The Science of Sleuthing:

The Evolution of Detective Practice in English Regional Cities, 1836-1914

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Abstract

Crime investigation has captured the public's imagination since the early nineteenth century, and the fascination with detectives and their sleuthing adventures endures today. Yet, despite the widespread interest, little is known about how the first professional police detectives developed their investigative skills. Police histories provide broad summaries rather than detailed analyses of the contribution of regional police detectives and there is limited published information about the formation and evolution of borough detective departments. Using primary sources, such as watch committee records, government reports and trial depositions, this thesis examines how Victorian and Edwardian detectives in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham acquired and developed their crime detection abilities. The comparative study is undertaken within the context of local environment, organisational change, national legislation and the advances in forensic science and communications technology. It charts the evolution of detective practice and identifies the key points of change.

This thesis presents a thorough examination of the modus operandi of regional detective officers. The findings challenge the assumption of police historians that regional detective policing was somewhat rudimentary, slow to change and based mostly on trial and error. It demonstrates that, from the earliest days of the new police, many regional detective officers were capable, innovative and adaptable. Moreover, the larger borough police forces formed efficient and effective prototype detective departments from their inception. It argues that the blending of traditional investigative strategies with new methods is evidence of the professionalisation of the borough detective police. This study fills an important gap in the police historiography and reveals for the first time how the early police detectives developed their investigative skills, which formed the foundation for crime detection practices today. This makes a significant and unique contribution to previous academic research and provides new information on detective policing for a wider audience.

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Abbreviations

BAC	Birmingham Archives and Collections
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
DCI	Detective chief inspector
DHC	Deputy head constable
DI	Detective inspector
DS	Detective sergeant
DSI	Detective superintendent
GMPA	Greater Manchester Police Archives
HC	Head constable
HMSO	Her/His Majesty's Stationery Office
IOC	Inspectors of Constabulary
LRO	Liverpool Record Office
MALH	Manchester Archives and Local History
OBP	Old Bailey Proceedings
PC	Police constable
PS	Police sergeant
TNA	The National Archives
WMPM	West Midlands Police Museum

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Chapter 1

Introduction: 'Hiding in Plain Sight'

> …the detective officer can only make his mark by closely studying the various forms of wrong-doing, and endeavouring to unravel each case of guilt brought to his knowledge in the light of the experience which he is constantly gaining.[1]
>
> — Jerome Caminada, *Twenty-Five Years of Detective Life,* 1901.

Detective Jerome Caminada served with the Manchester City Police from 1868 to 1899. Towards the end of his career, during which he rose through the ranks to become detective superintendent, Manchester Watch Committee rewarded him for apprehending 1,225 offenders.[2] After his death in 1914, the newspapers celebrated his success as an investigator who, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, 'was known all over the country'.[3] Over a century later, the general fascination with detectives and their sleuthing adventures still endures. Yet, despite the ongoing and widespread interest in crime detection, little is known about how the first professional police detectives developed their investigative skills, including the adoption of new scientific techniques, such as photography and fingerprinting, which gradually became available throughout the late Victorian and Edwardian periods.[4] This thesis reveals for the first time how the early police officers developed their detective practice, which makes a significant and original contribution to previous academic research, as well as providing new information for a wider audience. By examining in detail how regional police detectives acquired and refined their sleuthing abilities through their

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[1] Jerome Caminada, *Twenty-Five Years of Detective Life*, Volume II (Manchester: J. Heywood, 1901), 512.

[2] Angela Buckley, *The Real Sherlock Holmes: The Hidden Story of Jerome Caminada* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2014), 131.

[3] *The Manchester Guardian*, 11 March 1914, 11.

[4] Haia Shpayer-Makov, "Detectives and Forensic Science: The Professionalization of Police Detection" in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice,* eds. Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 491.

experience as law enforcers, as summarised by Detective Caminada, this study charts the professionalisation of detective policing, which formed the foundation for crime detection practices today.

By the time the famed detective force of the Metropolitan Police was created at Scotland Yard in 1842, there were already police detectives in operation in other parts of the country, mostly as plain-clothes officers operating within the uniformed divisions of borough constabularies. Haia Shpayer-Makov asserts that detective departments were formed contemporaneously in other large urban police forces outside London,[5] such as in Birmingham where Head Constable Francis Burgess established a detective department shortly after the creation of Scotland Yard.[6] Other borough and county forces throughout England gradually created their own detective departments, and individual officers became increasingly competent at crime investigation as they developed their distinctive role and expertise. However, published police histories have rarely focused on, or even referred to, the history of the regional detective police and there is limited information available about the formation and evolution of specific detective departments in major cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.

Following the Municipal Corporations Act 1835,[7] large towns and cities were empowered to establish their own professional police force. The rise of political unrest and public protest in the 1830s precipitated the need for an organised and more formal police force in the cities. The County Police Acts in 1839 and 1840 further enabled local authorities to establish a paid professional police force in rural England and Wales.[8] From the earliest days of the new police, detectives were deployed in borough forces, first by uniformed officers assuming plain-clothes duties and then through the creation of formal detective departments. (See Appendix A for a timeline of borough detective history).

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[5] Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 43.
[6] John Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Policing Birmingham* (Birmingham: West Midlands Police, 1989), 16.
[7] See Appendix B for regnal information for all Acts of Parliament.
[8] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 41.

The experience of regional detective departments was recorded in detail for the first time in a government report published in 1878. Following the Turf Fraud Scandal the previous year,[9] in which five senior and long-serving Scotland Yard detective officers were tried at the Old Bailey for conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, the Home Secretary initiated an inquiry into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police. Regional head constables gave evidence about detective practice in their forces, which formed the basis for the reform of the Metropolitan Police and the creation of the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland Yard.[10] This marks a key point in the professionalisation of crime detection. It is significant that the evolution of detective practice in the Metropolitan Police was influenced by borough detective departments, even though the contribution of provincial forces to the development of national policing practice is often overlooked in published histories due to the prevalence of the capital's principal police force. Historians, such as Chris Williams, recognise that the traditional view of the Metropolitan Police as the 'fount of all innovation' is simplistic and that the reality of the diffusion of policing and crime investigation skills is far more complex.[11] Nevertheless, since the earliest days of policing, the events and history of the CID of the Metropolitan Police have dominated not only public consciousness but also academic research and consequently the police history narrative.

As reinforced by some historians such as Shpayer-Makov, Scotland Yard is seen as the 'hub of detective operations in the country'.[12] Although the development of regional policing and crime detection in cities outside London is intrinsically linked with that of the capital, everyday practice differs; and yet, detective police history is to a great extent constructed on the history of the Metropolitan Police. For example, in 1868, following the

[9] *Old Bailey Proceedings* (hereafter OBP), trial of John Meiklejohn, Nathaniel Druscovich, William Palmer, George Clarke and Edward Frogatt, ref. t18771022-805.
[10] The National Archives, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force of the Metropolitan Police* (London: HMSO, 1878), xiv-xv.
[11] Chris A. Williams, "Policing the Populace: The Road to Professionalism," in *Histories of Crime: Britain 1600-2000*, eds. Anne-Marie Kilday and David Nash (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 170.
[12] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 9.

Fenian bombing in Clerkenwell and amidst concerns about ticket-of-leave convicts, the Metropolitan Police commissioners introduced divisional detective police throughout the police districts, in addition to the detective officers in the central department at Scotland Yard. However, as examined in Chapter 3, there is evidence that this practice had already been in operation in other urban centres for some time.

Despite the existence of regional detective officers in English cities since the early days of policing, the study of detectives and investigative practice usually comprises a broad summary rather than a detailed analysis in the majority of published police histories and is often confined to short references or a single chapter within a more general history. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, academic attention has turned more firmly towards the lives and work of detective officers, but there is consensus among crime historians on the need for further study in this area.

In addition to the limited and London-based focus of academic research and police history publications, there are further factors which have concealed the activities and daily work of regional police detectives. From the beginning of the 'new' police force in England and Wales the objective was crime prevention, with detection as a secondary function.[13] In reality, the role of detective and preventive uniformed police officers was interchangeable and ambiguous, with the latter often assuming plain-clothes duties.[14] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov describe how research into the history of police and policing in the late twentieth century has focused 'almost entirely on uniformed patrol officers'.[15] They cite possible reasons for this as the distraction and allure of detective fiction compared to the mundane nature of real-life detective work and the limited number of detectives, the latter being in their opinion the most likely explanation.[16] Whether in real life, fiction or academic

[13] Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History,* 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 1996), 71.
[14] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 43.
[15] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, "The Police Detective and Police History," in *Police Detectives in History,1750-1950,* eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 2.
[16] Ibid., 9.

research, it would appear that detective police officers have been consistently hidden from view and yet, as noted by Shpayer-Makov, they 'gradually emerged as the key instrument in the fight against crime' during the nineteenth century.[17]

Furthermore, scant attention has been paid to the development of investigative practice, particularly in relation to borough police detectives. Philip Rawlings argues that professionalisation began as early as the eighteenth century with the actions of the thief-takers.[18] Emsley adds that these prototype investigators displayed traditional detective skills,[19] which did not develop significantly among the detective officers of the new police.[20] He suggests that beyond London there was only the possibility, rather than the reality, of competence in crime detection.[21] In her study of regional policing, Carolyn Steedman states that detective work did not become standardised or formalised until the advent of forensic science.[22] This accords with Shpayer-Makov's conclusion that detective police officers developed their skills by trial and error.[23] However, there has been no research to date on the modus operandi of borough police detectives, nor any detail on how they acquired and developed their skills in crime detection. All police historians call for further research in this area.

Shpayer-Makov advocates that the study of the interface between crime detection and forensic science is vital to an understanding of the professionalisation of policing. Although for most of the nineteenth century there was little interaction between police officers, forensic scientists and medical practitioners, scientific techniques began to have an impact on crime investigation in the later decades of the century.[24] In her work on the development of forensic science, Alison Adam adds that the key role played by police

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[17] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 1.
[18] Philip Rawlings, *Policing: A Short History* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 231.
[19] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009), 21.
[20] Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750-1900*, 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 242.
[21] Ibid., 26-29.
[22] Carolyn Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community: The Formation of English Provincial Police Forces, 1856-80* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1984), 157.
[23] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 299.
[24] Shpayer-Makov, "Detectives," 475.

detectives in linking scientific developments with crime investigation started to develop in the late nineteenth century.[25] Nevertheless, Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton highlight the fragmented nature of existing research into the practical application of forensic science techniques in crime detection.[26]

Finally, the study of the historical background of policing strategies has been long established as essential to the study of the history of crime, as reiterated by Anne-Marie Kilday and David Nash,[27] in addition to being a prerequisite for developing an understanding of contemporary policing practices, as posited by Tim Newburn.[28]

This study examines how Victorian and Edwardian police detectives in key English cities developed their investigative practices in response to national and local crime rates, organisational change, government legislation and advances in science and technology. It analyses the acquisition and evolution of detective skills in the interface between policing and related fields, such as local governance, professionalisation, technological developments and forensic science. Within a wider context, the development of regional detective policing is charted by identifying and examining key points of change, such as recruitment, organisational structure, national and local government policy and the interactions between the borough police forces and the Metropolitan Police. In this way, the study makes an important and unique contribution to the field of police history by providing a detailed understanding of investigative technique in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It offers new insights into how the regional police detectives developed their skills, which were instrumental to the evolution of policing practice. The study uncovers for the first time the sleuthing work of regional police detectives hitherto 'hiding in plain sight', which contributes to the existing academic field and influences the ongoing public perception.

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[25] Alison Adam, *A History of Forensic Science: British Beginnings in the Twentieth Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 124.
[26] Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton, *Murder and the Making of English CSI* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 2.
[27] Anne-Marie Kilday and David Nash, eds., Introduction to *Histories of Crime: Britain 1600-2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 2.
[28] Tim Newburn, ed. *Handbook of Policing*. 2nd ed. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 13.

1.1. Historiographical context

The majority of twentieth-century police histories focus on the role, function and work of uniformed officers, with plain-clothes officers generally being excluded, or being limited to a brief reference.[29] This may be due to the emphasis on the police's role in law enforcement and social control as evident in the work of historians such as David Philips and Robert Storch.[30] As interest in the detective police began to emerge in the later decades of the century, they were confined to a sole chapter and there was scant attention paid to their investigative work. As already stated, most histories focused on the development and activities of the CID of the Metropolitan Police, with little consideration afforded to police detectives who operated in the borough constabularies of other major English cities. This may be accounted for by the nature of the roles of uniformed patrol officers and investigating plain-clothes officers being often interchangeable, with uniformed police constables assuming a detective role for specific cases and situations.[31]

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, there has been more detailed research into the occupational life of Victorian and Edwardian police detectives, most significantly through the groundbreaking work of Emsley and Shpayer-Makov. In addition, there has been an increasing interest in crime detection, criminology and forensic science, with detective history research assuming an integral role within interdisciplinary studies. However, research is still often limited to discrete chapters within more comprehensive studies and, although there have been some case studies from regional police forces, the focus is still mainly confined to the development and activities of Scotland Yard detectives.

[29] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, *Detectives*, 2.

[30] David Philips and Robert D Storch, *Policing Provincial England, 1829-1856: The Politics of Reform* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), 2.

[31] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 4.

1.1.1. Early police historiography

Late twentieth-century police histories rarely include detailed research into the nature and activities of the detective police. T. A. Critchley opines that detective work was 'the Cinderella of the police service' for most of the nineteenth century. He argues that this was primarily due to the early focus on crime prevention and on the poor reputation of the first London detectives.[32] He makes no reference to the regional detective police. Victor Bailey argues that police reform and the development of the criminal justice system directly influenced crime detection in the nineteenth century.[33] He agrees with Critchley on the inefficiency of the new police and further highlights the slow pace of reform and the variation in practice of the provincial police, which adversely affected their investigative work.[34]

Steedman builds on Bailey's work in her examination of regional policing from 1856 to 1880, with the emerging professionalisation of policing during this period as a key theme. In reference to detectives, Steedman contests that the provincial authorities supported the deployment of a small number of plain-clothes officers because of the financial benefits; they could provide additional support to the uniformed police on a limited scale without spending too much of ratepayers' money.[35] Steedman concludes that crime detection was 'an art confined to a few urban centres', although she does not examine its nature. She states that in the mid-nineteenth century, crime detection was solely reliant on intelligence gathering, witness testimonies and surveillance.[36] However, Steedman's research does not include borough police detectives, as her focus is on county constabularies which were much later in

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[32] T. A. Critchley, Introduction to *A History of Police in England and Wales,* 2nd ed. (London: Constable, 1978), 160-161.
[33] Victor Bailey, ed. *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1981), 11.
[34] Ibid., 14-15.
[35] Steedman, *Policing*, 18.
[36] Ibid., 157-158.

developing formal detective roles. Other noted police historians, such as David Taylor, do not refer to detectives in their general histories.[37]

In contrast, Rawlings' work includes a more sustained focus on crime detection and detectives within his wider work on police history, charting the development of detective policing from the seventeenth century onwards. He highlights a shift in the eighteenth century, through the creation of the Bow Street Runners, towards the deployment of more proactive detection methods, instead of relying on victims to initiate investigations and on execution as a deterrent.[38] Although Rawlings makes brief references to detective departments in cities outside London, such as Birmingham and Leeds, he focuses on the Metropolitan Police for more detailed discussion and points out that provincial police could apply to Scotland Yard for assistance in complex cases, although he admits that some senior officers were reluctant to do so.[39] However, Rawlings includes some examples from regional detective departments in his exposition of basic crime detection techniques, such as surveillance and information gathering.[40] In reference to 'the science of detection', he again refers to borough forces but merely cites the overall numbers of detectives rather than the techniques they employed, and he does not analyse the impact of their work.[41] Finally, Rawlings examines the relationship between uniformed and detective officers, which he opines to be separate and opposed, emphasising the rivalry rather than their respective influence on crime detection.[42]

Moreover, there are some references to detective policing in regional publications about specific police forces. For example, W. R. Cockcroft's account of the history of the

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[37] For example, see David Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England: Crime, Conflict and Control* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997); Philips and Storch, *Policing*.
[38] Rawlings, *Policing*, 96.
[39] Ibid., 170.
[40] Ibid., 172.
[41] Ibid., 179.
[42] Ibid., 186-187.

Liverpool Police contains some basic information about the detective department, mostly in relation to the numbers of officers and key events in its creation and development.[43]

As Emsley posits, research into crime history increased significantly during the final decades of the twentieth century with greater analysis of primary sources, such as court documents and police records, as part of a wider trend in historical research to explore 'history from below'.[44] Emsley's earlier publications mark this wider shift in relation to police history with a greater focus on individual police officers, particularly those from the lower ranks. He advocates that crime detection techniques did not change significantly with the establishment of the new police in the early nineteenth century, for which he offers examples such as plain-clothes police officers carrying out surveillance. He further argues that investigative practice remained limited until the advent of fingerprinting and forensic science, with the exception of footprinting and the increased use of communication technology.[45] However, Emsley does not examine this topic in any further detail nor offers any analysis.

1.1.2. The rise of the detective police

During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the interest in detective policing became a more substantial and intrinsic component of police history. Emsley includes detective police within his work on British police constables and further widens the scope of his research to include regional constabularies. Despite his stated focus on 'bobbies on the beat', Emsley devotes a considerable portion of his work to detective officers, beginning with an examination of crime detection practice prior to the creation of the new police, in which he contends that the Bow Street Runners and other thief-takers exhibited some investigative skills, such as in the detection of pickpockets.[46] He also propounds that the first constables

[43] W. R. Cockcroft, *From Cutlasses to Computers: The Police Force in Liverpool, 1836-1989* (Market Drayton: S. B. Publications, 1991), 35.
[44] Emsley, *Crime*, 1.
[45] Ibid., 242.
[46] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 21.

operating outside London might have had some skill in crime detection,[47] thus confirming that the tradition of crime investigation precedes the Victorian era. Emsley develops this argument in relation to the establishment of the new police, dismissing the notion that effective detective policing began with the creation of a professional force and accusing police historians of overlooking the contribution of earlier police officers, such as the night and day watchmen, to the ongoing development of investigative practice.[48]

Unusually for general police histories, Emsley includes a case study of Manchester City Police Detective Jerome Caminada within a chapter on individual police officers. However, his summary of Detective Caminada's crime detection work is based solely on the officer's published memoirs and serves as an example of a typical police officer from a working-class background, rather than on the development of his investigative expertise. However, Emsley further considers the role and work of police detectives in more detail within the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century policing, in which he examines the lack of impact of Howard Vincent's reforms during his tenure as director of the CID at Scotland Yard, which he argues were mostly organisational. He concludes that there were no significant developments in crime detection techniques throughout the nineteenth century and refers to photography and fingerprinting as the only innovations established during that time. Emsley further asserts that any success in detective work relied on innate personal characteristics, such as determination and common sense, rather than the acquisition of new skills.[49]

In 2006, Emsley and Shpayer-Makov published one of the first books exclusively dedicated to police detectives, with the aim of addressing the lack of research in this key area. This marks a significant change in the historiography, and their seminal work widens the geographical scope of detective policing research to other countries such as France and Australia. However, the British focus remains confined to London and the Metropolitan

[47] Ibid., 29.
[48] Ibid., 40.
[49] Ibid., 166-167.

Police. Despite the geographical limitations, they take a broad view of detective police history, which establishes a solid basis for further study. Within the publication Robert Morris devotes a section to the professionalisation of detection, with the focus firmly on Scotland Yard: he concentrates on the recruitment and retention of detective officers, concluding that detectives and their expertise were still not sufficiently separable from their uniformed colleagues in the early 1880s, after the creation of the CID.[50] In his conclusion, Morris admits that little is known about detective behaviour and that the public perception of them was influenced by court appearances and memoirs published mostly by former Metropolitan Police officers.[51] In his discussion he does not refer to borough constabularies and their detective practice.

Following her collaborative work with Emsley, Shpayer-Makov published the most comprehensive study to date of the occupational life of Victorian and Edwardian detective police officers through an examination of their work experience and their representation in the press and fiction.[52] In this she offers a broad perspective of their history and the development of their role and, like Emsley, she considers the complexity of the detective role, which she describes as 'interwoven' between the uniformed and plain-clothes police.[53] In reference to their occupational life, Shpayer-Makov analyses the detective officers' everyday work and environment, covering topics such as recruitment, employment conditions, promotions and training. In keeping with other police historians, such as Rawlings and Emsley, she offers a history of pre-Victorian policing and crime detection, leading to the rise of Scotland Yard which she argues was the most prominent detective department, although it was not necessarily the most efficient within a wider international context.[54] At a micro level Shpayer-Makov examines regular detective duties, which she

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[50] R. M. Morris, "'Crime Does Not Pay': Thinking Again About Detectives in the First Century of the Metropolitan Police" in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-195*0, eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 89-90.
[51] Ibid., 92.
[52] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 2.
[53] Ibid., 4.
[54] Ibid., 50.

maintains were focused on gathering intelligence and evidence for prosecutions rather than on administrative tasks. Although her observations mostly relate to Scotland Yard officers, she concedes that detective duties varied within different constabularies.[55]

Shpayer-Makov extends the scope of her research beyond the capital by citing some brief examples from detective departments in other English cities, such as Liverpool, Birmingham and Manchester, to illustrate the roles, tasks and perceptions of detective police officers. However, she remains steadfast in her conviction that crime detection strategies were initiated by the detective officers at Scotland Yard, including record keeping, communication, fingerprinting and Alphonse Bertillon's anthropometric system.[56] She does not explore whether there were any early examples of investigative technique trialled or practised in other urban forces, or how those instigated by the Metropolitan Police were disseminated to and adopted by borough detective departments.

Shpayer-Makov concludes that detective policing was founded on the individual officers' personal characteristics and abilities, and that the evolution of their practice was based on an experimental approach which gradually led to more formal and professional investigative practices and expert knowledge in specific areas relating to crime detection and bringing offenders to justice. It was this professionalisation of their work that resulted in the creation of their separate identity.[57] By bringing her own research to a conclusion, Shpayer-Makov presents its limitations, including her lack of detailed attention to specific investigative practices and her failure to assess their performance.[58] She raises further questions and calls for continuing research in this area with a particular focus on regional police detectives and their investigative work.[59]

In addition to the work of Shpayer-Makov and Emsley, other historians published articles with specific references to detective policing. One example was Terry Stanford who,

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[55] Ibid., 43-44.
[56] Ibid., 60-61.
[57] Ibid., 299-300.
[58] Ibid., 302.
[59] Ibid., 9-10.

in his research into offender identification, highlighted detective activities, such as visiting prisons to gain knowledge of offenders.[60]

1.1.3. Interdisciplinary links

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the history of policing, including detectives and investigative technique, has played a more prominent role in crime history research and it has become integral to the examination of specific historical cases. Policing history is also firmly considered to be relevant for contemporary practice, including crime detection. Moreover, it has been incorporated into other disciplines within a wider research environment such as criminology, law and the history of forensic science.

Kilday and Nash advocate the study of current issues in criminology and policing through 'an historical microscope', echoing the call of earlier historians for more detailed investigation of the historical context of present-day issues, with the justification that today's criminal justice system is the result of changes in context and practice through time. Thus, an appreciation of the past is essential for a better understanding of contemporary discussions. They further argue that research into crime and criminality needs to be more focused on the human aspect of their interrelated history, as the investigation of past practices may aid the formulation of policies for the future. Kilday and Nash conclude that research into the history of crime must include an analysis of the theories and practices of law enforcement and policing.[61] This discussion provides a framework for the examination of historical policing and related topics within the wider field of crime history and its relevance for today's practices.

Continuing the discussion on the history of crime, Williams reinforces the link between the police and the criminal justice system and emphasises the significant impact of

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[60] Terry Stanford, "Who Are You? We Have Way of Finding Out!: Tracing the Police Development of Offender Identification Techniques in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Crimes and Misdemeanours* 3, no. 1 (2009): 67.
[61] Kilday and Nash, *Histories*, 1-2.

law enforcers on the curbing and prosecuting of behaviours. He summarises the accepted main functions of the police as crime control and the maintenance of public order. He also raises the issue of discretion, which he describes as a defining policy of 'non-enforcement'.[62] This is an interesting area for discussion in relation to detective police officers as, in theory, they practised greater discretion in their enforcement of the law and were not bound by the same restrictions as uniformed officers.[63] Although Williams does not explore this theme in detail, he cites it as justification for the need for further research due to the impact of cultural traditions on policing, which he further links to society.[64]

Williams traces the beginning of crime investigation to the 'old' police, whose objective was crime prevention. Effective detection was based on the relationships between police officers and their informants, which could lead to corruption. However, despite the potential flaws in their investigative practice, he notes that the detective police had acquired celebrity status by the early twentieth century.[65] Williams acknowledges the current debate on the nature of police expertise and its diffusion and adds that regional police forces developed their practices independently of the Metropolitan Police. In his analysis of historical policing, he includes two case studies of individual officers from Birmingham and Liverpool, both of which are used as examples of occasions when policing was perceived as dysfunctional. According to Williams, this is a typical approach due to examples of positive policing not having been recorded and poor practices having been instrumental in policy changes.[66] The second case highlights the tensions and challenges in the relationship between the watch committee and the chief officer, which further emphasises the power of the council over their respective police force – an issue that will be examined in Chapter 2.[67] Williams concludes that changes in policing have been adopted over time 'albeit sometimes slowly and sometimes in piecemeal fashion', and that there is little resemblance between

[62] Williams, "Policing," 160.
[63] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 123.
[64] Williams, "Policing," 160.
[65] Ibid., 163.
[66] Ibid., 170.
[67] Ibid., 172-173.

today's police officers and those of the early nineteenth century, particularly with reference to motivation and professionalism, but discussions on key topics such as governance and accountability endure,[68] thus reinforcing Kilday and Nash's argument about the relevance of historical study for modern practice.

Through their examination of the intersection of crime history and criminology, Barry Godfrey, Paul Lawrence and Chris Williams highlight the relevance and significance of the study of policing in conjunction with crime history within a multidisciplinary research environment, which has been significantly under-represented in the historiography to date. According to them, studies combining crime history and criminology would be beneficial as 'both disciplines seek similar insights into the functioning and regulation of past and present societies'. They emphasise that there has been little published work in this area, and that crime history is still confined to an introductory section or contextual chapter.[69] However, Godfrey et al. conclude that a shared framework of criminology and crime history is emerging and that the two disciplines are becoming intrinsically linked,[70] as demonstrated by their own work, in which the history of related areas such as criminal statistics and police governance are included within their wide-ranging discussion.

In their more recent research into the history of crime and criminal justice, Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen build on the multidisciplinary approach signalled by Godfrey, Lawrence and Williams, with a further exploration of the interaction between social sciences and history.[71] In relation to crime history, they emphasise how researching institutions within their historical context helps to dispel the myths that have been created over time, and they point to the importance of such a study in transcending the institution to engage with more enduring themes, such as national identity, thus reiterating the importance of researching the

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[68] Ibid., 175-176.
[69] Barry S. Godfrey, Paul Lawrence & Chris A. Williams, *History & Crime*: *Key Approaches to Criminology* (London: SAGE Publications, 2008), 6-7.
[70] Ibid., 21.
[71] Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen, eds., Introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1.

past to inform the present.[72] Within Knepper and Johansen's work, Paul Lawrence develops Emsley's use of the concept of 'history from below' as a context for police history research and purports that crime history was accepted as a 'subset of social history' in the 1970s and 1980s.[73] Although he asserts that more recent research has attempted to examine the police's daily practices based on local archival research, he does not refer specifically to detective police or crime detection. He concludes that the area is still under-researched and proposes a 'comparative approach' as the next step in the historiography.[74]

David Churchill's comparative research into crime control in Victorian cities builds on Emsley's suggested approach and the multidisciplinary research of Godfrey et al. Focusing on the impact of civilian action on the bringing of offenders to justice, Churchill's work is firmly positioned within the nexus of crime history, criminology and social history. Based on detailed empirical analysis of crime control, governance and policing in Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, Churchill seeks to 're-forge dialogue between history and criminology'.[75] In this way, he extends the previous work of social scientists, crime historians and criminologists and sets a solid foundation for further interdisciplinary studies of all aspects of the history of crime and policing.

Shpayer-Makov further examines detective policing in conjunction with forensic science. She states that the study of policing is incomplete without reference to the interface between crime detection and forensic science, although the latter was mostly undertaken by external experts such as scientists and medico-legal academics. She concedes that some progress was made in the adoption of forensic science into crime detection in the late nineteenth century, despite the fact that the cooperation of police officers was inconsistent.[76] Despite the availability of forensic techniques, Shpayer-Makov emphasises the lack of formal

[72] Ibid., 3-4.
[73] Paul Lawrence, "The Historiography of Crime and Criminal Justice," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice,* eds. Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 24.
[74] Ibid., 31.
[75] David Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City: The Police and the Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 7.
[76] Shpayer-Makov, "Detectives," 475.

training and information for detectives and their reliance on experience, identifying personal characteristics and intelligence gathering as the main tools used in crime detection.[77] However, she argues that the acquisition of new techniques such as record keeping and fingerprinting were 'scientific breakthroughs', adding that they were usually trialled first at the Metropolitan Police, although she makes reference to some regional initiatives.[78] Shpayer-Makov concludes that the development of detective investigative practice was neither linear nor straightforward. She highlights the lack of knowledge and research in this area and calls for more attention to be paid to this topic within a wider study, with a focus on 'lower-profile' cases, to trace the history of standard practices and to understand how detectives operated as 'knowledge workers'. She criticises current research for failing to provide analysis and she raises the key issue of how technological advances were incorporated into routine detective work and the impact on crime investigation. Shpayer-Makov concludes her research with a series of further questions for future historical enquiry, emphasising that research into provincial detective departments, based on data from regional archives, would be profitable to the study of crime history.[79]

In addition, the study of policing has had a significant impact on research into the history of forensic science. Adam adopts a multidisciplinary approach to the field by combining science and technology with criminology.[80] She cites scientific policing and crime detection as integral components of the development of forensic science.[81] Although she does not examine detectives and investigative practice in detail, she considers the impact of scientific criminology on detective work and acknowledges the influence of policing on crime scene management in the twentieth century.[82] In reference to detective officers, Adam argues that they were ambivalent towards such advances.[83] She concludes by accentuating

[77] Ibid., 482-483.
[78] Ibid., 486-488.
[79] Ibid., 491-492.
[80] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 3.
[81] Ibid., 6.
[82] Ibid., 65.
[83] Ibid., 121.

the importance of the professionalisation of detective policing on the evolution of the application of forensic science in crime detection.[84] Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton also consider police detectives as key to the practical application of the pioneering work of criminologists such as Hans Gross and Edmond Locard.[85] However, like Adam, they examine the detective's role through the lens of contemporary crime scene management, policing manuals and detective fiction, rather than the everyday investigative activities of real-life plain-clothes officers. The only examples of crime detection practice are limited to Scotland Yard detectives.

Katherine Watson builds on the work of Adam, Burney and Pemberton in her recent publication on medico-legal practice. Focusing on the interaction between law, criminal history and medicine, for the first time she identifies police officers, including detectives, as an integral element of historical medico-legal work, along with coroners, doctors and lawyers.[86] As called for by earlier crime historians, this interdisciplinary study provides comparative and empirical research to bridge the gaps in previous studies and, although her focus is primarily on doctors, Watson examines the role of police investigators within the context of the medico-legal process, which had been hitherto overlooked or only referred to in brief. This marks a fundamental and significant change in the historiography and is a solid foundation for further multidimensional academic work.

1.2. Research aims and methods

As already established, there has been little scholarly attention paid to the role and everyday operations of detective police officers, with notable exceptions such as the work of Shpayer-Makov and Emsley, despite repeated calls for more analytical study of police detectives and

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[84] Ibid., 147.
[85] Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton, *Murder and the Making of English CSI* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 36.
[86] Katherine D. Watson, *Medicine and Justice: Medico-legal Practice in England and Wales, 1700-1914* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 4.

their investigative techniques. Furthermore, there is a paucity of general research into policing in the borough constabularies, mainly due to the persistent focus on the Metropolitan Police. Moreover, despite the innovative work of some academics such as Churchill, the only attention afforded to policing these important urban environments has been in short case studies within more comprehensive general police histories and in publications written by former police officers and local historians.[87]

In reference to investigative technique, the history of crime detection has formed part of general police histories, usually beginning with the work of the eighteenth-century thief-takers and the Bow Street Runners as forerunners of the more formal detective departments established in the mid-1800s and followed by references to key changes and developments in the detective department of the Metropolitan Police. Once again, developments in crime detection in the regional cities have been largely absent from the historiography.

Furthermore, even though the shift of focus in historical research to examine all strata of society has had a considerable impact on the study of policing, especially in reference to the lower ranks such as police constables, there has still been limited interest in police detectives who were generally recruited internally and rose through the ranks in the same manner as their uniformed counterparts. Although they shared some social and organisational characteristics, the role and work of detective officers are sufficiently different as to merit more critical attention, rather than being subsumed in a more general assessment of the everyday life of Victorian and Edwardian police officers. In addition, the study of detective police officers has been mostly conducted through the prism of their fictional and media representation, which has perhaps obscured the reality of their work through comparison with an artificial construct. This was based on a partial but often unreliable experience of real-life investigative work due to writers such as Dickens engaging directly with detectives and to the officers themselves penning their own memoirs.[88] Even

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[87] Examples include Eric J. Hewitt, *A History of Policing in Manchester* (Manchester: E. J. Morten, 1979) and John W. Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Police in Birmingham* (Birmingham, West Midlands Police, 1989).
[88] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 154.

though there has been some more academic research into detective officers since the beginning of the twenty-first century, it has rarely been combined with regional policing, which renders it rather one-dimensional with the principal focus yet again on the Scotland Yard detectives. Therefore, there is still an absence of comparative research relating to borough police detectives.

Since their inception in the early nineteenth century, police detectives have been ‘hidden in plain sight’. Their individual contributions to the development of policing have been overlooked and their work concealed, and this obscurity has been represented in and, to some extent, perpetuated by the historiography of policing, which has paid insufficient attention to individual detective officers, especially those operating outside the capital, and to their work in crime detection. The general absence of research into detective officers is fully recognised by police historians and there have been repeated calls for more analytical study in this area.

Through a comparative study of the borough detective departments of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, this thesis demonstrates how nineteenth and early twentieth century borough police detectives acquired and developed their investigative skills, which provides a significant and original contribution to the existing police historiography. It offers a critical analysis of the investigative practices of regional police detectives within a multi-faceted context. The project comprises multiple themes, such as local government, urban environments outside London, emerging communication technologies and the application of forensic science in crime detection, the interface of which has hitherto not been examined in detail. This project not only makes a major contribution to the current historiography relating to policing, crime history and criminology, but it also provides a more meaningful and informative context for contemporary discussions on policing and methods of crime detection and reveals for the first time the modus operandi of Victorian and Edwardian police detectives.

Firstly, this thesis aims to establish the history of regional police detective departments and examine the context in which they were created, identifying and assessing

the impact of key points of change in their governance, organisational structure and management. This will be followed by an examination of the occupational life of detective officers, including recruitment, probation and training, their duties, deployment and daily routines. It will also compare their role in crime detection with that of uniformed police officers. These two objectives will complete a detailed background study which will provide the context within which the investigative practices of borough detective officers will be assessed. Following this, the thesis will investigate the nature of detective technique and examine the impact of external factors, such as national record keeping, on the development of investigative skills and strategies, testing the theory that their acquisition was by trial and error. This theme will be further analysed through an assessment of the extent to which regional police detectives adopted and applied new scientific techniques, such as fingerprinting and crime scene examination, in the investigation of serious offences, such as homicide.

This thesis comprises a focused study of borough detective forces in the major regional cities. According to Asa Briggs, there were five cities in England and Wales outside London which had more than 100,000 inhabitants at the time of the first official census in 1841.[89] These were Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds and Bradford. Of the five, Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham were selected as the focus for this study. Selection was based on several factors, including population, the nature and rates of crime, policing history and intercity relationships. There are many similarities between the three cities, including industrialisation, political movements such as the rise of Chartism, and types of crime, yet each urban centre faced unique challenges. For example, Birmingham was the centre of the illegal firearms trade,[90] and Liverpool was a major port. In this way, borough police forces were impacted by their local environment as well as organisational changes and developments in national policing, and advances in communications technology and forensic science.

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[89] Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 1963), 59.
[90] Reilly, *Policing Birmingham,* 6.

Although the formative period for Victorian and Edwardian detectives is defined by Shpayer-Makov as being from 1842 to 1914,[91] 1836 is the starting point for the chronological framework of this research, as this is the earliest date of the creation of the new police for the selected cities.

1.2.1. Methodology

This project employs a mixed method comparative approach, as recommended by Lawrence,[92] with the analysis of qualitative data obtained from primary sources, such as watch committee minutes, government reports and court records, which is supported by quantitative data where relevant.

Godfrey emphasises a multifaceted approach to data analysis, including quantitative and qualitative methods,[93] placing archival sources at the centre of crime history research and highlighting the more recent textual and discourse analysis of official records, such as court records, to understand the development of power-based relationships through the study of intertextual links.[94] However, he highlights the limitations of archival data, such as regional newspapers, some of which have not been digitised, which creates gaps in contemporary research,[95] as well as the inadequacy of statistical analysis which he argues is often limited but remains fundamental to crime history research.

Despite the challenges and limitations of archival sources, Knepper and Johansen reiterate the importance of primary sources and emphasise that the use of court records is less prevalent than police and prison records.[96] However, crime history studies, such as

[91] Ibid., 2.
[92] Lawrence, "Historiography," 31.
[93] Barry Godfrey, "The Crime Historian's *Modus Operandi*," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice,* eds. Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 39.
[94] Ibid., 42.
[95] Ibid., 45.
[96] Knepper and Johansen, *History of Crime*, 9.

Churchill's research into crime control in Victorian cities,[97] are based on the textual analysis of local records. Adopting this approach, this project identifies key points of change in detective practice, as well as attitudes to and the adoption of investigative techniques, as well as the application of innovations in forensic science and communications technology. It establishes how detective practice evolved and assesses whether the adoption of new techniques led to improvements in detective performance.

Data relating to the structure, organisation and practice of detectives in regional police forces was extracted from borough council and central government records and was used to examine the detective police's response to local events and criminal cases, regional and national organisational change and external developments such as advances in science and technology. The project comprised an analytical study of council records relating to the borough detective forces in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. Evidence from other police forces, particularly the Metropolitan Police, served for comparison where appropriate, as the relationship between these independent yet similar organisations provided a more textured understanding of how the borough detective departments operated within a wider context. The data included:

- Watch committee minutes, orders and reports
- Head constable reports and memoranda
- Police orders and police instruction books
- Inspectors of Constabulary reports
- Crime statistics and conviction rates
- Government commission and inquiry reports
- Metropolitan Police files
- Home Office records
- Trial depositions

[97] Churchill, *Crime Control,* 24.

- Regional and national newspapers

The majority of these records were not available online and required visits to local archives. Borough council records and related police documents were available in regional archives and police museums. Home Office records and Metropolitan Police sources were accessible at the National Archives at Kew. In addition, depositions and case papers from the Northern and Midland Circuits were analysed for further examples of crime investigation strategies in relation to homicide. Knepper and Johansen argue that homicide forms the basis for studies of historical crime, as incidences of murder have been counted more precisely and are an indicator of trends in violent criminal activity.[98] The trial depositions were used primarily to assess the acquisition and application of crime scene investigation skills in homicide cases, as well as substantiating evidence relating to investigative practice from the regional archival data.

Discourse and narrative analysis were used to evaluate the data collected from the primary sources and to examine how the regional police and individual detectives responded to a range of factors and how they influenced the development of investigative technique. The extracted data was compared across the regional cities, and with the Metropolitan Police. The primary sources were assessed within the context of their creation, with reference to the nature and purpose of specific documents such as watch committee minutes. The data was supported by evidence from contemporary newspapers, which provided additional information on specific crime cases and on the investigative actions of police detectives. Many regional newspapers were available in online collections, such as the British Newspaper Archive, whereas some were only accessible in local record offices. The reliability and limitations of newspaper sources were assessed and, although they can be less factually accurate than primary sources such as pre-trial and trial depositions, they were used to supplement and corroborate the evidence extracted from the official

[98] Knepper and Johansen, *History of Crime*, 7.

documents. Home Office and Metropolitan Police records and parliamentary reports were examined to provide evidence of external factors which had a direct impact on the evolution and practice of regional detective departments. These records were only partially available online.

Finally, the research was undertaken within a background study of the factors affecting detective practice and performance during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. This included studies of local events and incidents of public disorder and political unrest, such as those created by Chartism and Irish nationalism, organisational change in policing as instigated by the local authorities as well as by national government, and advances in forensic science and communication, such as the introduction of record keeping and fingerprinting. The background study pinpointed the factors affecting the evolution and professionalisation of detective policing against which the response of regional police forces and their detective officers was studied.

One of the most challenging aspects of the research was the assessment of the performance of regional detective departments and of individual detective police officers in relation to positive outcomes in criminal investigations. Shpayer-Makov highlights the difficulty of accuracy in attempting to measure the efficiency of detective police performance. She concludes that the effectiveness of police detectives was limited and that ‘only a small proportion of reported crimes were resolved through the efforts of detectives’.[99] Nevertheless, she concedes that detective police officers were measured by the successful outcome of their investigations, which led to a fluctuating public image. She adds the caveat that only high-profile ‘successful’ cases were reported. Moreover, the positive actions of detectives were glamourised in the press, which obscured other factors such as luck and information provided by victims and witnesses, all of which distorted the reality of crime detection.[100]

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[99] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 303.
[100] Shpayer-Makov, “Detectives,” 481-482.

The subject of the accuracy of historical crime recording and statistics is an ongoing topic of discussion throughout the historiography. Whilst acknowledging that the police acted as a deterrent, Taylor cautions against using crime rates to measure the actual incidence of crime, as they were subject to a range of complex factors, including an increase in police numbers and their performance, and changes in the prosecutorial system due to costs and attitudes. He states that serious crime declined throughout the nineteenth century, despite regional variations, but concludes that this was more likely to be the result of improved living conditions than the actions of the new police. He adds that there was however a rise in arrests for petty crime due to greater regulation and control of communities by the local police.[101]

As outlined by Emsley, there are many factors which had a direct impact on the accuracy and reliability of crime statistics and their use in historical research. These included legislative change, such as the shift from indictments to an increase in the range of offences dealt with summarily in the 1850s, the influence of the chief police officer and the inconsistency in the reporting of offences. Emsley refers to the impact of developments in policing, including increased arrest rates and committals and localised directives to target specific types of crime such as vagrancy, but he does not reference crime detection. He concludes however that crime statistics are a valuable starting point in researching perceptions and trends in criminality.[102]

Godfrey et al. reinforce the generally accepted view of historians that crime statistics were inaccurate and that they are more valuable for studying the changes in the judicial system, rather than the nature and incidence of crime.[103] They enumerate a further set of challenges, including inconsistency in reporting and subjectivity on the part of police officers and magistrates, positing that police could be reluctant to record crimes due to the pressures on performance, as the crime statistics were taken as measures of efficiency linked to

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[101] Taylor, *New Police*, 96-97.
[102] Emsley, *Crime,* 26-30.
[103] Godfrey et al., *History,* 77.

funding, following the 1856 County and Borough Police Act.[104] In this they make specific reference to detective police officers and their perceived effectiveness, but with examples cited from the mid-twentieth century rather than the nineteenth. Godfrey et al. conclude that reported crime extracted from criminal justice records yields the most realistic picture of historic crime rates.[105]

Williams further acknowledges that police returns were 'deeply flawed' and advocates arrest rates as a basic quantifiable measurement. However, he adds that criminal statistics can be included in numerical data as an indicator of attitudes.[106] Williams concludes that as the number of convictions compared to arrests is very low, the study of criminal statistics distorts the picture. Moreover, a study of arrest rates leads to the contention that the police were primarily concerned with public behaviour, rather than specific crimes with identifiable victims. Therefore, analysis of the criminal statistics offers insight into the criminal justice system rather than the state of crime.[107] With these issues in mind, the effectiveness of detective performance was assessed within the limitations and deficiencies of the available primary sources and, where possible. This was supported and corroborated by a range of other evidence.

1.2.2. Chapter outline

The first two chapters of the thesis establish a multilayered contextual background to the examination of investigative practice through a comprehensive study of regional policing and the detective departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. The final two chapters comprise a more detailed analysis of detective practice, with a particular focus on the investigation of homicide.

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[104] Ibid., 31-33.
[105] Ibid., 38-39.
[106] Chris A. Williams, "Counting Crimes or Counting People: Some Implications of mid-nineteenth century British Police Returns," *Crime, History & Societies* 4, no. 2 (2000): 79.
[107] Ibid., 91-92.

In response to the lack of previous academic research into borough police forces, Chapter 2 presents a more complete history of regional policing, comprising its characteristics and evolution throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It includes a comparison of the different organisational structures of English police forces, a consideration of the parliamentary acts which had a direct impact on historic policing and the instigation of central government initiatives such as the Inspectorate of Constabulary. This is followed by an introduction to the detective departments of the three cities under study, which consists of an overview of their environments, including crime rates and key dates in their formation and history as well as their detective personnel. The final section of Chapter 2 is devoted to an analysis of the role of the watch committees and head officers and their impact as managers on the development of their respective detective departments.

Chapter 3 focuses further on the occupational lives of the regional detectives as specialist investigating officers within their police forces. Based primarily on archival material, such as watch committee minutes and the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, this chapter provides an original insight into how detective departments were organised and the role and daily activities of detective officers. It considers the recruitment, probation and training of detective officers, and assesses their personal background, skills and education. Key themes are examined such as the difference in the investigative function of central and divisional detectives, the latter often being uniformed officers assuming detective duties, and the role of the detective superintendent as the linchpin in the development of investigative practice. Moreover, this chapter provides new data on the number of detective officers in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham throughout the period under study.

With the context of regional policing and the history and function of detective departments firmly established, Chapter 4 examines the nature and evolution of detective technique. Firstly, it provides a brief history of investigative practice prior to the creation of the new police and then determines which crimes were investigated by detective officers. This is followed by a consideration of the traditional strategies used by detectives in their investigation into a range of offences. The analysis covers surveillance and information

gathering, the use of local knowledge, inter-force collaboration, the dissemination of information, and communication technologies. The second section explores the response of regional detective departments to central government requirements to monitor habitual offenders through record keeping and new technologies such as photography, Bertillonage and fingerprinting. The study assesses to what extent the regional detectives adopted these innovative methods. These elements combine to test the theory purported by police historians that investigative practice in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was rudimentary, slow and based on experimentation.

Chapter 5 develops this central theme further with an analysis of how detective practice evolved in relation to homicide investigations. Using primary evidence from trial depositions, the study traces the management of murder cases investigated by regional police detectives from the examination of the crime scene to the arrest of the alleged perpetrator and preparation of evidence for presentation in court. The study begins by examining how homicide cases were managed in the detective department, including the deployment of detectives, the preservation of evidence and the processing of suspects. The following section demonstrates how detective officers developed skills in examining a crime scene and collecting evidence. As detectives engaged external experts to analyse trace evidence, such as blood, it considers their role as facilitators and coordinators. Moreover, their duties as prosecutors are studied, particularly in relation to their use of aids such as crime scene maps and plans which, as is revealed, also had an investigative function. This dual role is assessed in more depth in the final section, which focuses on the identification, tracking and apprehension of suspects and the collection of further evidence. It also demonstrates how regional detectives used photographs, models and plans to build their prosecutorial cases. This chapter provides additional evidence of the ability of detectives to select investigative strategies, depending on availability and appropriateness for individual crime cases and it clearly demonstrates how their investigative practice evolved during the period under study, which contributed significantly to the professionalisation of their law-enforcing role. The findings of all chapters are summarised and collated in Chapter 6 as a

basis for further research into the wide-ranging and often overlooked topic of historical detective practice.

This thesis combines a comparative study of the interrelated fields of detective policing, borough policing, investigative technique and forensic science to provide a detailed analysis of how the Victorian and Edwardian police detectives developed their sleuthing skills. Based on an analysis of primary documents relating to local policing, it offers insight into how detective practice evolved throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the provincial English cites. This fills a substantial gap in the previous research and challenges the generally accepted view among police historians that the development of investigative strategies was slow to evolve, inconsistent and based on trial and error. This study reveals for the first time that regional detective officers were professional, innovative and increasingly effective throughout the period under study.

Chapter 2

Regional detective policing in England, 1836-1914

> What strikes anyone who begins to study the organization of the English Police Force is its utter illogicality…it is not a system, but a series of systems; it makes no provision for general, as apart from local, protection…its higher Officers are selected without method, or any real test of qualification; and its present efficiency is a splendid tribute to the English quality of "muddling through".[1]
>
> --Sir William Nott-Bower, *Fifty-Two Years a Policeman*, 1926.

After 47 years as chief officer of Leeds, Liverpool and the City of London Police, Sir William Nott-Bower concluded that one of the most significant weaknesses of national policing in England was the existence of separate, independent forces throughout the country. He highlighted the piecemeal nature of the British police, which comprised county and borough constabularies, as well as the two distinct forces of the capital. As established by police historians, regional policing in England throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was fragmented, inconsistent and, in many constabularies, slow to evolve. Detective police departments were an intrinsic and integrated function within borough police forces and therefore were subject to the same influences as their uniformed colleagues, such as environment, local management, national government guidelines and legislation. However, as previously stated, their distinctive role within wider regional policing has not been studied in detail and little is known about their origins and development in response to changes in the internal and external factors that affected their evolution. This chapter provides an overview of the development of the detective police departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, within the context of the wider history of regional policing, their

[1] John William Nott-Bower, *Fifty-Two Years a Policeman* (London: E Arnold & Co.,1926), 316.

specific urban environment and the impact of central and local government initiatives and directives. It establishes their origins within their respective cities, charts the principal points of change and assesses the impact of their management structure on the key function of crime investigation.

Within the police historiography there is a limited number of published academic sources relating specifically to the policing of the three cities under study, and most local police histories are written by former police officers, usually of a high rank. There are references to the borough forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham in a range of general police histories, but these are brief with only basic information recorded. The development of the individual constabularies has been explored to a certain extent in articles, but they do not cover the entire period of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Moreover, there have been no published studies to date into the history of distinct borough detective departments. Therefore, it is necessary to establish the context in which the three borough forces were created and to trace their evolution through the given period, as the background to a more focused study of their respective detective departments.

There is minimal confirmed research into the date or context of the establishment of individual borough detective departments, limited tracking of key events and changes, and no examination of how they evolved throughout the first decades of their existence. There are some references to their creation in academic police histories, but these tend to be unsupported by primary evidence and are often unclear and even contradictory. For example, Philip Rawlings states that the detective department of the Birmingham Borough Police was established in 1839 but offers no supporting evidence.[2] Clive Emsley also refers to Birmingham's detective department, asserting that it was created before Scotland Yard, based on secondary evidence from Michael Weaver, which states that it was established on 27 August 1842, which was concurrent with the creation of the detective department of the Metropolitan Police.[3] A letter from Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Richard Mayne

[2] Philip Rawlings, *Policing: A Short History* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 170.
[3] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the*

indicates that authority to appoint detective officers was given by the Home Secretary in June 1842 and a list of appointees was confirmed on 23 August.[4]

Emsley devotes a section to detective policing in his general history, which focuses initially on Scotland Yard. Although he examines the work of individual detective officers from Manchester and Leeds, his exposition takes the form of brief case studies, based primarily on detective memoirs, and he does not assess the wider work of their respective detective departments.[5]

Haia Shpayer-Makov refers to regional police detective departments repeatedly throughout her published work but does not offer a thorough analysis. In relation to specific borough departments, she uses selected evidence to support a wider study rather than focusing on their evolution as discrete entities. For example, in relation to their establishment, she suggests that the detective departments in cities were created in the mid-nineteenth century and were more or less contemporaneous with the creation of Scotland Yard, but offers no further detail.[6] She acknowledges that more archival research is needed into the work of regional police detectives.[7]

T. A. Critchley lists the key factors necessary for a comprehensive study of police history, including local government, the criminal justice system, legislation and police reform. His blueprint features a comparative study of regional police forces, through which shared characteristics can be identified within the context of influences such as central government, local authorities and the impact of chief constables.[8]

In this chapter, after establishing the contextualised origins of the regional detective forces, the key changes in organisational structure and management are examined through a comparative study of the three constabularies. The principal factors that influenced their

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Present (London: Quercus, 2009), 80; Michael Weaver, "The New Science of Policing: Crime and the Birmingham Police Force, 1839-1842," *Albion* 26, no. 2 (1994): 303.
[4] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), HO 45/292, Police: Origins of Detective Force, 1842.
[5] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 165-169.
[6] Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 44.
[7] Ibid., 9.
[8] T. A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales* (London: Constable, 1978), xix.

development are analysed, such as national government policy and legislation, local governance and environment, and the impact of senior management, including chief constables. This makes a significant contribution to the overall aim to further police history research, as recommended by acknowledged police historians such as Critchley.

The research presented in this chapter is based on the extensive study of council documents from the regional cities, predominantly comprising watch committee minutes, but also including orders given to and reports from the head constable. The series of watch committee minute books is mostly complete in all three cities, with occasional gaps. Contemporary newspaper reports were used to cover key events in the missing data, as well as providing further detail where necessary. Evidence from government commissions, such as the 1853 Select Committee on Police, was also studied, although discrepancies between the national and local documents were evident in places. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary provided an annual report of all three forces from 1857, although the information and focus varied throughout the years with inconsistent reporting of detective policing. Despite this, data was extracted where possible to support the information acquired from the archival material.

This chapter confirms that the origins of the detective departments in Liverpool and Birmingham were indeed concomitant with that of Scotland Yard, and it offers new, unpublished evidence that in Manchester, the detective department predated the initiative of the Metropolitan Police by three years. It further shows that although these emerging detective departments were independent from central government, they were fully functioning and formally managed units from their inception. They were able to respond and adapt to change, influenced by a range of factors, such as their respective watch committees and head constables. Beginning with an overview of the history of regional policing, this chapter sets the context for the thesis and thus establishes the contention that the evolution

of detective policing in the Victorian and Edwardian periods was not entirely based on trial and error, as purported by Shpayer-Makov.[9]

2.1. The characteristics and evolution of regional policing

The creation of the first professional police force is generally regarded to be the establishment of the Metropolitan Police by Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel in 1829. Yet, in the 1820s fledgling police forces had already been initiated in some towns in response to local need. Most notably, in the county of Cheshire, a paid constabulary was initiated a few weeks before the creation of the capital's principal force.[10] Prior to this, communities were policed by a combination of parish constables and night and day watchmen, managed by local magistrates whose role was mainly to keep the peace.[11] In the event of larger-scale public disturbances, the local authorities could call on central government for military assistance and enlist special constables. From 1822 there was a consistent call for the reform of local policing, which began in London and then spread into the provinces.[12] The motivating factors for reform, primarily the fear of public disorder and an awareness of increasing crime, permeate the historiography.[13] Chris Williams adds further detail in his assessment, including fear of theft specifically, and the management of large-scale disturbances.[14] Emsley notes that unrest in Lancashire in 1826 led to Peel's initiative to create his professional force, after impoverished hand loom weavers caused damage to employers' properties.[15] Therefore, although the Metropolitan Police was the first force to be funded by central government, in other parts of Britain there was a shift from the part time

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[9] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 299.
[10] Clive Emsley, *British Bobby*, 75; Maryse Tennant, "Fields of Struggle: a Bourdieusian Analysis of Conflicts over Criminal Justice in England, c.1820-1850," *Social History* 39, no.1 (2014): 50-51.
[11] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 18.
[12] Philips and Storch, *Policing*, 6.
[13] See Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750-1900,* 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 231-238 for an overview.
[14] Chris A. Williams, "Policing the Populace: The Road to Professionalism," in *Histories of Crime: Britain 1600-2000*, eds. Anne-Marie Kilday and David Nash (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 169.
[15] Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History,* 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 1996), 32; John K. Walton, *Lancashire: A Social History, 1558-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 145.

and voluntary, or low paid, 'old' police, made up of parish constables and watchmen, to a collectively-funded regular force even though, in the 1820s and 1830s, there was often a lack of distinction between the two. For example, in 1827 a formal police force was created in Carlisle, funded by voluntary public subscription, after citizens became afraid of civil unrest and lawlessness in the town.[16] According to Martin Stallion and David Wall, there were at least eight towns in England and Wales which had adopted a more formal police force prior to the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829.[17] Furthermore, by the early 1830s, several cities and towns, including Manchester and Liverpool, had police forces which, David Churchill asserts, were 'substantial and often impressive'.[18]

Following the Great Reform Act in 1832, the Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations was appointed, which led to the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835. This established a system of local government in the 178 boroughs of England and Wales (excluding Manchester, Birmingham and Bradford, which had not been granted charters of incorporation at this time), by extending the franchise to the middle classes and allowing new entrants onto democratically elected town and city councils, through which they would manage each borough. Local policing was to be organised and managed by the watch committee, which was a town council subcommittee. The structure of the new police forces was not specified, apart from the appointment of constables, and new police districts were to be formed in boroughs with more than 10,000 inhabitants. As noted by Carolyn Steedman, this was a key component of a series of parliamentary acts which formed the framework for the development of regional policing throughout the nineteenth century.[19] (See Appendix B for a list of key statutes that affected borough detective departments). According to Jenifer

[16] Bob Lowther, *Watching Over the Town: 140 Years of the Carlisle City Police Force, 1827-1967* (Carlisle: P3 Publications, 2011), 22-28.
[17] These are Carlisle, Carmarthen, Croydon, Lancaster, Leamington Spa, Preston, Walcot and Wantage. For a full listing, see Martin Stallion and David S. Wall, *The British Police: Forces and Chief Officers, 1829-2012* (Hook: The Police History Society, 2011).
[18] David Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City: The Police and the Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 33.
[19] Carolyn Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community: The Formation of English Provincial Police Forces, 1856-80* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1984), 14-15.

Hart, the majority of boroughs formed new police forces following the act. She records the number created by 1837 as 100 whereas, more recently, Stallion and Wall list 145 borough police forces established by that year.[20] Hart observes that reform and progress were slow in the borough forces due to multiple factors including local opposition and politics, organisational and managerial difficulties, and the challenge of recruitment and retention.[21] She makes no reference to detective policing.

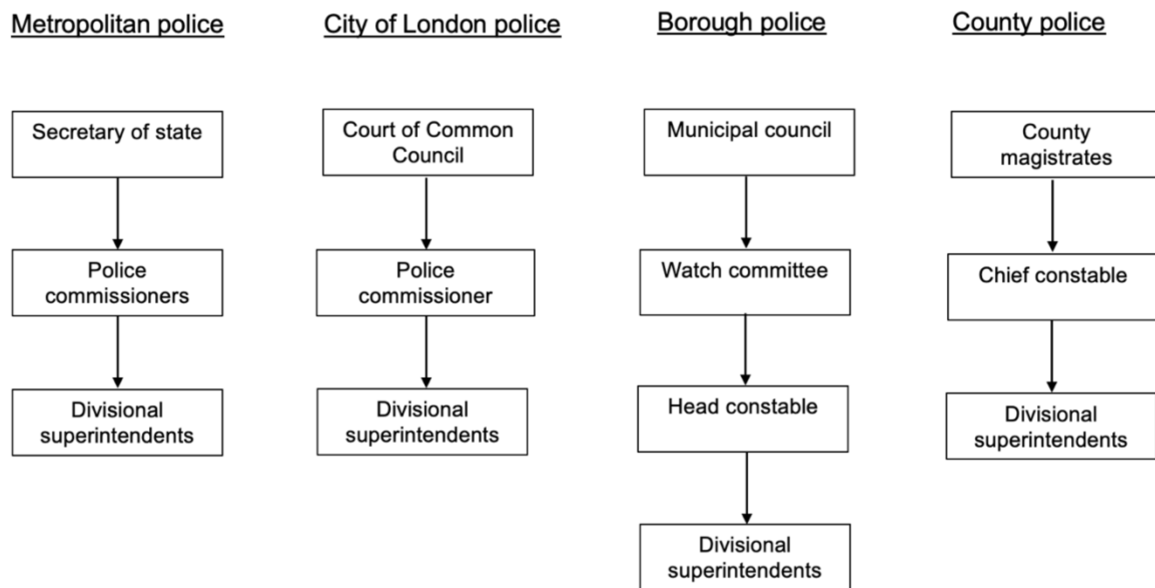
In 1836, just a year after the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act, the government opened an enquiry into rural policing, influenced by Edwin Chadwick whose reforming zeal had been instrumental in the formation of the Metropolitan Police. The first Report of the Constabulary Commissioners published in 1839 highlighted the inadequacy of local policing.[22] Accelerated by fears of Chartist disorder, this led to the County Police Act 1839, which placed the responsibility for establishing a rural constabulary for each community with county magistrates.[23]

Throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, there were four different systems of police authorities in operation which continued with some slight modifications until the mid-twentieth century. As demonstrated in Figure 2.1, in London, the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police were managed by their respective police commissioners, although the Metropolitan Police Commissioners only were accountable directly to the Home Secretary, who was the head of the entire police force. As already noted, in the boroughs the local police force was managed by the watch committee, which was composed of members of the elected council who appointed all police officers including the head constable. By contrast, county police forces were controlled by the county magistrates, who were responsible for the appointment of the chief constable. Following the Local Government Act 1888, the

[20] Jenifer Hart, "Reform of the Borough Police, 1835-1856," *The English Historical Review* 70, no. 276 (1955): 416; See Stallion and Wall, *British Police*, for full listing.
[21] Hart, "Borough Police," 422-425.
[22] Critchley, *History of Police*, 68-19; Philips and Storch, *Policing*, 7.
[23] Hart, "Borough Police," 427; Steedman, *Policing*, 15; Emsley, *English Police*, 40.

magistrates were replaced by standing joint committees, which comprised county magistrates and members of the county council.[24]

Figure 2.1. Organisational structure of the English police forces, 1837-1888.



For the purposes of simplification, deputy commissioners and deputy head/chief constables have been omitted.

The significant difference between the types of police forces for the focus of this thesis is the management structure, particularly between the borough and county forces, as it forms part of the context within which the detective police operated, and it is an important factor in their development. As seen in Figure 2.1, the management structure of the county and borough forces differed substantially.[25] Whereas the county chief constable was appointed by the county magistrates and was entirely responsible for the management of the police force, the borough head constable was an employee of the watch committee who were, in practical as well as executive terms, the direct managers of the police, and whose responsibilities included the employment, promotion and dismissal of police officers, including detectives. As

[24] Richard Cowley, *A History of the British Police: From its Beginnings to the Present Day* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011), 108-109.
[25] Chief officers had different titles depending on the individual borough force and were variably known as ‘head officer’, ‘head/chief constable’, and ‘chief superintendent’. For the purposes of this thesis, ‘head constable’ is used throughout.

noted by Rawlings, the difference in management structure afforded greater autonomy to the county chief constables, as they were accountable to the county magistrates who met only four times a year, compared to the close supervision exerted by the watch committees on the chief officer of the borough forces.[26] This led to tensions between watch committee members and head constables,[27] and had a significant impact on the development of individual police forces, thereby directly influencing the regional detective departments. The archival data examined in this chapter will shed further light on these key relationships. However, as indicated by Richard Cowley, county constabularies were subject to greater control by the Home Office than borough constabularies, even though they were managed locally. The Secretary of State was permitted to stipulate rules and regulations for county police forces, thus rendering the latter under closer control from central government than the borough forces, whose only requirement by the Home Office was to submit quarterly returns, which, according to Hart, did not lead to the government initiating inquiries or issuing policing guidelines.[28]

There is little mention of detective police officers and crime detection in the parliamentary commission reports during the first decades of national policing. This may be due to the primary objective of the new police being crime prevention rather than detection. Emsley argues that there was substantial concern about plain-clothes officers in the early decades of the nineteenth century and that the police themselves did not see detection as a priority.[29] Shpayer-Makov further posits that the focus on crime prevention remained prominent until the First World War.[30] The First Report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners in 1839 cites the key objective for an organised rural constabulary as crime prevention, but adds ‘the detection and apprehension of criminals’ was necessary to

[26] Steedman, *Policing*, 21; Wall, *Chief Constables*, 94; Rawlings, *Policing*, 183.
[27] Emsley, *English Police*, 90.
[28] Cowley, *British Police*, 54; Hart, “Borough Police,” 423.
[29] Emsley, *English Police*, 72.
[30] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 60.

improving the efficiency of the criminal justice system.[31] However, although crime detection is considered in the body of the report to be difficult and ineffective, it is not mentioned specifically in the commissioners' recommendations.

As referenced by Cowley, the Home Office circulated the rules and regulations of the Metropolitan Police to county constabularies to provide guidance and direction.[32] These detailed and regularly updated instructions included specifications and requisite qualifications for the appointment of police officers of all ranks, rates of pay and allowances, clothing lists. Most importantly, they offered advice and stipulated procedures in relation to crime detection, for which they provided pro-forma, such as charge sheets, as well as instructions on how to submit information about suspects and stolen property to the editor of the *Police Gazette* for circulation to other forces, to the Metropolitan police commissioners, or to the head constables of relevant constabularies.[33] There appears to be no evidence of these publications being distributed to the borough constabularies.

Despite the circulation of some policing guidance, albeit only to county constabularies, police historians agree that between 1836 and 1857 the policing of English cities, towns and rural communities was generally inefficient and ineffective. Emsley describes how the transition from the old forms of policing to the new police forces was gradual and inconsistent, due to issues with individual police officers such as drunkenness, indiscipline and corruption. Furthermore, there were varied local responses to public disturbances and disorder, leading to pressure for increased centralisation in order to respond more effectively to outbreaks of violence and rioting.[34] David Taylor pinpoints the key issues undermining the efficiency of the early decades of the new borough police forces as irregular quarterly returns, a lack of guidance from central government and a limited

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[31] *First Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire as to the Best Means of Establishing an Efficient Constabulary Force in the Counties of England and Wales* (hereafter *Report on Efficient Constabulary*) (London: Charles Knight and Co., 1839), xi.
[32] Cowley, *British Police*, 60.
[33] TNA, MEPO 2/85, Metropolitan Police: Office of the Commissioner: Correspondence and Papers, Commissioner's Office Staff, Office Routine, 1845-1884.
[34] Emsley, *English Police*, 61-62.

transmission of ideas, which resulted in minimal progress in policing.[35] In the early 1850s, these perceived failures in policing were further undermined by several external factors, such as widespread unemployment and the fear of public disorder after the end of the Crimean War and changes to the penal system, with the replacement of transportation by the ticket-of-leave system.[36] In 1853, the state and organisation of county and borough policing was re-examined within the context of a continuing fear of lawlessness and a need for greater control of regional police forces by central government, culminating in a governmental review.[37]

The 1853 Select Committee on Police reported that 13 boroughs and 31 counties had not formed a new police force and therefore had not adhered to either the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act or the 1839 County Police Act. Of those which had, many were inadequate in police strength and efficiency.[38] The report concluded that the initiative to provide a uniform police force had failed overall to prevent crime and protect the property of residents. Furthermore, a marked lack of cooperation between the county and borough police forces undermined the efficiency of the entire force.[39] Captain John Woodford, chief constable of Lancashire Constabulary, complained of hindrances in the administration of justice in working with borough forces, which included Liverpool and Manchester: 'We have found a disinclination to co-operate with us in the detection of offenders; assistance has not been given with cordiality, and rarely with effect.'[40] When questioned about this issue, the clerk to the Liverpool magistrates conceded that 'local jealousies' between the borough and county police were 'likely' to exist.[41] Edward Willis, head constable of the Manchester Police also acknowledged a lack of cooperation with Lancashire Constabulary: 'There is certainly at

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[35] David Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England: Crime, Conflict and Control* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 33.
[36] Victor Bailey, ed. *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Ltd.,1981), 15; Steedman, *Policing*, 3; Emsley, *English Police*, 53-54.
[37] Taylor, *New Police*, 36-37.
[38] Cowley, *British Police*, 71.
[39] *Second Report from the Select Committee on Police: Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence and Appendix* (hereafter *Second Report on Police*) (London: HMSO, 1853), iii-iv.
[40] *First Report from the Select Committee on Police; with the Minutes of Evidence* (hereafter *First Report on Police*) (London: HMSO, 1853), 97.
[41] Ibid., 109.

present a want of co-operation and a want of union; the police forces know very little of what each other is doing, and there is very little intercommunication except when very serious robberies are committed'.[42] The commission therefore recommended greater uniformity of policing in rural constabularies and the amalgamation of smaller boroughs. In an attempt to address the 'patchwork system of policing', as described by Emsley,[43] the County and Police Act 1856 made it obligatory for all counties and boroughs to establish a new police force.[44]

Steedman points out that the emphasis of the 1853 Select Committee was firmly on the county constabularies and that the commissioners were generally critical of the borough forces, especially the smaller ones, with particular reference to their inability to suppress potential public disturbances.[45] Furthermore, she highlights the difference between the senior management of the two respective types of force, whereby the borough head constable was employed by the watch committee, which rendered the latter the direct equivalent to the county chief constable: 'County chief constables had a statutory autonomy and were free to create forces in their own image, but a borough force operated within the framework of local bye-law and legally its head constable was only an employee of the watch committee.'[46] These issues, along with the fact that many subsequent inspectors of constabulary were appointed from county constabularies, and that the police officers themselves were recruited from agricultural communities, leads Steedman to the conclusion that: 'The prescriptive pattern for nineteenth-century policing was rural, not urban.'[47]

Following the act, both county and borough police forces were to be subjected to an annual inspection and, if deemed 'efficient', they would receive a reimbursement of a quarter of their costs from central government.[48] Police historians generally consider the establishment of the Inspectorate of Constabulary to be a turning point in the development of

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[42] *Second Report on Police,* 22.
[43] Emsley, *Crime and Society*, 237.
[44] Ibid., 53-55.
[45] Steedman, *Policing*, 3.
[46] Ibid., 21.
[47] Ibid., 3.
[48] Critchley, *History of Police*, 105; Emsley, *English Police*, 91; Cowley, *British Police*, 73.

early provincial policing. Steedman describes the initiative as the introduction of 'realistic professionalism', through the compilation of police theories and practices, widely disseminated in the annual reports. She concludes, 'by this act, a career body was delineated'.[49] In his study of Portsmouth Borough Police, John Field agrees with Steedman that the reformist government of the 1850s engendered changes in regional policing in the borough forces as well as in the counties.[50] Hart contends that the County and Police Act 1856 was a more significant landmark in the history of English policing than the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act.[51]

The minutes of evidence of the 1853 Select Committee on Police embodies a more detailed discussion of the efficiency and impact of detective police and crime detection than earlier government reports, most of which made no reference to this aspect of policing. However, the observations were focused on localised policing mainly relating to the counties rather than the boroughs. Throughout the discussion, the weaknesses of the existing police systems were exposed, especially in the counties where either uniformed police officers were required to operate in plain clothes when necessary, or detective officers were enlisted from the neighbouring towns or from London. In Norfolk, for example, three police sergeants were used as detectives in the county towns.[52] The report highlighted the need for detective policing, such as in Hampshire where the deployment of detective constables at railway termini was considered a potential benefit.[53] Key issues relating to crime detection pinpointed in the evidence included the inefficiency of the county forces that had retained the old system of parish policing, the lack of cooperation between different constabularies, such as Manchester and Lancashire, and the difficulties of communication between forces, all of

[49] Steedman, *Policing*, 26.
[50] John Field, "Police, Power and Community in an English Provincial Town: Portsmouth, 1815-1875," in *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. Victor Bailey (London: Croom Helm Ltd.,1981), 47.
[51] Hart, "Borough Police," 421.
[52] *First Report on Police*, 57.
[53] Ibid., 21.

which hindered the detection of offenders.[54] However, no detail was given in reference to the process and practice of crime investigation.

Although the discussion engendered by the select committee is incomplete and inconclusive, it signals a shift in the balance of the importance between crime prevention and detection towards the latter. This is reflected in the committee's resolutions, in which they conclude that those forces who have adopted new systems of policing have rendered the detection and apprehension of offenders 'more prompt and certain', and that the system of parish constables was inefficient in this aspect. The report further states that the lack of cooperation between county and borough forces undermined and impaired the entire police force, thus leading to the recommendation of a uniform system of policing for the whole of Great Britain.[55] In the first report of the Inspectors of Constabulary, published in 1857, detective police officers and the provision for crime detection were included in the general comments. Major-General William Cartwright, inspector of the Eastern Counties, Midland and North Wales district, which included Birmingham, advised the addition of detective officers to county forces instead of the deployment of uniformed superintendents and inspectors for detective duties: 'Nothing in my opinion would add more to the efficiency of the police than the establishment of a good detective system under the local authorities, in communication with both the county and borough force throughout the district.'[56] He highlighted the importance of the detective force in Birmingham and suggested that it 'might be increased with advantage in co-operation with other forces'.[57]

In summary, contrary to the opinion of key historians, such as Steedman who contended that the Inspectors of Constabulary were supportive of the county forces and critical of those in the boroughs, the attitude in the reports towards detective policing signals the opposite, as the deficiencies of crime detection at county level were highlighted, whereas the already formed detective departments of the borough forces were deemed satisfactory.

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[54] Ibid., 34, 199.
[55] *Second Report on Police*, iii-iv.
[56] *Reports of IOC*, 1857, 9-10.
[57] Ibid., 21.

This may be due to the delay of county constabularies in adopting a more uniform police system, until after the passing of the County and Police Act in 1856. With the exception of brief comments in the annual Inspectors of Constabulary reports, there are no further references to detective policing on a national level, either in government commissions or reports until 1877, when the Secretary of State initiated an inquiry into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police, which comprised evidence from head constables about regional detective policing. In the light of this lack of official governmental data, this study relies more on local archival evidence, beginning with an exploration of the urban contexts within which the first professional regional police forces and their detective departments were established.

2.2. The creation and development of borough detective departments

The 1841 census records the population of the boroughs of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham as 282,656, 240,367 and 181,116 inhabitants respectively.[58] During the first decade of each city's new police force the figure increased by approximately one third and growth continued exponentially throughout the century. As noted in Table 2.1, the rise in the urban population is reflected in the population of the respective police districts.

Table 2.1. Population of urban police districts based on census returns, 1851-1911.

Year	Liverpool	Manchester	Birmingham
1851	374,401	303,382	232,841
1861	443,874	338,346	295,955
1871	493,346	355,665	343,696
1881	552,425	341,508	400,757
1891	517,951	505,343	429,171
1901	629,443	505,368	478,113
1911	746,566	714,427	525,960

[58] 1841 census, England, Enumeration abstract, 1841, 465.

Sources: *Judicial Statistics*, *England and Wales*, London: HMSO, 1858-1891; *Reports of IOC*, 1901-1914.

It is interesting to note that the number of individuals living in the Manchester police district declined through the 1870s and 1880s, before rising sharply in the early 1890s, compared to the steady rise in the other two cities. Increases in population may be due to factors such as immigration or to the extension of the city boundaries. For example, the borough township of Birmingham was extended in 1891 from 8,340 acres to 12,365.[59] The population of police districts is an important factor in examining the provision of detective policing and the data will be used for further analysis in Section 4.2.2 below. An overview of the salient characteristics of the urban environment and typical crime in each of the boroughs studied provides further detail about the context in which borough police forces and their detective departments were established.

2.2.1. Urban environments: an overview

In his memoirs, HC William Nott-Bower recalled Liverpool's 'ugly reputation for its excessive number of crimes of violence', in particular grievous bodily harm and common assault. Furthermore, Nott-Bower highlighted the main contributing factor to Liverpool's high crime rate as its seaport, which was characterised by casual work, low wages, high levels of alcohol consumption and poverty. Itinerant workers migrated to the city's docks in search of work, many of whom failed to secure employment and were left destitute in the cramped and unsanitary accommodation in the streets surrounding the port, which was 'the lowest quarter of the town'.[60] John Archer confirms Liverpool's position as a major port throughout the nineteenth century and supports the view that the city's higher than average crime rate was

[59] C. C. H. Moriarty, *Birmingham City Police Centenary, 1839-1939: The formation of the Force, and its present organization* (Birmingham: Birmingham Watch Committee, 1939), 27.
[60] Nott-Bower, *Fifty-Two Years*, 147-148.

due to mitigating factors such as overcrowded conditions, poverty, unemployment, alcoholism and disease.[61] The link between the dock and crime was referred to in the first report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners in 1839: 'In Liverpool, as in most sea-port towns, a large proportion of the depredators live by depredations committed on property *in transitu*, and on passengers.'[62] The report estimates that the number of 'depredators' in Liverpool was 4,711, which was a population rate of 1:45.[63]

Local police historian William Cockcroft describes how the docks harboured thieves, sex workers, rough sleepers, young offenders and receivers of stolen property. He cites that in 1836 there were more than 1,000 habitual male thieves in the town, with 500 individuals who committed irregular thefts. A further 600 operated at the port and in excess of 12,000 children worked as thieves on behalf of adults. He adds that there were approximately 1,500 illegal beerhouses and some 300 brothels, with 1,200 sex workers: 'Many of these women, moreover, supplemented their earnings by assisting notorious thieves who cohabited with them.'[64] Cockcroft concludes that Liverpool was one of the most notorious centres for the sex trade outside London.[65]

The criminal and police returns compiled by the Liverpool Watch Committee in 1844 recorded that 15,284 individuals were arrested, of which 7,376 were charged with drunkenness, compared to 4,582 who were alleged to have committed unspecified felonies. There were 3,055 convictions for theft, some 500 beerhouses and public houses were fined, and there were 547 brothels in the city with 2,366 known sex workers.[66] The statistics for 1846 reported a rise in arrests to 17,310, showing an increase of 1,205 arrests since the previous year as well as 1,025 more offences committed. This was attributed to the

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[61] Ibid., 14.
[62] *Report on Efficient Constabulary*, 19. 'Depredators' can be taken to mean those committing or with the potential to commit crime.
[63] Ibid., 13.
[64] W. R. Cockcroft, *From Cutlasses to Computers: The Police Force in Liverpool, 1836-1989* (Market Drayton: S. B. Publications, 1991), 4.
[65] Ibid., 19.
[66] *The Liverpool Mercury*, 7 March 1845, 82.

immigration of itinerant dock workers.[67] However, the number of brothels and sex workers had decreased. This demonstrates the fluidity of the urban environment, which renders it difficult to make generalisations about types and incidence of crime, the accuracy of the collated statistics notwithstanding. In addition to the above-mentioned offences, the Liverpool Police had to deal with sectarian clashes and Fenian disturbances.[68] In his exploration of the context for the city's new police force, Emsley highlights the regular confrontations between Irish Catholics and Orangemen in Liverpool throughout the 1830s and 1840s. These deliberate attempts to antagonise each other continued throughout the nineteenth century.[69]

Asa Briggs describes Manchester as 'a symbol of a new age', based on its rapid growth during the early decades of the nineteenth century following the cotton revolution, which established the previously quiet market town as the world's first industrial city.[70] Other industries also operated in the city, such as machine manufacture, engineering and the chemical industry. Briggs notes that Manchester had an extensive working-class population, with 80,000 workers engaged in the cotton business in 1851. The population also comprised a large number of immigrant Irish, with 34,000 recorded in the city in 1841. He further observes that in 1837 there were as many as 50,000 people in Manchester who were unemployed or on short time.[71]

Alan Kidd attributes Manchester's reputation for elevated crime rates to its significant population growth and the influx of mostly transient immigrants. He posits that, in the 1830s and 1840s, almost 75 per cent of offences against the person resulted from drunkenness, with common assault accounting for ten per cent, and that the majority of the crimes against property were theft without violence, and vagrancy. Kidd concludes: 'There was little in the way of organised crime and most offences were minor.'[72] The criminal returns for 1841

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[67] *The Liverpool Standard*, 11 May 1847, 3.
[68] Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 8.
[69] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 85.
[70] Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London: Penguin, 1963), 94.
[71] Ibid., 134-135.
[72] Alan Kidd, *Manchester: A History,* 4th ed. (Lancaster: Carnegie Publishing, 2011), 54.

report that 8,957 cases were referred to the magistrates' court, including 1,889 felonies, 3,617 cases of disorderly behaviour and 354 assaults. Some 1,272 individuals were tried for drunkenness, which appears to support Kidd's contention.[73] Eric Hewitt examines the crime statistics from the head constable's report for 1843, which further corroborates the prevalence of drunkenness, listing it as the highest occurring offence with 4,198 arrests for the year, accounting for almost a third of the total. This was followed by 2,256 apprehensions for theft without violence and 1,072 assaults. There were 330 known brothels in the city with 701 sex workers, which was lower than in Liverpool. In the same year, Hewitt notes that there were 502 public houses and 781 beerhouses.[74]

Hewitt draws a direct comparison between Manchester and its neighbouring city of Liverpool, drawing attention to their similar growths in population and their geographical proximity. He argues that criminality in each city was influenced by the other, but further asserts that crime rates were higher in Liverpool than in Manchester due to its position as the point of arrival for immigrants. Hewitt concludes that the general perception of both cities is that they were populated by 'thieves and vagabonds.'[75] Like Liverpool, Manchester also experienced public disorder such as sectarian disturbances, Chartist unrest and Fenian activities. Kidd describes how Chartist agitations reached a peak in 1842, which culminated in the Plug Riots, thus providing the context for the formation of the city's new police.[76]

In his exploration of the context for the establishment of the new police, Emsley describes Birmingham as 'a thriving industrial town'. Like Manchester, it was a centre of industry, with specialties in metalware, jewellery, firearms and locks. However, although the town centre was populated by factories and manufacturing plants, most businesses were still conducted in smaller family-run workshops. Moreover, even though the accommodation was, as in other urban environments, cramped and unsanitary, there were more parks and

[73] *Evening Mail*, 15 March 1844, 1.
[74] Eric J. Hewitt, *A History of Policing in Manchester* (Manchester: E. J. Mortem, 1979), 60-62.
[75] Ibid., 79.
[76] Kidd, *Manchester*, 54.

open fields in the centre of the town.[77] Briggs contends that the nature of the working environment afforded Birmingham a number of key advantages over Manchester, such as better relations between employers and employees, more stable economic conditions and greater political cooperation.[78] Despite this, like Manchester, Birmingham also became a focal point for Chartist activities in 1839.[79]

Birmingham police historian John Reilly records that in 1841, 5,556 individuals were arrested (approximately half the numbers in Liverpool and Manchester), and that there were 886 robberies.[80] He also notes that Birmingham was the centre of the illegal firearms trade.[81] As in the other cities, Reilly highlights alcohol consumption as a particular problem and reports that in 1875 the watch committee recorded that 1,792 individuals had received fines for drunkenness.[82] In contrast, Weaver asserts that, although crimes against property were higher during the period of the establishment of the new police between 1839 and 1842, drunkenness and assault decreased. He adds that the counterfeiting of coins was prevalent in Birmingham due to the number of metalworkers in the town.[83] The decrease in drunkenness may be accounted for by the general practice in Birmingham of those arrested for this offence being discharged rather than being committed to trial or summarily convicted. This tendency was confirmed by the head constable's report to the watch committee for 1843, which chronicled the discharge of 68 per cent of those held in custody for drunkenness.[84] The criminal returns for the year ending 1840 reported that, of the 6,150 individuals brought before the magistrates, 3845 were discharged, most of which were cases of drunken and disorderly behaviour. The returns also recorded that there were 81 houses

[77] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 52.
[78] Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 186-187.
[79] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 53.
[80] John Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Policing Birmingham* (Birmingham: West Midlands Police, 1989), 16.
[81] Ibid., 6.
[82] Ibid., 23.
[83] Weaver, "New Science," 291
[84] Birmingham Archives and Collections (hereafter BAC), BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee Minute Book (hereafter Watch Committee), 14 May 1844.

for the reception of stolen goods, 228 houses which were the meeting place of thieves, and 200 brothels in the town.[85]

Clive Emsley notes that contemporary commentators tended to perceive the industrialised urban environments as 'dangerous'.[86] However, he argues that: 'No two cities are entirely similar and different economic structures and different functions provide opportunities for different types of crime.' He cites seaports like Liverpool as engendering greater opportunities for specific crimes, such as prostitution and street robberies, rather than in the canal networks of Manchester or Birmingham, the latter of which was characterised by juvenile crime due to the ease with which children could move goods from one workshop to another.[87] Whilst there are differences between the three cities, there are also similarities, such as the prevalence of theft and alcohol-fuelled crime. As noted by Shpayer-Makov, it was in this urban context that 'plain-clothes detectives gradually emerged as the key instrument in the fight against crime'[88]. They took increasing responsibility for the investigation of more serious offences, such as complex thefts, fraud, arson and violent crimes, including assault and murder, as well as supporting their uniformed colleagues, whose primary objective was crime prevention - this issue will be examined further in Section 4.1.1. Early crime statistics, such as those compiled by the watch committees in the 1840s, and the data published by the constabulary inspectorate from 1857 onwards, provide further evidence of the nature and prevalence of crime in these key cities during the first decades of detective policing.

2.2.2. Crime rates: contexts and comparisons

In her examination of the rate of change in borough policing, Hart highlights the deficiencies of criminal statistics prior to 1857 and the resulting difficulties in estimating crime rates (see

[85] *The Birmingham Journal*, 9 January 1841, 3.
[86] Emsley, *Crime*, 120.
[87] Ibid., 125.
[88] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 1.

Section 1.2.1). As confirmed by the archival data studied for this thesis, where criminal returns were recorded, they usually only contained information about arrests and conviction rates as a measure of police efficiency and which, as underlined by Hart, were influenced by changes in criminal law rather than in illegal activity. Key data, such as population rates, were generally omitted from police returns, rendering it difficult to judge how prevalent specific crimes were in relation to the local population.[89] As demonstrated in Birmingham, the decisions and practices of local magistrates differed between boroughs. However, this thesis adopts an 'interactionist' approach as proffered by crime historians such as Williams,[90] in an attempt to identify trends in criminal activity relating to each of the three cities as an integral part of the context for the establishment of the new police. This contributes to some extent to the comparative study.

Criminal statistics, compiled from the police returns and relating to the nature of crimes committed in each police district (in so far as they were known to the police) including boroughs, were first published in the annual judicial statistics report in 1859, for the preceding year.

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[89] Hart, "Borough Police," 412-413.

[90] Chris A. Williams, "Counting crimes or Counting People: Some Implications of mid-nineteenth century British Police Returns," *Crime, History & Societies* 4, no. 2 (2000): 78.

Table 2.2. Nature and incidence of indictable offences committed in each police district, giving crime-to-population ratios in 1858.

Nature of crime	Liverpool	Manchester	Birmingham
Simple larceny	1:331	1:156	1:226
Larceny from the person	1:288	1:268	1:505
Burglary and housebreaking	1:5221	1:705	1:800
Passing counterfeit coins	1:1480	1:487	1:2450
Larcency on rivers, canals, wharfs	1:497	1:15169	1:10123
Total indictable crimes	1:74	1:66	1:87

Sources: *Judicial Statistics*, *England and Wales*, 1858; *Reports of IOC,* 1859.

Although it is difficult to assess precisely the prevalence of different types of crimes in the three cities, due to the generally accepted inaccuracy, inconsistency and subjectivity of the data collected, it is possible to trace some key patterns of criminal activity. As recorded in Table 2.1, Manchester had the highest rates of crime, particularly in relation to simple larceny and the circulation of counterfeit coins, although Birmingham was a centre of illicit manufacture. The predominance of larceny on rivers, canals and wharfs in Liverpool relates to the city's position as a major seaport. These figures represent the types of offences investigated by the borough detective police departments, as summarised by Shpayer-Makov.[91] The nature of detective investigations will be examined further in Chapter 4.

Discussions about the accuracy and reliability of comparative crime statistics continued throughout the period under study. In response to a complaint about police efficiency in 1868, a subcommittee of the Manchester Watch Committee led an inquiry into the compilation of criminal statistics, in comparison to other boroughs, which included

[91] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 44.

meeting with Liverpool's head constable.[92] They concluded that, even though the Home Secretary had issued guidance on the format for annual police returns, the figures were interpreted differently in the two cities: 'crime is understood to have a very different meaning in Liverpool, to what it has in Manchester'. They attributed this variation in interpretation to the differences in magisterial authority and the latitude permitted by the Home Secretary's instructions. Manchester Head Constable Palin further explained to the watch committee that the police were instructed to 'enter only such cases as their judgement, from the circumstances attending them, would if discovered, be sent for trial'. He referred to this as 'discretionary judgment', which was unlikely to be the same if applied by different individuals. He concluded: 'It is plain that, without some definite rule to guide them in the preparation of this return, the opinions of the officers must vary as much as the practice of the magistrates, and that any information founded on such returns cannot be considered trustworthy'.[93]

Despite the inaccuracy and unreliability of criminal statistics, they indicate the types and incidence of crimes committed in the nineteenth century during which time the new borough police forces and their detective departments were created and developed. This adds to the multifaceted background study of the specific localised environments of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham examined in this thesis.

2.2.3. Liverpool Borough Detective Police

Liverpool Borough Police was formed on 9 February 1836 with an authorised strength of 390 officers.[94] Prior to the creation of the new police, public order in the city had been maintained for almost a century by a night watch, established in 1748 under the Liverpool Corporation Act, which was separated into two entities covering the town and the docks. There was also

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[92] Liverpool Record Office (hereafter LRO), 352 POL/1/9, Orders of the Watch Committee to the Head Constable (hereafter Watch Committee), 14 April 1868.
[93] Manchester Archives and Local History (hereafter MALH), GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/7, Watch Committee Minute Book (hereafter Watch Committee), 18 June 1868.
[94] Stallion and Wall, *British Police,* 137.

a day watch comprising corporation constables, but this was independent of the night watch.[95] By 1811 there were seven police ‘sections’, each with a head constable and two assistants which, according to George H. Pumphrey, resulted in a police force of 21 officers serving a population of 100,000.[96] As shown in Figure 2.2, by 1824 there were eight ‘regular’ police districts, each with four officers, five assistant constables, a police office keeper, a beadle and a bellman. In addition, six officers were responsible for policing the dock area. Thus, the total strength of the force was 38.[97]

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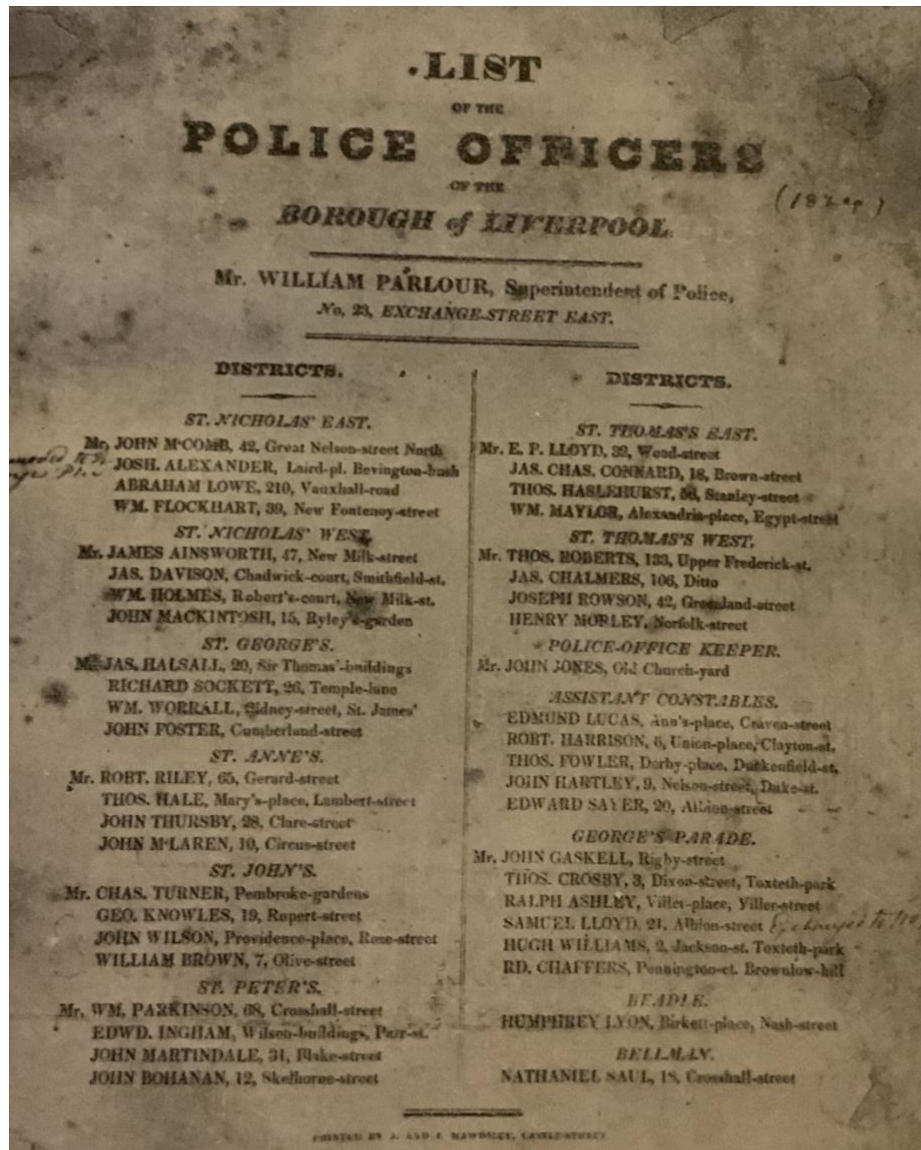
[95] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 33; Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 3.

[96] Brian D. White, *A History of the Corporation of Liverpool, 1835-1914* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1951), 14-19; George H. Pumphrey, *The Story of Liverpool’s Public Services* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1940), 175.

[97] *Police!! An Illustrated and Descriptive History of the Liverpool and Bootle Police Past and Present* (Liverpool: George J. Smith & Co., and W. Jones & Co., 1910), 27.

Figure 2.2. Liverpool Police Officers and District Duties in 1824.



LIST
OF THE
POLICE OFFICERS
OF THE
BOROUGH of LIVERPOOL.

Mr. WILLIAM PARLOUR, Superintendent of Police,
No, 23, EXCHANGE-STREET EAST.

DISTRICTS.

ST. NICHOLAS' EAST.
Mr. JOHN M'COMB, 42, Great Nelson-street North
JOSH. ALEXANDER, Laird-pl. Bevington-bush
ABRAHAM LOWE, 210, Vauxhall-road
WM. FLOCKHART, 39, New Fontenoy-street

ST. NICHOLAS' WEST.
Mr. JAMES AINSWORTH, 47, New Milk-street
JAS. DAVISON, Chadwick-court, Smithfield-st.
WM. HOLMES, Robert's-court, New Milk-st.
JOHN MACKINTOSH, 15, Ryley's-garden

ST. GEORGE'S.
Mr. JAS. HALSALL, 20, Sir Thomas'-buildings
RICHARD SOCKETT, 26, Temple-lane
WM. WORRALL, Sidney-street, St. James'
JOHN FOSTER, Cumberland-street

ST. ANNE'S.
Mr. ROBT. RILEY, 65, Gerard-street
THOS. HALE, Mary's-place, Lambert-street
JOHN THURSBY, 28, Clare-street
JOHN M'LAREN, 10, Circus-street

ST. JOHN'S.
Mr. CHAS. TURNER, Pembroke-gardens
GEO. KNOWLES, 19, Rupert-street
JOHN WILSON, Providence-place, Rose-street
WILLIAM BROWN, 7, Olive-street

ST. PETER'S.
Mr. WM. PARKINSON, 68, Crosshall-street
EDWD. INGHAM, Wilson-buildings, Parr-st.
JOHN MARTINDALE, 31, Blake-street
JOHN BOHANAN, 12, Skelhorne-street

DISTRICTS.

ST. THOMAS'S EAST.
Mr. E. P. LLOYD, 32, Wood-street
JAS. CHAS. CONNARD, 18, Brown-street
THOS. HASLEHURST, 58, Stanley-street
WM. MAYLOR, Alexandria-place, Egypt-street

ST. THOMAS'S WEST.
Mr. THOS. ROBERTS, 133, Upper Frederick-st.
JAS. CHALMERS, 106, Ditto
JOSEPH ROWSON, 42, Greenland-street
HENRY MORLEY, Norfolk-street

POLICE-OFFICE KEEPER.
Mr. JOHN JONES, Old Church-yard

ASSISTANT CONSTABLES.
EDMUND LUCAS, Ann's-place, Craven-street
ROBT. HARRISON, 6, Union-place, Clayton-st.
THOS. FOWLER, Derby-place, Dukenfield-st.
JOHN HARTLEY, 9, Nelson-street, Duke-st.
EDWARD SAYER, 20, Albion-street

GEORGE'S PARADE.
Mr. JOHN GASKELL, Rigby-street
THOS. CROSBY, 3, Dixon-street, Toxteth-park
RALPH ASHLEY, Villet-place, Yiller-street
SAMUEL LLOYD, 21, Albion-street
HUGH WILLIAMS, 2, Jackson-st. Toxteth-park
RD. CHAFFERS, Pennington-ct. Brownlow-hill

BEADLE.
HUMPHREY LYON, Birkett-place, Nash-street

BELLMAN.
NATHANIEL SAUL, 18, Crosshall-street

Source: Police!! An Illustrated and Descriptive History of the Liverpool and Bootle Police Past and Present (Liverpool: George J. Smith & Co., and W. Jones & Co., 1910), 27.

In the 1830s, the number of night watchmen totalled 50 for 240,000 inhabitants. Although they were deemed as only being useful in calling out the time, it was considered that they afforded more protection to residents than in other towns at the time.[98]

[98] Ibid., 31.

In 1836, Michael Whitty, superintendent of the night watch and a former newspaper editor, was appointed the borough's first head constable, a post he held for eight years during which time the new police force was established. The force comprised 390 police officers, with a third of the constables recruited from the old night watch.[99] In 1837 the Dock Police, which had been a privately-run force since 1833, was amalgamated with the Town Police, bringing the total strength to 585 officers.[100] Cockcroft asserts that Liverpool's police commissioners had recruited officers for the watch from the Metropolitan Police as early as 1830, and that a structure for the town's policing, based on the Metropolitan Police districts, was already in place by the time of the formation of the new force.[101]

In 1845, under the leadership of a newly-appointed head constable, Matthew Dowling, a former divisional superintendent from the Metropolitan Police,[102] the 702-strong force was divided into two divisions: North and South, each with eight districts and overseen by an 'outdoor' superintendent, assisted by inspectors.[103] Dowling's first appointments to these two new posts had both served with the Metropolitan Police.[104] An 'indoor' superintendent was engaged to manage the departmental staff, which included the detective officers.[105] The new structure consisted of three divisions: South Town and Dock, North Town and Dock, and Departmental Staff. The first report of the Inspectors of Constabulary concluded:

> The organisation of this police force is very complete. In point of number (in proportion to population) it is unequalled, and in general efficiency and discipline it is unsurpassed by any similar establishment that has fallen under the observation of the Inspector.[106]

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[99] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report of the Head Constable on the Organization of the Police Force* (hereafter *Report on Organization of the Police*), Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee (hereafter Head Constable), 1883*,* 3; Churchill, *Crime Control,* 39; Taylor, *New Police*, 32.
[100] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report on Organization of the Police*, 4.
[101] Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 5.
[102] Ibid., 55.
[103] LRO, 352 POL/1/1, Watch Committee, 10 January 1845; LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report on Organization of the Police*, 1.
[104] LRO, 352 POL/1/5, Watch Committee, 20 March 1860.
[105] LRO, 352 POL/1/1, Watch Committee,10 January 1845.
[106] *Reports of IOC,* 1857, 54-55.

In 1883, the number of police divisions was increased to five, including the 'staff' division and the River Police Division, which had been added in 1865.[107] By 1910, there were seven divisions.[108]

The first reference to plain-clothes officers in the Liverpool Borough Watch Committee orders was in 1838, two years after the formation of the new police force. The watch committee instructed the head constable to send 'policemen in plain clothes' to the outskirts of the town, where there had been several attempts at house burglary.[109] In 1844, the incumbent head constable proposed to the watch committee an initial complement of 16 'practised and intelligent' men, whose duty was 'to trace and discover offenders'.[110] HC Miller resigned soon after, and when the two new divisions were created in 1845, the watch committee instructed the new indoor superintendent, who was to manage the detective force, to appoint no more than three detective officers for which he was to select 'the fittest men' from the rest of the force. This initial appointment was flexible, in that individual officers were engaged to perform specific detective duties after which they would return to their usual tasks: 'This arrangement will give him (the indoor superintendent) an unlimited number of men for this especial duty to be drafted from the force as occasions arise.'[111]

Cockcroft records that, exactly a year later, the number of detective officers had increased to 11.[112] By the end of the 1850s, under the leadership of HC John Greig, divisional detectives were operating in Liverpool in addition to those working centrally in the detective department.[113] The Inspectors of Constabulary reported in 1858 that the police force consisted of a total of 14 detectives, although no distinction was made between those who operated in the central office and those who worked in the divisions.[114] A decade later,

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[107] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report on Organization of the Police*, 5-6.
[108] Police!!, 41; Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 33.
[109] LRO, 352 POL/1/1, Watch Committee, 27 April 1838.
[110] *The Liverpool Mercury*, 3 January 1845, 8.
[111] LRO, 352 POL/1/2, Watch Committee, 10 January 1845.
[112] Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 56.
[113] LRO, 352 POL/1/5, Watch Committee, 9 October 1858.
[114] *Reports of IOC,* 1859, 65.

the inspectors recorded 23 detectives and four divisional detectives.[115] In 1872, a report published by a special subcommittee of the Liverpool Watch Committee, into the pay and conditions of service of the force, recorded 26 detective constables in the detective department (which they considered to be inadequate).[116] The following year, another special subcommittee was appointed to inquire into the staff and general operations of the detective department, and to consider whether any changes should be recommended. A deputation from the subcommittee held an interview with Captain William Harris, assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, to find out 'valuable information' about the organisation and working of the detective department at Scotland Yard. The subcommittee reported that detective officers in the Metropolitan Police received higher salaries than their own, but they conceded that the former covered a much greater area compared to that of the Liverpool detectives.[117] In the light of their report, the subcommittee made a number of recommendations. Firstly, they proposed the introduction of competitive examination for the promotion of officers, although it is unclear whether they were referring to promotion within the existing detective team, or to the promotion of uniformed officers into the detective department. In reference to detective pay, they advised the addition of a classification in the lower ranks of the detective police, which resulted in four classifications for the rank of constable. A reorganisation of detective personnel would result in a total strength of 25 detective officers, including 16 constables. Finally, they suggested that a sum of money, amounting to £50, should be made available in the detective office for expenses. All proposals were adopted.

HC Greig reported that in 1877 the detective department comprised one superintendent, three inspectors and 24 constables, out of a total strength of 1,200 police officers.[118] He further confirmed that the detective department had been distinct from the rest

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[115] *Reports of IOC,* 1869, 91; LRO, 352/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.

[116] LRO, 352 POL/1/12, *Report of the Special Sub-committee on the Pay and Conditions of Service of the Police Force,* Watch Committee, 1872, 5.

[117] LRO, 352 POL/1/12, Watch Committee, 29 April 1873.

[118] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective*

of the force since before his tenure as chief officer, therefore for more than 25 years.[119] In 1883, the report on the reorganisation of the Liverpool force listed the members of the detective department as 27, including the detective chief superintendent, four detective inspectors and a detective storekeeper. There were no recommendations for either increasing or decreasing the numbers within the new structure of the five divisions.[120] However, later in the decade came the first call for a reduction in the costs in the deployment of detective officers as, by September 1888, the number of detective police officers had reached a total of 61, 11 of whom worked in the central detective office. HC Nott-Bower proposed the downgrading of some detective ranks, such as substituting two sergeants for one inspector to save money. This change, according to him, 'would not be detrimental to efficiency', thus reducing the cost without a decrease in numbers.[121] In 1898, an actual reduction in the number of detective officers was mooted. Nott-Bower suggested a reduction of 11 detective officers, which would save £1,000 per annum. He justified this 'temporary experiment', by stating that the number of indictable offences in the city had diminished by 22 per cent, despite an increase in the force's jurisdiction. The proposal was based on plans to fill current vacancies, rather than making detectives redundant and therefore was held in abeyance for the time being with the vacancies being retained in reserve.[122] Despite changes in numbers, the five divisions remained in place until the early 1900s, when a further two divisions were added.[123]

Force of the Metropolitan Police, 1877-1880 (hereafter *Report on Detective Force*) (London: HMSO, 1878), 121.

[119] Ibid., 131.

[120] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report on Organization of the Police*, 15-16.

[121] LRO, 352 POL/2/11, Head Constable, 18 September 1888.

[122] LRO, 352 POL/2/15, Head Constable, 25 April 1898.

[123] Cockcroft, *Cutlasses,* 33.

2.2.4. Manchester Borough Detective Police

When the Municipal Corporations Act was passed in 1835, Manchester did not have a charter of incorporation and therefore, was not required to comply.[124] Thus, in the absence of a town council and a watch committee, the town was unable to establish a new police force. Manchester was granted a charter of incorporation in October 1838, and the new borough council was formed shortly after.[125] In June 1839, the council established a police force, with 295 constables and 48 higher ranking officers, under the leadership of HC Richard Beswick who had previously been senior beadle for the boroughreeve.[126] There followed a protracted period of power struggles, as those who managed the town's old police forces refused to cede authority to the newly-elected council, all under the persistent threat of Chartist demonstrations and rioting.

Prior to 1839, there had been three separate police forces in Manchester, comprising a day and a night watch, and a body of constables, totalling some 600 officers who were managed by the police commissioners and the manorial court leet, whose powers were not sufficient to levy taxes to meet policing needs.[127] Moreover, their combined authority was limited to the central township. When the borough council was formed, both parties were reluctant to relinquish what little power they had and relations in local government were strained,[128] with the police commissioners and the court leet continuing to battle against the new council, and with the former taking measures such as physically preventing the council from meeting in the town hall. However, any progress in stabilising local politics and the management of the police force was stymied later in 1839 when, due to the increasing threat of Chartist disturbances, central government took control and appointed their own chief police commissioner, Sir Charles Shaw, to create a new force. Richard Beswick assisted him

[124] Cowley, *British Police*, 43.
[125] Kidd, *Manchester*, 62-63; Emsley, *English Police*, 41.
[126] *The Blackburn Standard*, 8 May 1839, 2.
[127] Arthur Redford, *The History of Local Government in Manchester: Volume 2, Borough and City* (London: Longmans Green, 1940), 50.
[128] Hewitt, *Policing*, 44-47.

as deputy chief constable. This was initiated in October of the same year with 319 constables and 64 officers of higher rank, most of whom were recruited from the old police forces.[129] Despite this decisive move by the government, the former powers continued to disrupt proceedings, with the old police commissioners operating until 1841. The court leet did not disband until 1845.[130]

The management of the borough police force reverted to Manchester's town council on 1 October 1842 and the watch committee resumed control. Captain Edward Willis was appointed as the first head constable.[131] He had previously held the position of assistant head constable of Lancashire Constabulary.[132] From the beginning, the new police force in Manchester was divided into five divisions, A to E, with E Division designated as the detective department.[133] This structure remained in place throughout the nineteenth century. In his first report in 1857, the Inspector of Constabulary found the Manchester Police to be 'well organised, and in all respects in a highly satisfactory state of discipline and efficiency'.[134]

The first entry in the Manchester Borough Watch Committee minute books relating to E Division, the Detective Division, is dated 1845 (this is the first entry for all divisions). E Division is listed alongside the four 'preventive' divisions of the force.[135] Hitherto, there has been no verified date for the establishment of the detective department in Manchester in the historiography. However, a series of newspaper reports in the local press confirm that the detective department was created in 1839, at the same time as the creation of the first professional force before the intervention by central government. An advertisement in the *Manchester Courier* published vacancies for the new police force in May 1839 which included an indoor superintendent who would be required to 'take measures when

[129] Redford, *Local Government*, 46.
[130] Kidd, *Manchester*, 63.
[131] Redford, *Local Government*, 66.
[132] Hewitt, *Policing*, 57-58.
[133] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 15 January 1846.
[134] *Reports of IOC,* 1859, 56.
[135] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 16 October 1845.

necessary for the detection and securing of offenders'.[136] The following month, the same newspaper reported that an indoor superintendent had been appointed. As referenced in the press at the time, there is no formal recording of these appointments,[137] which may be explained by the ongoing tensions between the new town council and the local police commissioners, who were still controlling the township. An editorial in the *Manchester Times*, later that year, confirmed the watch committee's resolution to provide 'an active and vigilant detective force', in particular for the prevention of robberies and the apprehension of thieves.[138] This evidence demonstrates that the detective department of the Manchester Police preceded that of the Metropolitan Police by three years, and it may even have been the first to be established in England.

When the management of the new police force was ceded to the borough watch committee in 1842, the former head constable, Richard Beswick, was retained as superintendent of the detective force. This further supports the evidence that the detective division predated the change in management. In October 1842, additional detective constables were recruited, although the number at that time was not recorded.[139] In 1847, the number of detective officers was seven, with three inspectors, one sub-inspector and three constables.[140] By 1850, the detective division had doubled to 14 detective police officers: a superintendent, four inspectors, three sub-inspectors and six constables. Their general duties included investigating robberies and other offences, serving summonses and arrest warrants, attending court and collecting court fines.[141]

In 1865, the watch committee appointed a subcommittee to inquire into the efficiency of the detective force.[142] The report was submitted in May 1866 after the subcommittee and

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[136] *The Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* (hereafter *Manchester Courier*), 18 May 1839, 4.
[137] *Manchester Courier*, 8 June 1839, 4.
[138] *The Manchester Times,* 16 November 1839, 2.
[139] Redford, *Local Government*, 66.
[140] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 29 April 1847. The ranks within the detective departments will be discussed in Chapter 3.
[141] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/2, Watch committee, 16 April 1850.
[142] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/6, Watch Committee, 28 September 1865.

HC William Palin had made visits to police forces in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Liverpool, in order to learn about the management of their detective forces. The deputation made a series of observations. Firstly, that in most of the towns visited, the rate of all police officers to population was higher than in Manchester, and that the proportion of detective police officers to uniformed officers was also greater.[143] Secondly, they noted that, instead of the detective element being distributed among the different divisions as in Manchester, it was generally consolidated in one office. Consequently, although plain-clothes officers were deployed in each division, they reported directly to the central detective department officers who assumed responsibility for investigations. (See Section 3.1.3 for further discussion of the duties of divisional detectives). Finally, they reported that in all other towns inducements of pay and privilege were offered to detective officers to motivate them, and that sums of money were set aside for rewarding individual detectives for 'extraordinary circumstances' at the discretion of the head constable.[144] As in Liverpool, the subcommittee recommended an increase in funds for the detective department, to be made available at the disposition of the head constable. The watch committee granted £100 per annum for this purpose.

In 1869, there were 40 detective police officers in the Manchester force, with the detective superintendent also holding the position of deputy head constable.[145] The number remained more or less constant throughout the 1870s. In 1880, in a report on the efficiency of the police force presented to the watch committee by the deputy head constable, it was recorded that the number of detective police officers had risen to 62. He proposed to reduce the strength by seven officers by transferring them into other divisions, due to a decrease in crime in the city.[146]

Almost a decade later, a formal reorganisation of the detective department was considered in 1899, based upon information acquired about the management of the

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[143] These observations were not supported by any data in the watch committee report.
[144] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/6, Watch Committee, 3 May 1866.
[145] *Reports of IOC,* 1870, 69.
[146] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/13, Watch Committee, 9 September 1880.

detective force in Liverpool and London.[147] The ensuing recommendations approved by the watch committee included the distribution of detective officers throughout the entire divisions of the force, with the exception of those attached to the A Division, who would continue to receive their instructions from the central office as hitherto.[148] By 1910, the number of detective police officers in E Division had increased to 124.[149]

2.2.5. Birmingham Borough Detective Police

Birmingham was granted a charter of incorporation on 31 October 1838 and the borough police force was formed on 20 November 1839. Prior to this, similarly to Manchester, the town had been policed by three separate bodies: the manorial court leet constables, daytime street keepers and a night watch. The court leet had appointed its first police officers in 1789, whose duties were to maintain public order through the suppression of riots and disturbances, and to arrest felons. Weaver explains how the court leet appointed a headborough, who was also the prison keeper, and two constables, with some six thief-takers employed for investigative work. There were 125 night watchmen and 30 day watchmen. They did not serve all year round and received little supervision and no training. Their focus was on crime prevention.[150] The constables were elected annually by the court leet jury and were also accountable to the local justices of the peace on whose behalf they executed warrants. The constables' work was supported by night watchmen, who had been in operation in the town since 1769 and were appointed by the street commissioners to manage traffic and obstructions, and to protect inhabitants and their property.[151] Additional privately-funded night patrols were added to the watch by 1831, as residents became increasingly concerned about crime.

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[147] It was not recorded whether this referred to the Metropolitan Police and/or the City of London Police.
[148] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/27, Watch Committee, 18 May 1899.
[149] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/41, Watch Committee, 2 June 1910.
[150] Weaver, "New Science," 292-294.
[151] Moriarty, *Birmingham*, 7-8.

After the town council was established in 1838, it failed to form a watch committee due to legal wrangling and tensions between the existing authorities and the town council over levying a watch rate.[152] However, before they had managed to form a new police force, their efforts were overtaken by national and local events. By the late 1830s, Chartist meetings and demonstrations had increased in Birmingham, reaching a culmination in May 1839, when the National Convention of the Chartist Movement relocated to the town from the capital. In July, the justices of the peace drafted in special constables and Metropolitan Police officers to quell a riot in the town centre.[153] The following month, central government assumed control of policing in Birmingham and appointed Captain Francis Burgess as chief commissioner. [154] He created a new police force, with 289 officers divided into four divisions.[155] Chief Commissioner Burgess managed the Birmingham Police force, under the auspices of the Home Office, until 1 October 1842 when the watch committee, which had been re-appointed on 19 August, took charge.[156] They continued with the existing arrangements for the management of the police force until the end of the year, during which time they acquired reports from HC Burgess and drew up their plans for the future.[157] The watch committee divided the existing borough into two divisions, Eastern and Western, and authorised 300 constables which, according to Weaver, was a reduction of ten per cent.[158] In addition, they stipulated that two officers be assigned 'to the purpose of detecting persons who may have committed offences'.[159] Serving officer Richard Stephens was appointed as head constable once HC Burgess had left the command.[160] Although Moriarty suggests that Stephens was already engaged in detective work, there is no evidence of this being within a

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[152] Reilly, *Policing*, 5; Critchley, *History of Police*, 80; Weaver, "New Science," 289-292.
[153] Weaver, "New Science," 292-293; Emsley, *English Police*, 55; Emsley, *British Bobby,* 52-53; Cowley, *British Police*, 50.
[154] Taylor, *New Police*, 36; Weaver, "New Science," 2.
[155] Reilly, *Policing,* 11; Stallion and Wall, *British Police*, 65.
[156] Ibid., 16; BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 19 August 1842.
[157] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 6 September 1842.
[158] Weaver, "New Science," 308.
[159] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 23 October 1842.
[160] Ibid., 29 November 1842.

formal department.[161] HC Stephens subsequently recommended an increase in the number of divisions from two to three, which included the new detective department contained within A Division, consisting of Inspector William Hall and three detective constables.[162]

In May 1844, the number of detective officers was increased to five.[163] By April 1850, the strength of the department had increased to seven, with one detective inspector, one detective sub-inspector and five detective constables.[164] In 1852, the watch committee recorded seven detective constables, bringing the total to nine.[165] By this time, the detective division was operating as a separate division from the regular three divisions.[166] The number of detective constables continued to fluctuate by one or two until the first report of the Inspectors of Constabulary, in which it was noted that the detective department could be increased, as it 'is of the greatest importance'.[167]

In 1858, a subcommittee appointed to inquire into the management of the police force in Birmingham proposed an increase from three divisions to five, each led by a divisional superintendent.[168] The detective division formally became a separate entity and was additional to the other four. The Inspector of Constabulary considered the new arrangements to be 'highly advantageous'. The 1860 report recorded that the now separate detective division comprised two inspectors, four sergeants and eight constables.[169] Furthermore, the watch committee undertook a comparison of detective numbers in different forces, with the purpose of comparing gratuities received by detective police officers. The resulting table recorded the number of detective officers in the Birmingham Police as 13, compared with 11 in the Metropolitan Police and 13 in the City of London Police. The

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[161] Moriarty, *Birmingham*, 22; Weaver, "New Science," 303.
[162] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 6 December 1842; 13 December 1842; 31 January 1843.
[163] Ibid., 28 May 1844.
[164] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/4, Watch Committee, April 1850.
[165] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/5, Watch Committee, 3 August 1852.
[166] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/6, Watch Committee, 19 September 1854.
[167] *Reports of IOC*, 1857, 21.
[168] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/7, Watch Committee, 20 April 1858; *Reports of IOC*, 1859, 40-41.
[169] *Reports of IOC,* 1861, 36-37.

number for Manchester was recorded as nine.[170] The information for Liverpool was not recorded in sufficient detail for comparison.

Almost a decade later, in 1867, HC George Glossop presented a report on the arrangement of the detective department. He summarised the department's strength over the previous 11 years as consisting of an average of 12 detective officers, including a clerk. The present number was 11, excluding two members of the detective department who were deployed outside the central office; one inspector was on patrol throughout the divisions, as well as taking charge of convicts, and a detective sergeant was working specifically in one of the regular divisions on unrecorded duties (see Section 3.3.3 for an examination of detective duties). Glossop added that a detective officer was now appointed to each of the five police stations in the borough under the supervision of the divisional superintendents, so that they could respond more rapidly to robberies, and in order to train uniformed constables, who could then be recruited into the detective department (see Section 3.2.1). Additionally, there were 23 plain-clothes constables more or less equally divided between the five divisions.[171] However, by 1872, there were still only ten officers in the central detective office.[172]

In 1877, HC Bond stated that there were 16 detectives within his force of 520 men. He described how the system in the Birmingham Police was 'mixed', with divisional detectives who were to a certain extent separate from those in the central detective office. However, the detective superintendent had responsibility for all the detective work across the entire force, including investigative activities undertaken by the divisional detectives, whose usual daily duties were carried out under the supervision of their respective divisional superintendent. Bond added that, in the central detective office, there were six detectives including the detective superintendent. This would indicate that, in addition, there were two detective officers in each division.[173] This had been reduced from four, who had previously

[170] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/9, Watch Committee, 17 July 1860. These numbers relate specifically to detective officers receiving gratuities and therefore may not represent the true figure.
[171] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/12, Watch Committee, 12 March 1867.
[172] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee, 30 July 1872.
[173] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 113.

been deployed on patrolling. When HC Bond had discovered that many of them had been spending their time in public houses and 'sloping their time away doing nothing', he had demoted them. The subsequent reduction had enabled him to supervise the remaining officers directly.[174]

When HC Bond retired in 1881, there were 16 detective officers, comprising a superintendent, five inspectors, nine sergeants and one constable.[175] In 1890, the watch committee reported that, following a recommendation by the Inspector of Constabulary that the force's strength should be increased, they had appointed a further ten detective officers.[176] A decade later, the watch committee acknowledged that the detective department was understaffed and 'quite unable to cope with the very numerous cases reported to it', and they authorised an increase of 25 officers.[177]

2.3. The impact of organisational structure and senior management

The importance of the relationship between the watch committee and the borough police forces is crucial to understanding the development of early policing and yet its impact on the detective police is omitted from the historiography. To date, there has been no research into the watch committee's influence on the management of the detective department, nor on the development of crime detection and investigative practice.

Town council watch committees were responsible for the regulation and management of the borough police forces. Their duties comprised the appointment, promotion, demotion and dismissal of all police officers, including detectives, although these decisions were usually made on the head constable's recommendation. The head constable was also a watch committee appointee and as such was an employee of the council and directly accountable to the committee. Watch committee subcommittees were formed on an

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[174] Ibid., 120.
[175] *Reports of IOC,* 1883, 92-93.
[176] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/18, Watch Committee, 11 February 1890.
[177] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/22, Watch Committee, 5 February 1901.

ad hoc basis for the monitoring of long-term management issues, introducing initiatives, responding to central government guidelines and for specific tasks, such as inquiring into the efficiency of detective policing when required. The subcommittees were instrumental in driving change in regional policing, providing that their recommendations were accepted first by the watch committee, and then the council. The level of authority exercised by the watch committee could lead to differences of opinion and tensions between members of the watch committee and the senior police officer. Further challenges and restrictions were caused by the financing of the borough police which was, until the County and Borough Police Act 1856, funded entirely by a levy on local ratepayers, rendering the watch committee sensitive to public opinion and thereby impacting directly on policing.

2.3.1. Watch committees

Steedman highlights the key role of the watch committee in the development of modern policing through their formulation of local government and policing theory, with the objective of maintaining law and order in their community. She claims that earlier police historians, especially those who had served in the force, had only a partial understanding of this crucial relationship.[178] Steedman further argues that the nature of provincial policing was political, as it was a key proponent of community control through its role as an administrative agent of local government and magistrates. The police were 'paid servants', funded by ratepayers to maintain the peace and protect the public.[179] Briggs explores the nature of watch committees in more detail and highlights the influential role of traders, shopkeepers and merchants, specifically in the governance of Manchester. He notes that the first town council comprised 34 merchants and manufacturers and ten shop owners, out of the 64 members, with their proportion increasing throughout the Victorian period.[180] An analysis of the biographies of the

[178] Steedman, *Policing*, 1.
[179] Ibid., 5-6.
[180] Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 108.

city's watch committee in 1845 confirms this contention, with a chemist, a brewer, a coppersmith and a teamster (in charge of a team of horses) among its members, none of whom were likely to have had experience of policing. This supports Steedman's view that council members could be considered to have been protecting their own interests.

In Birmingham, soon after the creation of the new watch committee in 1842, the members requested information from the incumbent chief officer about the existing force, which had been established by HC Francis Burgess under the auspices of the Home Office. After conferring with watch committees in other cities, they authorised the head constable to dismiss police constables without their approval, which suggests that the chief officer may have had more autonomy than in other cities.[181] These actions suggest that the first watch committee may have been aware of their lack of policing experience, and they sought information from other town councils in preparation for their new role.

Despite the delegation of the power to dismiss officers in Birmingham, Steedman argues that some watch committees acted as 'semi-legal tribunals', and that police management funded by ratepayers was based on pragmatism and necessity, rather than on innovation.[182] It is generally accepted by police historians that the funding for borough policing was restricted due to its reliance on the levy on local ratepayers, which led to under-recruitment and tight local control.[183]

In his study of Portsmouth Borough Police force, Field describes disagreements on policing between individual members of the watch committee, which affected the relationship between the committee and its head constable.[184] Taylor agrees that the nature of local policing was affected significantly by the attitudes of the watch committee, as well as of the head constable, which he considers to be variable.[185] Rawlings further hypothesises that the chief officers of the borough police forces were less likely to share the socio-economic

[181] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 20 December 1842.
[182] Steedman, *Policing*, 41-44.
[183] Critchley, *History of Police*, 67; Emsley, *Crime and Society,* 231.
[184] Field, "Police," 43.
[185] Taylor, *New Police*, 92-93.

background of members of the watch committee, as opposed to the senior officers in the county forces, whose status was generally more similar to that of the magistrates who appointed them. In his view, this is a key factor in the lack of autonomy of the borough forces. It may also account for some of the tensions. In 1853, John Wybergh, clerk to the Liverpool magistrates, gave evidence to the Select Committee on Police about the relationship and balance of power between the watch committee and the head constable in his city. He confirmed that police officers, including the head constable, were appointed by the town council's watch committee, which was responsible for the regulation and management of the force, and yet he was less clear about the delegation of power to the head constable in relation to the appointment of new police officers: 'I suppose they delegate some of their power to him, but to what extent I do not know'. Moreover, he highlighted issues caused by the power of both the magistrates and the watch committee to dismiss police officers, which led to disputes between the council and the local judiciary: 'the evil of divided authority is very great'. Wybergh described how serious conflicts of interest could arise in the town council's management of the police force. For example, some watch committee members had interests in public houses which, in his opinion, led to a reluctance among the police to give information and to lead prosecutions against public houses and beer shops, for fear of dismissal.[186] HC Nott-Bower described his experiences of working with watch committees in his memoirs, stating that in Leeds his greatest difficulty was working effectively and harmoniously with the watch committee, 'who could interfere in almost every detail, and required considerable care and tact to get on with'. In addition, he experienced further interference from members of the town council who did not sit on the watch committee but who had some knowledge of police work.[187] In Liverpool, he found that he had better support from the watch committee, but that party politics was of a higher importance, and that it was difficult for him to gain complete support from all members whilst

[186] *First report on Police*, 108-109.
[187] Nott-Bower, *Fifty-Two Years,* 40.

maintaining a neutral political stance, despite attempts of individuals to garner his support for their causes.[188]

In practice, the borough watch committees met more frequently than the county police authorities, which led to greater control.[189] Emsley explores this point in detail, explaining how the watch committees met one or more times a week and were more aware of the demands of local ratepayers.[190] Emsley also highlights the 'free hand' afforded to the watch committees but he acknowledges that the relationship between the autonomous watch committees and their head constable was that of 'master and servant'.[191] Despite the shortcomings and challenges of the borough watch committees in local police management, Churchill argues that they were capable of and often committed to reform, and that they were able to scrutinise their practices. They recognised their failures and sought to improve by making changes where they saw fit.[192]

The archival evidence from the watch committee minutes of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham sheds some further light on the relationship between watch committee members and the detective departments, albeit indirectly. Firstly, it is clear from the documents that one of the watch committee's main foci was to manage the police force's finances, within the restrictions of the funds levied by the borough on the local ratepayers. Whilst the watch committee had no direct influence on the rate, they could make recommendations to the borough council for increases to the entire police force, and there are no examples of their doing so in relation to detective officers specifically. However, following successful crime investigations, they instructed the head constable to apply for additional funding and rewards from other bodies, such as central government or other constabularies. For example, in 1866, after a detective police officer from Liverpool travelled to New York to arrest a man later convicted of murder, the watch committee instructed the

[188] Ibid., 56.
[189] Rawlings, *Policing*, 183.
[190] Clive Emsley, "The Birth and Development of the Police," in *Handbook of Policing*, 2nd ed., ed. Tim Newburn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 78.
[191] Emsley, *Crime*, 232.
[192] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 34.

head constable to apply to the Treasury for a reimbursement of the officer's expenses, which amounted to £150. When the request was denied, the watch committee insisted that the head constable make another request.[193] In Manchester in 1864, this time at the head constable's instigation, the watch committee resolved to increase the charges for the deployment of the city's police officers, including detectives, for special duties and private services outside their jurisdiction.[194]

Secondly, the subcommittees acting on behalf of the watch committee were initiated to investigate a range of factors which influenced policing, such as local crime rates and statistics, police force strength and efficiency, and the effectiveness of the detective police department. Usually motivated by a concern from an external party, such as the magistrates, a government inquiry, the local press or members of the general public, they gathered information and presented reports first to the watch committee and then, if relevant, to the town council, as in the previously referenced inquiries into the detective departments in Manchester in 1868 and in Liverpool in 1873 (see Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

As supported by the aforementioned archival evidence, the borough watch committees were primarily concerned with the practical management of their respective police forces, including the detective department. Their inquiries, reports and recommendations were focused on costs, uniform, officer rank and classification, and organisational issues. They had little direct interaction with detective officers and largely treated them in the same manner as their uniformed counterparts. With respect to crime detection, they intervened only on the instigation of external parties, and this occasional intervention was limited to directing the head constable to deploy detectives for a specific purpose, such as supporting a public event in another town in response to a government directive or due to the apparent rise in a particular type of crime which had been brought to their attention. It is notable that when the Birmingham Watch Committee published their

[193] LRO, 352 POL/1/3, Watch Committee, 31 July 1866.
[194] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/6, Watch Committee, 23 June 1864.

duties in 1875, there was no reference to crime detection or investigation.[195] This further underlines the conclusion that the influence of the borough watch committees on detective policing was minimal and indirect, with their impact being restricted to the numbers of detective officers employed, and rank and pay, whilst direct management of the detective police was delegated to the head constable.

2.3.2. Head constables

Critchley includes the role of chief constables in his list of key contributing factors to a full appraisal of police history, although he does not explore this aspect in detail.[196] Taylor agrees that the head officer was a key variable in the development of policing.[197] Kim Stevenson, David Cox and Iain Channing support these earlier assertions and add that the trilateral components of 'hierarchy, culture and consistency', embodied by the study of chief constables, are essential to all police history discourse, given that chief officers play a crucial role in the development of policing.[198] David Wall points out, in the introduction to his work on chief constables, that hitherto there was a lack of detailed analysis of this subject in the police historiography and existing research was limited to their powers and constitutional role, with scant attention paid to their biographical background or career progression. He also highlights a greater focus on county chief officers in police history research, rather than on those who led the borough police forces.[199] In the time between his research in the late 1990s and the recent examination of chief constables by Kim Stevenson and her colleagues, Wall's assertion seems to remain accurate, as in the latter work there is still less focus on

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[195] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/14, Watch committee, 12 January 1875.
[196] Critchley, *History of Police*, xviii.
[197] Taylor, *New Police*, 92.
[198] Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing, eds., Introduction to *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 3.
[199] David S. Wall, *The Chief Constables of England and Wales: The Socio-Legal History of a Criminal Justice Elite* (Farnham: Ashgate, 1998), 2.

borough head constables than on those serving English counties and on officers in charge of police forces in other countries within the United Kingdom.

Although Emsley describes the relationship between the watch committee and the head officer as one of ‘master and servant’, this contention is challenged by other police historians. Wall asserts that the role of the borough chief officer is as a ‘mediator’ between the watch committee and the police force.[200] He further argues that the head constable was a ‘specialist council manager’, rather than a ‘servant’.[201] Richard Ireland agrees with this view and describes the pivotal nature of the head constable’s role as the key point of liaison between the management executive and the force, as well as having responsibility for liaising with the local community. He summarises the role as complex, problematic and giving rise to tensions.[202] Stevenson et al. reinforce the point originally made by Steedman in 1984, that head constables were autonomous in that they were accountable only to their executive, whose management and control differed from borough to borough.[203] In the same publication, Taylor explores the relationship between watch committees and chief officers in more detail and concludes that the practices varied between boroughs, and also that their relationship was localised and subject to trial and error.[204] Wall takes this one step further by suggesting that watch committees typically appointed head constables whom they considered to be sympathetic to their opinions and, to a certain extent, their politics.[205]

In relation to the biography of the early borough head constables, Cowley avers that their background differed from that of the county chief constables, in that the latter were more often than not appointed because of their military service and elevated social status. By comparison, he states that the borough head constables were mostly recruited internally

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[200] Wall, *Chief Constables*, 31.
[201] Ibid., 96.
[202] Richard W. Ireland, "‘A Nonconformist must be Chief Constable’: The Historical Challenges of Policing in Rural Wales," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 109.
[203] Stevenson et al., *Leading the Police*, 3.
[204] David Taylor, "‘A Fit Man to be at the Head of the Police’: Police Superintendents and Watch Committees in the First Generation of ‘New Policing’: A Yorkshire Perspective, c. 1850-1870," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 18.
[205] Wall, *Chief Constables*, 96.

and had begun their police careers on the beat.[206] To date, there has been insufficient research to explore this point more fully. In the same way, examination of the impact of individual head constables on the development of detective policing has been minimal. Police historians such as Emsley, Rawlings and Critchley have assessed the influence of chief officers on police constables, but this has not been extended specifically to police detectives.[207] Emsley posits that detective policing was not a priority for head constables and that any provision of training for crime detection was rudimentary. He insinuates that the chief officers were more focused on maintaining public order.[208] This may explain in part why this area of study has been neglected in academic research.

The limited published case studies support the view held by historians that the influence of the chief officer on crime detection was variable, in so far as this was true for the wider police force. David Cox assesses the impact of former Bow Street Runner Henry Goddard, who was appointed head constable of Northamptonshire Police in 1840. He concludes that, although Goddard had considerable experience of detective policing, he nevertheless 'appears to have made no attempt to introduce a detective element to the County Constabulary', although he himself investigated murder cases.[209] By contrast, David Smale demonstrates how chief officers in the Glasgow Police, notably James Smart and Alfred List, had a significant impact on crime detection, with the former developing the use of photography and the electric telegraph.[210] Elizabeth Malcolm offers a similar assessment of chief officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary.[211] However, there has been no such detailed study relating to the English borough police forces.

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[206] Cowley, *British Police*, 67.
[207] Stevenson et al, *Leading the Police*, 3.
[208] Emsley, *English Police*, 73-74.
[209] David J. Cox, "'The Best Chief Constable in the Kingdom?': Recruitment and Retention Problems in an Early English County Constabulary," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 44-45.
[210] David Smale, "Early Chief Constables in Scotland: Policing the City and County," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 65-67.
[211] Elizabeth Malcolm, "The Irish Inspectors-General, 1838-1916: Leading Dublin Castle's Constabulary 'Machine,'" in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 74-75.

As discussed earlier, the detective police departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham were established in the early years of their respective force's history. The initial leadership for both borough forces was assumed by a head constable selected from the former watch with some, albeit limited, policing experience. Although plain-clothes officers were deployed in Liverpool during the force's earliest years, the formal detective department was not established until the third head constable, Matthew Dowling, was in place in 1845. Despite the fact that Dowling had considerable experience of the Metropolitan Police, as well as being a barrister, there is no evidence to suggest that this had any influence on crime detection beyond the organisation and management of the detective police office.

In Manchester, the advertisement for the borough's first head constable in 1839 stipulated that 'a practical knowledge of police affairs, and experience in the direction of a numerous body of men, will be indispensably requisite.'[212] There was no reference to crime detection, as this responsibility was included in the accompanying vacancy for an indoor superintendent (see Section 2.1.1). When HC Beswick was replaced following Home Office intervention, the new head constable, Sir Charles Shaw, came from a military background, with no policing experience. According to Hewitt, changes to the borough police force during his tenure were minimal and the organisation remained based on the town's old watch.[213]

By comparison, when the government appointed Captain Francis Burgess to lead Birmingham's borough police force, he had a more direct impact on detective policing than his counterpart in Manchester. Like Shaw, Burgess had military experience but he was also a practising barrister at the Warwick Sessions.[214] Reilly points out that 'at that time no better mixture than that of law and military service could possibly have been found for the new police.'[215] Weaver examines Burgess's influence in detail and states that he 'viewed policing as a science that, when perfected, could virtually eliminate crime', although he typically

[212] *Manchester Courier*, 18 May 1839, 4.
[213] Hewitt, *Policing*, 50-56.
[214] Moriarty, *Birmingham*, 5.
[215] Reilly, *Policing*, 9.

favoured crime prevention over detection.[216] However, Burgess employed plain-clothes officers to attend public gatherings, such as a horse fair in 1841, to keep a watch for thieves and pickpockets, as well as deploying them on the beats when necessary, prior to establishing the formal detective department in 1842.[217] Weaver asserts that, although it was not his main focus, HC Burgess developed the investigative aspect of policing through his instructions to constables, which included surveillance of 'suspicious characters'. There is also evidence that he gave specific orders relating to crime detection, such as requiring beat officers to give detailed descriptions of robberies which he then circulated throughout the police stations. For more serious burglaries, Burgess deployed the detective superintendent to examine the crime scene and 'use every exertion to detect the offenders and report the result to the commissioner'. In addition, divisional superintendents were required to conduct investigations and then write special reports of offences committed in their district. From the earliest days of the new police, uniformed police officers were encouraged to attend court proceedings in cases of homicide when they were off duty to familiarise themselves with the legal process and to improve their ability to track offenders. Weaver concludes that Burgess recognised the importance of detective work, and that the serious attention he afforded to crime detection was superior to that of the Metropolitan Police at the time.[218] This is in sharp contrast to the influence of the early chief officers on crime detection in Liverpool and Manchester, where practices were still at a nascent stage, although it is impossible to support this contention with meaningful crime statistics. In the three cities, the first head constables had either military or policing experience, or a combination of the two, but only HC Burgess in Birmingham had a positive impact on detective policing. Throughout the remainder of the period under study, a more complex picture emerged.

[216] Weaver, "New Science," 290.
[217] Ibid., 299-300.
[218] Ibid., 302-303.

During the time period of this study, five of the 19 head constables appointed to the three borough police forces had no police experience. One was Captain John Greig, head constable of the Liverpool force from 1852 to 1881. Despite his lack of experience, he integrated the previously independent detective department more fully into the general police force through his instigation of divisional detectives in the 1850s.[219] Although he delegated the management of the detective department to the indoor superintendent, his testimony to the departmental commission on the detective force of the Metropolitan Police in 1877 demonstrates that he had detailed knowledge of the detective officers and their work in crime investigation and he maintained close supervision of their activities.[220] Although there is no evidence in the archival material of specific innovations in crime detection, it is obvious that HC Greig was fully involved in preparing reports for the watch committee, collaborating with other constabularies on detective business, issuing instructions for the detective superintendent and deploying detective officers directly in response to external requests and needs. The others who lacked police experience, with the exception of HC Burgess as discussed, had little impact on crime detection in so far as the evidence demonstrates.

The influence of those head constables with police experience on detective policing was variable. For example, Captain Edward Willis served as head constable in Manchester from 1842 to 1857, having both military and policing experience (see Section 2.2.4). In 1846, HC Willis visited the Metropolitan, the City of London and Dublin forces to examine their management practices. Although his inquiries were of a general nature, he introduced an initiative relating to detective patrolling (see Section 4.1.2).[221]

In contrast to Liverpool and Manchester, two of the head constables appointed in Birmingham were not only officers already serving in the force but had direct experience of detective policing. Richard Stephens assumed the role of chief officer in 1842. [222] He had been a superintendent under HC Burgess and had been deployed on detective duties,

[219] Cockcroft, *Cutlasses*, 58.
[220] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 123.
[221] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch committee, 2 July 1846.
[222] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch committee, 29 November 1842.

including adopting plain clothes to observe thieves.[223] In August 1842, Stephens had been formally appointed as superintendent of the detective department. Weaver describes how in 1841 Stephens arrested a network of thieves and recovered a stash of stolen goods. He was also well known for the detection of forgers.[224] In the first year of his tenure as head constable Stephens reorganised the divisions, placing the detective department in the first division. He consistently applied to the watch committee for an increase in detective officers. When Stephens resigned his post in 1860, the watch committee appointed the serving chief detective officer, George Glossop, as his successor.[225] He had joined the Birmingham Police in 1839 as a constable and was promoted through the ranks to chief detective officer in 1845.[226] Glossop's management of the police force, according to the watch committee minutes, was of a general nature, with little specific focus on detective policing.

In conclusion, the influence of borough head constables on the development of detective policing was inconsistent, in conformance with the general consensus of police historians. In Liverpool and Manchester, the chief officers exhibited a range of characteristics including military background (similarly to county chief constables) and legal knowledge, and some had direct experience of policing. Individuals such as Dowling and Greig in Liverpool could be considered to have had some significant impact on the development of the force's detective department, although this was limited to organisational structure and management rather than the evolution of investigative practice. In comparison, Birmingham Watch Committee favoured serving police officers in the earlier decades of their professional force, primarily from the detective department and yet, although Stephens and Glossop were experienced detective officers, they did not make a notable contribution to the development of detective practice. Like Henry Goddard, they did not use their knowledge to further the efficiency of the detective department, but rather became involved in individual cases under investigation.

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[223] Weaver, "New Science," 300.
[224] Ibid., 303-305.
[225] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 1 May 1860.
[226] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/14, Watch Committee, 4 April 1876.

The variation in practice and impact continued into the first decade of the twentieth century, as assessed by Joanne Klein who concludes that some head constables, such as Leonard Dunning and Francis Caldwell, who both led the Liverpool Police, were generally‘ineffectual’. She highlights HC Robert Peacock of the Manchester Police (1898-1926) as transformative, but his pioneering influence was not directly related to crime detection.[227]

The role of head constable was undoubtedly instrumental in forming and developing the borough police detective departments, but only to the extent that they influenced their entire police forces. Individual chief officers showed varying degrees of interest in crime investigation, and some were more involved than others. However, there is a lack of detailed research into this specific area, as well as little of note in the archival records. A further study might be valuable to assess the possible link between senior leadership and the development of crime detection practice throughout the period under study.

2.4. Conclusion

Primarily drawn from the borough watch committee minutes, the archival evidence supports the argument that although the larger borough police forces developed independently of central government, they formed effective and efficient prototype detective departments from their inception. These were created during a similar period to the detective branch of the Metropolitan Police and in Manchester, as new evidence confirms, predated it. Even though the borough police forces were separate entities, they conferred with each other on police matters and their organisational structures were similar, with a chief officer who was directly accountable to their respective watch committee. In all three cities studied, the first chief officer appointed detective police officers from the beginning of their force’s existence, and

[227] Joanne Klein, “‘The Best Police Officer in the Force’: Chief Constables and their Men, 1900-1939,” in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 140.

these were rapidly formed into discrete sections of police, either within one of the uniformed divisions or as a standalone department. This represents the importance of crime detection in relation to crime prevention, even though the number of detective police officers was initially limited. Throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, the detective departments developed, with gradual increases in officers both in the divisions and the central office (this will be analysed in more detail in Section 3.1.2). Furthermore, the detective departments were relocated to a more central position within their respective force.

In considering the extent of influence of senior management, evidence from the primary sources demonstrates that the borough watch committees had little interaction with the detective departments, as their concerns lay with the organisation and management of the entire police force, but their decisions affected crime detection indirectly. The impact of head constables, as appointed by the watch committees, was variable and entirely dependent on the individual selected. Most borough head constables had either police or military experience and, in some cases, both. However, there is an inconsistent correlation between those who had or did not have direct experience of crime detection, with the actions of the former, as shown in Birmingham, not necessarily leading to any specific development in investigative technique.

These themes will be developed further in the following chapter, which will examine detective police departments more closely and assess the organisational structure, internal management, departmental practices and processes, as well as the selection, characteristics, duties and training of detective officers.

Chapter 3

The occupational life of police detectives: a hidden history

In 2018 Manchester Town Hall, which was the headquarters of the Manchester City Police, closed for six years for extensive renovations. During the refurbishment, the original detective office was uncovered and although it had been used as a storeroom for decades, the room had been preserved and will now be transformed into a visitor centre. It is rare for detective offices to leave a physical trace. However, it is not only the physical environment of Victorian and Edwardian police detectives which has been hidden over time but also the history of their occupational lives and everyday activities, as there has been minimal research into how detective police departments functioned, who staffed them, what their roles and duties were, and how the detective officers operated on a daily basis.

Through a detailed analysis of archival material, this chapter examines the management and functions of the borough detective offices, the selection and training of detective officers, their duties and routine practices. It assesses the impact of organisational structure and internal management on the development of regional police detective departments and detective procedures. In relation to individual detective officers, it identifies the characteristics of regional detectives and key changes in their background, recruitment and abilities, as they evolved throughout the period under study. Furthermore, it provides new and previously unpublished research on the professionalisation of borough detective departments, in relation to the pivotal role of detective superintendents, detective office management and routine operational procedures, the deployment of divisional detectives, detective training and the selection of detective officers with specialist skills, all of which had an impact on the development of crime investigation.

As established in Chapter 2, the detective departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham were created between 1839 and 1845. From the outset they were well

organised within the operational structure of their respective police forces, with the gradual increase in detective officers throughout the period under study thus demonstrating that, despite the lack of attention paid to detective policing in the historiography, there was a clear focus on crime detection from the beginning of the new police. This chapter further supports that contention and provides a solid context for the analysis of crime detection techniques in Chapters 4 and 5.

There has been little research in this specific area to date, with the exception of the work of Haia Shpayer-Makov, which is mostly focused on the Metropolitan Police albeit with some references to borough detective departments.[1] However, her research is mainly based on the testimony of head constables to the 1877 departmental inquiry into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police and is not supported by archival evidence. Joanne Klein and David Churchill both present important research on the occupational lives of borough police officers, but their focus is on the uniformed police rather than on detectives.[2]

Extending the research presented in Chapter 2, this chapter examines the organisation and personnel of borough detective departments, including ancillary staff, such as clerks, coroner's officers and bridewell keepers. The number of detective officers in the three borough forces is calculated for the first time, and the relationship between the central and divisional detectives discussed. Changes to the selection process and requisite qualifications of new recruits to the detective department are identified, and the probationary period and initial training is established. As in Chapter 2, the research is based on a study of watch committee records from local archives and police collections. Regional archival data is compared to formal data collated by government departments such as the Inspectors of Constabulary reports. Additional evidence is provided from newspaper sources.

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[1] Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9.
[2] David Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City: The Police and the Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1; Joanne Klein, *Invisible Men: The Secret Lives of Police Constables in Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 1.

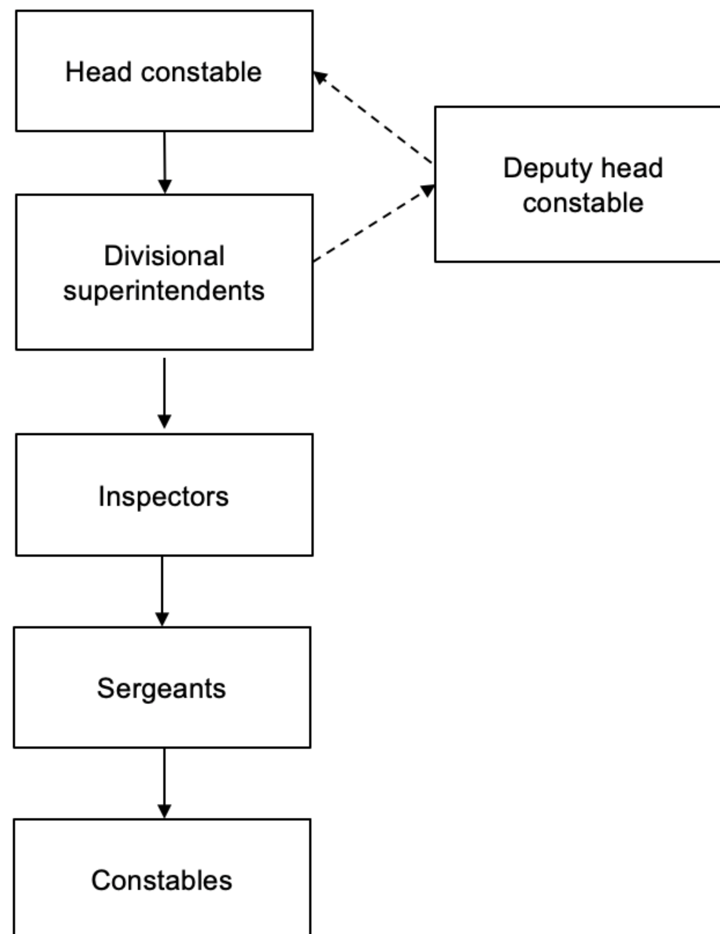
The chapter begins with an overview of the organisational structure of police detective departments and an examination of departmental personnel. This is followed by a more focused study of detective police officers, including their background and characteristics. The final section is dedicated to an analysis of the multifaceted and often complex roles undertaken by detective officers, and a detailed study of their daily routine.

3.1. Organisational structure: detective roles and hierarchy

As established in Chapter 2, the head constable was appointed by the borough watch committee as head of the police force (see Section 2.1), under whom the hierarchical ranks were organised and managed. There was no established or preordained organisational structure for regional forces and not only the titles of specific roles, such as head constable,[3] varied between the three borough police forces, but the ranks and the classes within them changed throughout the period. However, a more or less basic structure has been maintained to the present day.

[3] As noted in Section 2.1, the term 'head constable' will be used for that of the chief officers for all three borough forces.

Figure 3.1. Organisational chart of English regional police forces, 1836-1914.



The role of the head constable and the impact on crime detection was examined in Section 2.3.2, whereas this chapter focuses on the subordinate ranks integral to the detective department. The organisational structure of all three borough police forces included, at various times, a deputy (or assistant) head constable which was linked, to a certain extent, to the role of detective superintendent. This will be examined in detail in the context of the internal management of the detective police department in Section 3.1.1. Within the ranks below that of deputy head constable, there were further supplementary classes, which were specific to the individual borough police forces, and which changed over time. For example,

in 1872, the Inspectors of Constabulary noted eleven classes with the rank of the inspector in Liverpool Borough Police.[4] By the following year, the number of classes had been reduced to nine.[5] These additional ranks included sub-classes, such as deputy superintendents, chief inspectors and sub-inspectors, which were modified at different times throughout the constabularies' development in order to regulate pay and rewards.

The ranks within the detective department were delineated in conformance with the uniformed divisions of the police force. In the primary sources, such as the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, the distinction between the two was inconsistently recorded or omitted altogether. This was also often the case in the borough watch committee minutes, in which detective ranks were often only noted in relation to individual promotions or demotions, comparisons with other constabularies, or discussions about pay and rewards. Therefore, it is difficult to chart changes within the organisational structure of individual police forces. The distinction between detective officers who operated in the central detective department and those engaged in divisional detective duties is similarly unclear, which poses a considerable challenge when analysing the role of plain-clothes and uniformed officers and the operational differences between them. However, it is clear from the archival evidence that the role of the detective superintendent was crucial to the development of detective department practices and to crime investigation.

3.1.1. The detective superintendent as the linchpin in the evolution of detective practice

The borough police forces, unlike the Metropolitan Police, had nascent detective superintendents (also referred to as 'indoor superintendents') from the earliest days of the new police.[6] However, despite the instrumental and multifaceted role of detective superintendents in regional forces throughout the nineteenth century, there has been little

[4] *Reports of IOC*, 1873, 141.
[5] *Reports of IOC*, 1874, 145.
[6] The highest rank in the first years of the detective department at Scotland Yard was inspector.

research into their function and responsibilities, nor any examination of their impact on the evolution of detective policing and crime investigation. Churchill describes the role and duties of the indoor superintendents in the Liverpool and Manchester forces as a combination of office work, such as report writing, taking responsibility for lost and stolen property, and crime detection.[7] Shpayer-Makov limits her examination of the characteristics of detective superintendents to their lack of higher education due to internal recruitment.[8]

Despite the absence of any historiographical attention to this rank, it is evident from the archival sources that detective superintendents were appointed to lead and manage detective policing from the inception of the detective departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. In the latter two cities, this dates from the creation of the new police. When the position for the first indoor superintendent of the Manchester police was advertised in 1839, the requirements for the post were:

> he will be expected to possess a general knowledge of the character of offences; to take measures when necessary for the detection and securing of offenders, and for procuring all necessary evidence; he will be required, in case of emergency, and in the absence of the head constable, to take charge of the police force; will have to conduct the police correspondence, and to take charge of the police reports, and all of the books and papers connected with police affairs, as also of all stolen property and police stores.[9]

The first appointee was a Mr Davies, about whom there is no surviving information.[10] He was soon replaced by Richard Beswick (see Section 2.2.4). There is no record of the requisite qualifications for the first detective superintendents in the Liverpool and Birmingham Police, and all three forces, including Manchester after the first appointment, recruited for this role internally during the first decades of their existence, which was in line with the general

[7] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 52.
[8] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 69.
[9] *The Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser,* 18 May 1839, 4.
[10] Ibid.*,* 8 June 1839, 4.

practice of internal recruitment exercised by the new police forces.[11] In Birmingham, the first head constable immediately appointed his close colleague William Hall, with whom he had already been collaborating in crime investigation, as head of the detective department. On Inspector Hall's resignation, internal candidates only were invited to submit testimonials for the vacancy.[12]

When the detective department was formally established in Liverpool in 1845, the function and responsibility of the newly appointed indoor superintendent, Lawrence Kehoe, was clearly stated. He was to take charge of 'all the clerks, the procedures, and the detective department', ensuring that anyone calling at the office was 'received with attention and politeness'. In addition, he was required to make sure that all cases requiring the detective department's attention were met with 'the most prompt and energetic measures, which should be taken immediately, especially in relation to the recovery of stolen property and the apprehension of thieves'.[13] Furthermore, the indoor superintendent was to prepare evidence for the police court's daily proceedings, which he would attend on behalf of the head constable. Although the indoor superintendent received the same salary as the two outdoor superintendents, he also received a 'house, rent, taxes and water' and was to be accommodated next door to the detective police office. From this central location he was expected to meet the head constable every morning to confer on specific cases.[14]

In Birmingham, the role and duties of the detective superintendent developed significantly through the 1840s and 1850s. In 1848, a subcommittee of the watch committee recommended that the detective inspector should also be appointed prison keeper 'to take charge of the prisoners and criminal department.'[15] In 1851, a special subcommittee was

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[11] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 62.
[12] Birmingham Archives and Collections (hereafter BAC), BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee Minute Book (hereafter Watch Committee), 18 March 1845.
[13] Liverpool Record Office (hereafter LRO), 352 POL/1/2, Orders of the Watch Committee to the Head Constable (hereafter Watch Committee), 10 January 1845.
[14] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force of the Metropolitan Police* (hereafter *Report on Detective Force*) (London: HMSO, 1878), 121.
[15] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/3, Watch Committee, 26 September 1848.

appointed to inquire into the organisation and management of the detective department, in relation to the administrative procedures and the recording of the investigation of criminal cases. In consequence, the watch committee issued a new set of regulations for the management of the detective department which were mostly concerned with pay and jurisdiction. However, the detective officers were henceforth required to enter daily reports into the appropriate ledger books, recording the steps taken during the investigation of specific criminal cases, thus detailing their daily activities.[16]

During the reorganisation of the Birmingham Police in 1858, further changes were made in the detective department, which formalised the detective superintendent's role. These included:

> power during the absence of the chief superintendent from his office, to write letters on special business, to telegraph, to have handbills printed and distributed, to order the execution of warrants, to assist police officers from other towns, to send prisoners for trial out of the borough, or to county petty sessions, and to act generally in cases of emergency.

The detective superintendent was also required to report in writing every morning to the head constable and prepare a weekly list of all robberies committed within the borough, and any other business deemed necessary by his superior for his regular report to the watch committee.[17]

This marks a significant shift in the role of the detective superintendent in some borough forces, which has not been researched to date and yet had a direct impact on the hierarchy of the entire police force and its management. In Birmingham, not only was the rank upgraded to superintendent in 1858, but the incumbent was empowered to deputise for the head constable in his absence and held some financial responsibility. This key change is also evident in the Manchester Police. In 1868, when the Manchester Watch Committee

[16] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/4, Watch Committee, 16 December 1851.
[17] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/7, Watch Committee, 20 April 1858.

advertised the post of detective superintendent in the local and national newspapers, the vacancy was published as a dual role including that of deputy head constable, for which the watch committee required an officer 'of experience in the detection of crime, and possessed of the requisite qualifications for the superintendence and management of the detective branch'.[18] The successful candidate would further be required to deputise for the head constable when necessary. In addition, he was required to collaborate closely with the head constable on matters relating to crime investigation.

From the beginning of the detective department in Liverpool, the indoor superintendent worked closely with the head constable and was required to consult him 'on all intricate and important cases'.[19] He stood in for his superior in court and acted on the head constable's direct orders in relation to specific crime cases. In 1861, when the watch committee raised concerns about the number of burglaries committed in the borough, the head constable instructed the indoor superintendent to organise a night patrol of detective officers in the neighbourhoods in which the offences were being committed. He also required him to arrange visits to public houses and beerhouses known as 'resorts of thieves'.[20] This measure was carried out effectively and, during the following week, the head constable reported that there had only been one burglary and one attempted burglary in the targeted areas. There had also been two arrests. For these initiatives, the indoor superintendent was free to select 'the fittest men' from the force to perform detective duties.[21] HC Greig later confirmed that the indoor superintendent was exclusively appointed to supervise the force's detective branch and to ensure its efficiency, as well as assessing serious crime cases, such as homicide, and selecting individual detective officers to lead specific investigations.[22]

In 1878, the Liverpool Watch Committee instigated an inquiry into the force's

[18] Manchester Archives and Local History (hereafter MALH), GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/7, Watch Committee Minutes (hereafter Watch Committee), 19 March 1868.
[19] LRO, 352 POL/1/1, Watch Committee, 10 January 1845.
[20] LRO, 352 POL/2/2, Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee (hereafter Head Constable), 16 September 1861.
[21] LRO, 352 POL/1/1, Watch Committee, 10 January 1845.
[22] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.

detective department. Similarly to the Birmingham Police, this resulted in the formulation of a new set of rules for the role of the detective superintendent on the recommendation of the head constable, emphasising the importance of this pivotal role. The regulations stipulated that the detective superintendent was responsible for the management and daily operations of the detective department, which included undertaking correspondence and communications relating to detective business, recording the duties of detective officers and maintaining the office books and ledgers. He was required to attend the detective office every morning at 9 a.m. to receive reports from and give instructions to his subordinates, after which he had to attend the police court and enter any police-related matters arising from the proceedings into the court memorandum book. He also had to ensure that details of felonies were circulated to all police stations and bridewells within the borough. In addition, the detective superintendent was to assume full responsibility for overseeing serious crime cases, assisting more inexperienced officers with the management of prisoners, and directing detective constables to visit 'licensed houses, brothels and other places with a view to efficiently carry out the provisions of the Prevention of Crimes Act'.[23]

At this time, there was no formal change to the rank or role of the detective superintendent within the wider force hierarchy in Liverpool. However, when HC Nott-Bower was appointed in 1881, he recommended that the watch committee sanction a new role of assistant head constable, who would deputise for the head constable and oversee all divisions, especially in the management of discipline. Nott-Bower further stipulated that any future appointment for the role of detective superintendent should be incorporated into the assistant head constable's duties, which would extend to the supervision and direct management of the detective department and its investigative work.[24] The dual role was in conformance with similar changes in the organisational structure of the Manchester and Birmingham forces.

[23] LRO, 352 POL/1/15, Watch Committee, 7 April 1879.
[24] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, *Report of the Head Constable on the Organization of the Police Force,* Head Constable, 1883, 22-23.

Concomitant with the evolution of the detective superintendent's role was also a gradual change in the profile and abilities of candidates for this rank. The earliest evidence of this development is in the Manchester Police in 1868, when the watch committee advertised for the dual role of deputy head constable and detective superintendent, with the deliberate intention of securing an external appointment of 'a more responsible officer', contrary to the usual practice of internal promotion.[25] Prior to this, the detective superintendents had been promoted through the ranks and had begun their policing careers as uniformed officers, typically recruited from the working class, for which the level of education required upon initial appointment was the ability to read and write.[26] The previous holder of the post in the Manchester Police was John Maybury who, like his predecessor, had joined the police as a night watchman. Aged 44, Maybury was born in Manchester and his father was a chair maker.[27] During his 17 years of service he had risen through the ranks until his promotion to detective inspector. One of his subordinate detective officers, William Henderson, who later became head constable in Leeds, described Maybury as 'very illiterate', commenting that he 'could do very little more than write his own name'.[28]

When the new post of deputy head constable and detective superintendent was advertised in 1868, the watch committee received 33 applications and the final candidates were from Glasgow, Barnstaple, London, Glastonbury, Forfar, Tredegar and Cheltenham. After lengthy interviews, Edwin Coathupe from South Wales was appointed to the position.[29] In contrast to Maybury, Coathupe had a much higher social status, as his father was a gentleman landowner. He had studied medicine and was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, his first appointment being assistant surgeon at the Tredegar Ironworks, after which he joined the detective department of the Metropolitan Police. He served in the London force for three years before returning to Wales as chief surgeon.[30]

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[25] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/7, Watch Committee, 30 January 1868.
[26] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 63.
[27] Evidence was taken from his baptism record and the 1851 census.
[28] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 133.
[29] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/7, Watch Committee, 19 March 1868.
[30] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 174-175.

A similar change took place in the Liverpool Police after concerns were raised about the efficiency of the detective superintendent, Lawrence Kehoe, who had held the post for 18 years. Aged 69, the watch committee considered that he was no longer able to perform his duties and it was agreed that he had been delegating his primary duties to senior members of the detective department due to his failing health. Following the inquiry, DSI Kehoe took retirement. In his testimony to the committee, HC Greig stated that he would require ‘a man of better education’ to fulfil the role in future, adding that a combination of education and experience would be ‘valuable’.[31] Kehoe was replaced by George Williams, an educated man who had already served as head constable of Wigan Police.[32]

However, these developments in relation to the role and characteristics of the detective superintendent continued to be subject to change and regional variations throughout the remainder of the period under study. In Birmingham, successive detective superintendents were recruited internally and at the point of change to a wider role jointly with that of deputy head constable, the existing incumbent was upgraded into the post.[33] When George Glossop was further promoted to head constable in 1869, he maintained close control of the detective department and resumed direct management, to ensure its ‘efficiency and harmonious working’.[34]

In Manchester, when Edwin Coathupe resigned from his dual role of deputy head constable and detective superintendent in 1876 to become head constable of Bristol Borough Police, the watch committee filled the vacancy once again by advertising in the newspapers and inviting applications from outside the force. They appointed a Captain Irwin.[35] Yet, in 1881, when DHC Malcolm Wood was promoted to head constable, the watch committee advertised for his replacement as deputy head constable only, with no reference to the superintendence of the detective department, from which it might be inferred that the

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[31] LRO, 352 POL/2/8, *Detective Department. Minutes of Evidence taken by the Watch Committee* (hereafter *Detective Department*), Head Constable, 1878, 3-4.
[32] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 327.
[33] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/8, Watch Committee, 30 November 1858.
[34] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee, 25 May 1869.
[35] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/11, Watch Committee, 6 April 1876.

two roles had become separate during the previous incumbent's tenure.[36] When Superintendent George Watson was transferred from A Division to manage the detective department in 1905, he was accorded the additional responsibilities of deputising for the head constable, as there was no formal deputy head constable role at the time.[37]

Thus, it can be argued that in all three borough police forces the detective superintendent's role was more closely aligned with that of the head constable than of the other divisional superintendents, even leading to the integration of the detective superintendent's duties with those of a deputy head constable, albeit not always on a permanent basis. This signifies the prominence and increasingly indispensable nature of this role and, by association, the greater importance of crime detection over crime prevention. The detective superintendents gradually behaved more like chief operating officers, not only leading criminal investigations, but also ensuring the smooth running of the entire force as deputy head constables. In addition, as experienced detective officers, they continued to investigate crime cases whilst managing and overseeing their subordinates in the detective office. Furthermore, there is some evidence of a preference for external candidates with higher levels of education to fulfil this key role. Although these changes were not consistently applied within each of the police forces under study, it is apparent that the role and duties of the detective superintendent were discussed by the watch committees in greater detail as the new police forces evolved. The variation may be explained by the annual changes in those elected to the watch committee, the appointment of successive head constables, and internal issues such as relationships between individual officers within the hierarchy.

In summary, there were no universally accepted guidelines for the appointment and role of detective superintendents, which relied on the decisions of individual watch committees, influenced to a certain extent by the head constable in response to local needs and according to their perceptions of internal management. However, it is clear from the evidence from all three borough police forces that the detective superintendents held a

[36] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/13, Watch Committee, 10 February 1881.
[37] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/35, Watch Committee, 14 December 1905.

unique position within the organisational structure, which has been overlooked by academic research. They were in operation from the earliest years of the new borough police, they worked in close collaboration with the head constables, at times assuming the formal role of deputy head constable, and they were responsible for everyday operations, as well as being practitioners of crime investigation. During this period, there was the beginning of a shift in recruitment for this post, albeit not consistently applied, which reflected their complex responsibilities, and thus the requisite qualifications for such a post included a greater degree of education. The detective superintendents were instrumental in the development of detective practice in the borough police forces and this vital role, as revealed in this thesis, would benefit from the further study of evidence from other borough police forces.

3.1.2. Detective numbers: comparative data, 1836-1914

To date, there has been no published data to calculate how many detective police officers there were during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nor has there been any attempt to compile the actual numbers within any regional detective police department. Shpayer-Makov recorded 28 detective officers in Liverpool in 1877, out of 1,200 police officers and 16 in Birmingham, within a force of 520.[38] This data was extracted from the 1877 departmental commission into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police and does not correlate with the Inspectors of Constabulary report for the same year, which recorded 35 detective officers in Liverpool (the figure for Birmingham was accurately recorded).[39] However, the Inspectors of Constabulary reports are more consistent with the archival data compiled for the rest of the decade. Churchill published comparative data on police strength and police to population ratios in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester, which he extracted

[38] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 44.
[39] *Reports of IOC*, 1878, 157.

mainly from judicial statistics and archival sources but, although this is an interesting and enlightening study, it does not differentiate between uniformed and detective officers.[40]

In order to gain an accurate picture of how many detective police officers were operating in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham within this period, and to compare the provision of detective policing for each city, data was extracted from the judicial statistics and the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, supported where possible by watch committee minutes. As a full range of data was not recorded in any of the primary sources, nor was there a consistent format for reporting, the information has been compiled and compared in so far as it was reasonably calculable, notwithstanding inaccuracies in the original recording and in the inconsistency between primary sources. In the returns of the judicial statistics, the number of 'detective officers' was recorded but, as there is no accompanying detail, it is unclear whether only operational detective officers were counted or whether auxiliary staff, such as clerks, were included in the tally. More detailed information about detective departments was included in the reports of the Inspectors of Constabulary, also beginning in 1857. However, the recording and content of this data is inconsistent, as the number of detective officers was not compiled for all police forces for all years and, as it is presented mostly in a narrative format, the quality of the information differs, even for constabularies within the same inspection district. Nevertheless, in the available data there is a greater delineation between detective officer ranks, divisional detective officers and also clerical detective staff. Finally, the inconsistency of the reporting of detective strength also persists in the archival data. Birmingham Watch Committee recorded a regular count of detective officers, whereas reporting was much more variable in Manchester and Liverpool, where it was usually in response to queries about policing and police numbers. This inconsistency is likely due to much more systematic and regular recording of overall police strength in Birmingham than in the other two police forces, which was set by the first head constable, Francis Burgess (see Section 2.2.5), and which remained the case throughout the century.

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[40] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 42.

For the purposes of this study, where identification is possible, the number of active detective officers has been collated, excluding administrative staff, such as clerks, beadles and storekeepers, as either these roles were fulfilled by acting detective officers, or by ancillary staff who did not perform investigative work (see Section 3.3.1). However, divisional officers have been included in the study where appropriate, as they undertook an investigative role. In order to ensure maximum accuracy, coverage of available data was mapped. Specific years were selected for comparison according to the points at which there were the most comprehensive figures, rather than using regular intervals as the gaps in the data do not conform to this type of modelling. Within this criterion there is insufficient data on the number of detective officers available prior to 1859, or after 1891, to yield meaningful results or analysis. The number of detective officers was compared to the overall strength of police in each borough and compiled in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Detective police strength in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, 1859-1891, giving absolute numbers of detective officers and detective-to-force strength ratios.

Year	**Liverpool**		**Manchester**		**Birmingham**	
1859	20	1:49	9	1:67	9	1:40
1861	18	1:55	8	1:82	14	1:26
1866	21	1:35	24	1:27	9	1:41
1870	29	1:27	41	1:18	12	1:33
1873	32	1:24	51	1:14	10	1:45
1876	35	1:25	50	1:15	17	1:30
1880	37	1:24	62	1:12	19	1:27
1886	36	1:27	24	1:36	17	1:32
1891	-	-	35	1:29	23	1:26

Sources: *Reports of IOC*, 1858-1886; *Judicial Statistics*, 1861-1891; LRO, 352 POL/1, Orders of the Watch Committee to the Head Constable, 1859-1891; MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee, Watch Committee Minutes,1859-1891; BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1, Watch Committee Minute Book,1859-1891. Detective officer-to-force strength ratio is given to the nearest whole number.

The initially lower ratio of detective officers to force strength in Liverpool is explained by the inclusion of the River and Dock Police in the annual returns, which were excluded from the statistics after 1863. The most significant change in detective strength was the sharp rise within the Manchester Police in the late 1860s. This is likely to be attributed to the watch committee inquiry into the efficiency of the borough detective force in 1865, as referred to in Section 2.2.4, of which one of the conclusions was that in four out of the five cities visited, the number of detective police was of a higher proportion to the whole police force than in Manchester.[41] The Inspector of Constabulary confirmed that an additional 74 constables were engaged by the Manchester Police in 1867, and the number of detective officers increased to 49.[42] The apparent decrease in the late 1880s in Manchester is due to a difference in the recording between the two sets of primary sources, as the number of detective officers was generally reported as lower in the judicial statistics compared to the Inspectors of Constabulary reports. The latter had ceased to record detective officers by this period. For the other two constabularies, the recorded figures are more consistent between the datasets.

Although the statistical data is, to a certain extent, limited by the lack of reliable and accurate primary sources, it provides evidence of an overall increase in detective policing in the three cities throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, with the rise in numbers being more gradual in Liverpool and Birmingham than in Manchester where a marked increase was initiated in 1867. The periods during which detective strength appeared to decrease were due to annual variations such as temporary recruitment issues, rather than policy changes or watch committee decisions. However, the primary sources do not clearly nor consistently indicate the delineation between detective officers employed in the central office and those operating in the uniformed divisions.

The data further demonstrates that Liverpool and Manchester had a generally higher ratio of detective officers within their respective forces than Birmingham. Interestingly, a

[41] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/6, Watch Committee, 3 May 1866.
[42] *Reports of IOC*, 1868, 92.

comparison of detective numbers between Liverpool and London in 1873, undertaken by a watch committee subcommittee, reported that the ratio of detectives to strength of police force in the Metropolitan Police was 1:40, whereas in Liverpool (including the Dock and River Police) it was 1:29, despite the well-documented and significant increase in divisional detectives in the Metropolitan Police following a Home Office review in 1868.[43] Further study comparing the borough forces' detective provision and that of the Metropolitan Police and to examine this apparently disproportionate number would be valuable.

3.1.3. Divisional detectives

As established in Chapter 2, there were plain-clothes police officers investigating crime from the earliest days of the three borough forces. Clive Emsley acknowledges the 'inter-divisional' role of uniformed police who were assigned to plain-clothes duty to investigate specific crimes, such as pickpocketing, as situations arose.[44] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov examine the interchangeable nature of crime detection duties between uniformed and detective officers, concluding that the delineation is unclear as both contributed to crime detection and prevention. They argue that uniformed officers included crime investigation in their routine activities, such as house-to-house enquiries, as well as donning plain clothes when necessary.[45] Shpayer-Makov further posits that the role of detectives and plain-clothes officers continued to shift and remained ambiguous even after the establishment of the formal detective forces.[46] A study of the watch committee minutes of the three boroughs offers more insight into this complex and variable relationship.

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[43] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 35.
[44] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009), 58.
[45] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, "The Police Detective and Police History," in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950,* eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 4.
[46] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 104.

In an attempt to clarify the situation in the early decades of new policing, the report on the detective force of the Metropolitan Police explains that: ‘In the earlier days it had been the custom for men to be taken out of uniform and placed for a month at a time in plain-clothes to inquire into particular crimes as they arose’.[47] This was also true of the borough forces, as described in the borough detective police histories in Chapter 2. However, a more formal system of divisional detective policing was introduced into all three borough police forces prior to that of the Metropolitan Police, which took place in 1869. Liverpool Police had divisional detectives from the 1850s, and Manchester and Birmingham from the mid-1860s.

The archival evidence demonstrates that, although there were detectives assigned to the divisions in addition to the central office, the practice of temporary assignment of uniformed officers to plain-clothes detective duties continued. In Birmingham in 1874, following an increase in public disturbances throughout the borough, the head constable deployed four uniformed officers in each division to undertake plain-clothes duty to assist the effort to prevent these violent outbreaks.[48] The role of such officers was referred to formally as ‘temporary detective duties.’[49] In the same city in 1901, during a visit by David Lloyd George MP, a distinction was made in the arrangements, as noted in the watch committee minutes, between ‘plain clothes men’ and ‘detectives in plain clothes’.[50] This suggests that the two roles were distinctive and not necessarily interchangeable at this time. Furthermore, in 1903, Birmingham Watch Committee appointed a detective sergeant to ‘take charge of the plain-clothes officers’.[51]

The question of who managed the divisional detectives remains unclear and there is insufficient evidence in the primary sources to ascertain whether divisional detectives reported to their divisional superintendents, as in the Metropolitan Police, or to the detective superintendent. Edwin Coathupe maintained that when he was detective superintendent of

[47] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, iv.
[48] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/14, Watch Committee, 28 July 1874.
[49] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/22, Watch Committee, 27 November 1900.
[50] Ibid., 18 December 1901.
[51] Ibid., 2 Mar 1902.

the Manchester Police, he managed the detectives who worked centrally and those in the divisions: 'Everything emanated from me as the centre.'[52] He further explained that he allocated a detective inspector to each division, who received instructions from him and reported back to him on crime cases. The detective inspectors were assisted by other divisional detective officers.

In relation to the organisational structure of the borough police forces, it is clear from the evidence that divisional detectives played an increasingly formalised role in crime investigation and that uniformed officers continued to undertake temporary plain-clothes duty as required, throughout the period under study, thus supporting Shpayer-Makov's contention. At the same time, the role became less flexible and less interchangeable, with a much clearer distinction between the formal detective officers and those who adopted plain clothes for specific duties. Moreover, the deployment of divisional detectives played a key role in the recruitment and training of officers to work in the central detective office.

3.2. Detective officers: recruitment, probation and initial training

It is generally accepted by police historians that the first police officers in England were recruited from the working classes, predominantly from the countryside,[53] many of whom were agricultural labourers.[54] Klein confirms that, in the early decades of the twentieth century, new police officers generally had prior work experience in traditional working-class occupations, such as farmworkers, blacksmiths, carpenters and bakers. She further attests that the previous occupations of police recruits varied by place. For example, in Manchester many came from the textiles industry, whilst individuals with a background in mining joined the Liverpool Police.[55] In addition to their occupational experience, specific personal

[52] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 178.
[53] Carolyn Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community: The Formation of English Provincial Police Forces, 1856-80* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1984), 3.
[54] David Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England: Crime, Conflict and Control* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 47.
[55] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 14.

characteristics were preferred. Churchill highlights the requirements of early police recruits to be 'sober, steady, obedient, and physically capable', and able to discharge their duty efficiently and with personal restraint.[56]

The principle and practice of internal recruitment led to candidates for detective duties being selected from the general pool of recruits.[57] According to David Wall, during the early years of the new police, individuals were selected for higher office on the basis of their efficiency, which was assessed subjectively.[58] This was also true for detective police officers. As highlighted by Klein, many internal candidates for promotion were hampered by a lack of formal education, due to their working-class origins.[59] In the borough police forces, as officers were recruited from the working classes, the first detective officers were mostly from manual labouring roles, such as factory workers, and had basic levels of literacy and numeracy.[60]

HC Greig confirmed that recruitment to the Liverpool detective force was internal and 'never from outside'.[61] Most of his detective officers were agricultural labourers and sailors. In 1877, he described the composition of the detective department: 'The chief of department was a labourer, the next was a shoemaker, the next was a labourer, the next was a Scotch draper, then there was a farmer, a husbandman, a butcher, a shoemaker, and a bookseller'.[62] The first shoemaker referred to was likely Charles Carlisle, who joined the Liverpool Police in 1849 as a special constable. After two years' service, he was deployed for plain-clothes duty and later transferred into the detective department. He became detective inspector in 1860. When Detective Carlisle died in 1878, his obituary highlighted his role in the investigation into the aborted Fenian attack on Chester Castle. Also, his

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[56] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 44.
[57] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 62.
[58] David S. Wall, *The Chief Constables of England and Wales: The Socio-Legal History of a Criminal Justice Elite* (Farnham: Ashgate, 1998), 130.
[59] Joanne Klein, "'The Best Police Officer in the Force': Chief Constables and their Men, 1900-1939," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 125.
[60] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 64.
[61] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 121.
[62] Ibid., 130.

detective work was recognised by the French government, HRH Prince Arthur and the king of Belgium. The local stipendiary magistrate said, 'Considering that he had no legal training, he conducted the business of this court…in a manner entirely satisfactory to me'.[63] Carlisle's contemporary and close colleague, William Cozens, worked as a servant for a miller near his home town in Pembrokeshire, Wales before joining the Liverpool Police in 1846.[64] Together with Carlisle in 1852, Cozens was one of four police constables selected for plain-clothes duty to undertake a night-time patrol, targeting illicit drinking in the city.[65] He was promoted to detective inspector in 1871.[66] During his 37 years of service, he investigated some of the most important cases, including burglary, robberies, arson and murder. Like his former colleague, Charles Carlisle, he led police prosecutions in court.[67]

Although the police officers selected through internal recruitment for detective duties shared similar backgrounds to those described, Klein suggests that by the early 1900s, the calibre of new entrants to the profession had evolved due to an increase in the required standards of education and training. Her observations are made within the context of head constables but, as internal recruitment and promotion within the ranks was still prevalent, it can be inferred that the lower ranks were also more educated by this time.[68]

3.2.1. Internal recruitment and selection

In her detailed study of recruitment and selection procedures, Shpayer-Makov states that potential detective officers were required to spend an unspecified and variable period of time in uniform, before being considered for promotion into the detective department.[69] She further states that there was no specific criteria for selection, other than personal

[63] *The Liverpool Mercury*, 14 November 1878, 8.
[64] Ibid., 22 April 1884, 7.
[65] LRO, 352 POL/3/1, Head Constable's Special Order Book, 24 April 1852.
[66] LRO, 352 POL/1/11, Watch Committee, 22 February 1871.
[67] *The Liverpool Mercury*, 22 April 1884, 7.
[68] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 126.
[69] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 83-84.

characteristics such as intelligence, common sense, a good memory and an ability to carry out investigative work, the latter of which was considered to be an innate quality.[70] The combination of basic police training as a uniformed officer and the acquisition of 'police knowledge' enabled individuals to advance 'step-by-step' towards promotion into the detective department.[71] Emsley concurs with this assessment and adds determination and persistence to the list of desired characteristics for detective police officers.[72] In her study of early twentieth-century borough policing, Klein concludes that promotion into the detective department (and the higher ranks) was possible for all officers if they were 'sufficiently talented, well connected and lucky'.[73] The primary sources and archival data analysed in this study offers original insights into this important topic and demonstrates, for the first time, that the process of selection of detective officers in some borough police forces was more systematic and formalised than previously considered by police historians.

In Birmingham, the first detective police officers were selected by the newly-appointed head constable in 1842. After this, other police officers wishing to be promoted into the detective department were required to apply by submitting a testimonial to the watch committee. In 1845, candidates presented testimonials for the role of inspector of the detective department.[74] (Archival evidence suggests that increases in detective numbers usually took place following agreement by the watch committee, and recruitment practices varied.) By 1867, a more formal system had been created for the appointment of detective officers, by which potential applicants were attached to the police divisions, which provided 'a school from which to recruit the regular detective force'.[75] Two years later, when vacancies arose in the detective department, a subcommittee of the watch committee, including the chair and head constable, was instructed to compile a list of possible candidates from the uniformed force. The subcommittee considered the character and

[70] Ibid., 77-78.
[71] Ibid., 81.
[72] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 167.
[73] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 315.
[74] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/1, Watch Committee, 18 March 1845.
[75] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/12, Watch Committee, 12 March 1867.

qualifications of individual constables and then proposed three whom they considered to be the 'most qualified' for appointment as honorary sergeants in the detective department.[76] HC Bond explained how, in the Birmingham force, promotion into the detective department was based on merit rather than seniority and service, and that a specific period in uniform was not necessary. Bond developed his own system in which he gave 'papers of commendation' to an individual police officer whose work deserved notice, such as arresting a burglar whilst on regular patrol. There was no requirement for a specific number of commendations to be received before the officer gained a stripe but after receiving three stripes, he could apply for promotion. Selection for the detective department was then made from the officers who had received recognition in this way: 'I take him, and I find that he has perhaps found out eight or ten burglaries; he is a sharp man; he is a thoroughly good-charactered man…and in due time he will slip into the detective department.' There was no time frame to this selection process: 'I should put him in as soon as I thought he had got sufficient experience and stability as a constable.' HC Bond stated that this process would not take less than 18 months and, as before, the probationary period would take place in one of the divisions, to enable him to 'work up to the grade of a detective at head-quarters'. He concluded that 'a man becomes a detective merely from his own innate genius', and that the integrated system of deploying detective officers within the divisions enabled promotion into the detective department to occur 'naturally'.[77] However, he further stated that if he had the opportunity in the future to recruit officers into the Birmingham force with a higher level of education, he would replace the probationary period with learning from legal textbooks, such as *Oke's Magisterial Synopsis*, as an aid to crime investigation.[78]

HC Greig of the Liverpool Police stated that it was his responsibility to select potential candidates for promotion to the detective office, for which individuals had to demonstrate capability and intelligence. A candidate must have undertaken uniformed police duties for at

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[76] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee, 25 May 1869.
[77] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 116.
[78] Ibid., 118.

least six months before being considered for the detective department, during which time he could be deployed on minor cases. If Greig judged an officer to be 'particularly intelligent…very brilliant or very promising indeed', he could be promoted after just three months of regular 'outdoor' duty. The head constable further disclosed that there were no examinations for detective officers, as awareness of their ability 'gradually dawns on one'. Moreover, this appraisal of an individual's detective ability could be indicated by external parties, such as the local magistrate who might say, 'I notice one of your men, he is very sharp and would make a "good detective"'. When the ability of an individual officer was highlighted, the head constable then asked his highest-ranking colleagues for their recommendation, on which he would judge whether the officer should be admitted into the detective department.[79] HC Greig conceded that two or three police officers had been promoted to the detective department within six months of joining the force, but that such cases were very rare. He added that most detectives had been in the force for two to three years before joining the detective department: 'it takes a long time to make them thoroughly fit for their detective duties, because you must be very careful what you do in all detective matters'. He reinforced the necessity of detective officers having prior experience as uniformed patrolmen: 'I think that the street police and out-door experience is indispensable in order for them to acquire a general knowledge of police duties'. Very few men, perhaps as many as 12, had been promoted after one year, but the majority would spend 18 months to two years in uniform before being transferred to the detective department. Greig concluded: 'I have a very peculiar opinion about a detective. I think he is born, not made', implying that the gift of detection is rare: 'they all have their own talents and specialities, but a detective requires a great amount of keenness and judgment', and it took time to spot those qualities.[80]

The archival data offers more detail on the selection process in the Liverpool Police, in which the detective superintendent played a more prominent role in the assessment and

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[79] Ibid., 121.
[80] Ibid., 130-131.

recommendation of individual officers than indicated by HC Greig. The evidence confirms that the system described by Greig had been in place since at least 1860.[81] In 1869, DSI Lawrence Kehoe reported on selection to the watch committee, stating that he maintained close observation of potential detective officers over a period of several years. He described how he observed uniformed officers, for example when they were preparing cases for court, and then he selected the 'most intelligent' for special duties in the detective office. They were initially required to work on 'less important' cases whilst the experienced detectives were deployed elsewhere. In this way, they gradually acquired 'a moderate knowledge of detective duty' and when vacancies arose, selections would be made from among them. However, their promotion would be held in check for a further period of probation. This method was similar to the approach taken in Birmingham, whereby candidates were placed in the divisions to acquire skills and to demonstrate their ability. DSI Kehoe concluded that whilst he accepted that 'a moderate amount of education' was desirable for detective officers, there were other qualifications required which he considered to be more important, such as 'absolute reliability' which, he contested, could only be determined by close knowledge of individual officers over an extended probationary period. He added that general police experience was equally necessary.[82]

Despite an absence of references to the recruitment and selection of detective officers in the Manchester force, close study of the procedures in Liverpool and Birmingham confirms that, from the beginning of these new police forces, individuals were carefully selected following observation, their recruitment into the detective department being based on their skills and ability to undertake investigative work. Furthermore, detective officer recruitment could be considered to be more effective in the borough forces than in the Metropolitan Police, as the 1877 inquiry into the force's detective department concluded that the selection of detectives by divisional superintendents was unsatisfactory, due to subjectivity, favouritism and a lack of knowledge among the selected officers: 'The divisional

[81] LRO, 352 POL/2/1, Head Constable, 22 September 1860.
[82] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.

detectives are, as a rule, said to be the least educated and the least intelligent men in the force.'[83] The commission recommended that the head of the detective department take responsibility for the appointment of detectives within the entire Metropolitan force. This was based on the model already in place in the borough police forces, whereby the detective superintendent was generally responsible for the promotion of uniformed officers into the detective department. It could be argued therefore that the most satisfactory selection procedures were those of borough forces, such as Liverpool and Birmingham.

3.2.2. Probation, initial training and promotion

Detective officer probation and training feature in the police historiography but in-depth research is limited, and more attention has been focused on the Metropolitan Police than on the borough detective departments. In relation to the former, Shpayer-Makov states that the probationary period for newly-appointed detectives was a minimum of three months, which could be extended to 12. During this period, they would undergo initial training. She does not refer to the probationary period required by other constabularies.

In reference to training, Shpayer-Makov states categorically that in general there was no formal training provision nor specific training requirements for selection into detective departments during the Victorian period, and that the initial training received on joining the force was deemed sufficient for detective duties. She further asserts that there was no standardised system or programme for police training, and that the detective training was mainly 'on the job'. Shpayer-Makov refers to the Metropolitan Police as having the most 'regulated' training programme and cites Metropolitan Police Commissioner Edward Henry as having transformed police recruit training through the establishment of a training school for the force in 1907, based on an earlier prototype that he had initiated five years earlier, which included basic detective training. She further states that no other detective police

[83] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, xi.

training school existed in England within the time period of her study. However, she does not offer any examples or evidence from other constabularies to support this conclusion.[84]

As already noted, Emsley contends that detective training was not a priority for head constables and, where it did exist, it was of a rudimentary nature.[85] He concurs with Shpayer-Makov that initial training and the acquisition of detective skills was carried out ‘on the job’.[86] Klein confirms that, prior to the early twentieth century, training was informal with experience gained from new recruits shadowing more experienced officers, as well as acquiring information through informal contact in social settings.[87] Although Klein’s study is limited to uniformed officers, her research is relevant and applicable to detective officers. She states that, in the 1900s, new police recruits underwent both formal classroom and field training, although she does not offer a specific date for the introduction of these initiatives in borough forces.[88] Klein further observes that some watch committees were reluctant to sanction officer training, presumably due to the costs, and a universal probationary period and formalised training programme were not established until after 1918.[89]

Analysis of the archival data demonstrates that in Birmingham, once individual officers had been selected to undertake formal detective duties, they were required to pass a probationary period, after which they could be recommended to the watch committee to be appointed as a detective officer and receive the additional pay.[90] As previously stated, the probationary period took place in one of the divisions to enable the novice detective to ‘work up to a grade at headquarters.’ The probationer was required to submit a daily return of cases and types of crimes investigated, such as burglaries and thefts. The detective superintendent calculated the results either at the end of a month or after a six-month period. He then discussed the outcome with the head constable and if the individual’s investigative

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[84] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 97.
[85] Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History,* 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 1996), 73.
[86] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 10.
[87] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 26.
[88] Ibid., 11.
[89] Ibid., 25.
[90] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/12, Watch Committee, 12 March 1867.

work was not deemed successful, then the officer would be returned to uniformed duty.[91] There was no obvious information as to whether a demoted detective officer could be later reinstated.

In Liverpool, the probationary period of a newly-promoted detective officer was two years, after which they received their pay rise based on satisfactory performance.[92] The length of the probationary period for detectives in the Manchester Police was more flexible, as described by former detective superintendent, Edwin Coathupe: 'It would depend entirely on how long they remained, or would be according to their abilities to work…if I found a man useful I would keep him directly; if I found him not useful, or associating with people with whom he should not associate, I would send him back again.'[93]

In relation to initial detective training, study of the archival sources supports the consensus of police historians that there was no formal nor specific crime investigation instruction after officers had been selected for detective duties. HC Greig of the Liverpool Police acknowledged the lack of training, whilst recognising the need: 'it is very difficult to get detective officers, and to rear them; they want a great deal of training'. He reinforced the importance of basic police training, which lasted three weeks and comprised of being shown round the town, with visits to the railways, fire stations, public buildings and the post office. The uniformed probationer also spent time in court, where he was instructed to observe and memorise defendants so as to be able to recognise them in the event of their committing further offences.[94] According to Greig, this was essential to induct the new recruit into basic police duties and the discipline required for the job. It also saved time, as no further training was required for those appointed into the detective division.

Klein highlights that, in the early twentieth century, the Birmingham Police offered higher quality training than other constabularies, established by HC Rafter following his appointment in 1899. Recruits attended the Birmingham Police School at Digbeth police

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[91] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 117.
[92] LRO, 352 POL/2/1, Head Constable, 22 September 1860.
[93] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 178.
[94] Ibid., 125-126.

station for six to eight weeks, during which time they underwent classroom learning and drill, as well as external training in court and on patrol.[95] Local police historian John Reilly provides further evidence of the initial police training delivered at the police school, including a copy of the training schedule from 1905 which shows that recruits attended two one-hour sessions of 'school' every day.[96] By 1939, the school also provided detective training.[97]

As agreed unanimously by police historians, specific detective training was delivered 'on the job'. From the first decade of detective policing in Manchester, detective officers provided support and advice to uniformed officers throughout the divisions, which was an early form of training:

> a rule is established that in any case where a constable obtains information on particular matters connected with police business even should he be a perfect novice in the service, by naming the matter to his superintendent every assistance will be afforded him to bring his case to perfection, either by having an old and intelligent officer appointed to instruct him how to act, or by the personal advice and aid of the superintendent.[98]

According to HC Willis this was motivational, and it empowered uniformed officers to undertake crime investigation. It also provided informal training in crime detection for all recruits. In Liverpool, there was also a more formalised system of 'shadowing', which provided some specialised training for specific crimes, as explained by DSI Kehoe to the watch committee in 1869:

> Whenever practicable the younger detective constables are associated with their seniors, for the purpose of receiving instructions in the best and safest methods of performing duty; in some cases however this arrangement would operate prejudicially, especially in extensive cotton robberies, clerks and others absconding

[95] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 24-25.
[96] John Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Policing Birmingham* (Birmingham: West Midlands Police, 1989), 68-69.
[97] *The Birmingham Daily Post*, 29 April 1939, 18.
[98] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 2 July 1846.

> with large sums of money, and other important cases, when it has been found to be of advantage to employ those officers who have been accustomed to work together, and who have a specialty for such cases.[99]

HC Greig confirmed that this was the established practice for probationary detectives: 'I would always couple him at first with a detective constable of experience and long service, and would let them go together, and let him gradually pick up knowledge in that way'.[100]

After completion of the probationary period in the detective department, successful candidates were appointed and awarded detective pay. Promotions within the detective ranks were subject to further periods of probation. In Liverpool, novice detective officers undertook a probationary period, after which further promotion could ensue. Successful detective officers progressed from the first year to the second, for which a pay rise was awarded as 'a mark of distinction'. The basis of this initial promotion was good conduct and service. However, further promotion to higher ranks was based on merit and intelligence.[101]

Whilst the evidence supports the contention that there was no formal training for detective police officers in the nineteenth and the early decades of the twentieth centuries, informal 'on-the-job' training was more formalised and systematic than represented in the police historiography, with even some specialised 'shadowing' in Liverpool. The probation period for newly appointed detectives was variable, and successful completion depended on the assessment of superior officers. Initial police training for all recruits included court observation, which was important for the development of investigative skills. Moreover, the training school in Birmingham, which was established prior to 1901, was concomitant with that of the Metropolitan Police yet not mentioned in Shpayer-Makov's seminal work.

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[99] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[100] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 126.
[101] Ibid., 121.

3.2.3. Education and specialist skills

Evidence from the archival sources demonstrates that initiatives to improve the education and development of serving police officers date from the establishment of police libraries in the early decades of borough policing. Manchester's police reading room was introduced in 1846, 'for the use and benefit of police officers and constables'.[102] Its collection comprised local and national newspapers and periodicals, and donations of books from private collections. The proprietors of several Manchester-based newspapers offered free copies for police use, which were circulated through the divisions. Copies of national newspapers, such as the *London Daily News*, were filed in the detective office. The periodicals were of a general nature and covered topics such as politics, literature and science. In 1848, the library subcommittee proposed copies of *Chambers's Journal*, *Tait's Magazine* and *Jerrold's Magazine* to be placed in each of the divisions. However, the committee advised against these publications being placed in the detective office, as they might distract the officers from their investigative business.[103] The police reading room was closed in 1858, due to a lack of use, and the 1,153 volumes were donated to the Manchester Free Library.[104] Liverpool's police library opened in 1858 at Dale Street police station.[105] Donations were received from local benefactors, and police officers could request copies of specific publications according to their interests.[106] Similarly, a police library was first proposed in Birmingham in 1856, with divisional libraries being formed by 1861.[107]

As most police recruits were from a working class background with basic levels of literacy, the police libraries would have offered opportunities for further learning. However, the provision of reading rooms for the police, with the careful selection of material may

[102] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/13, Watch Committee, 3 December 1846.
[103] Ibid., 9 March 1848.
[104] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/4, Watch Committee, 4 March 1858.
[105] LRO, 352 POL/1/5, Watch Committee, 29 May 1858.
[106] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 6 February 1869.
[107] *Reports of IOC*, 1862, 39.

suggest an effort in social control in order to improve not only the officers' performance, but also their behaviour.[108]

In the late nineteenth century, there was a gradual shift towards the recruitment of police officers with higher levels of education. In borough police forces, such as Manchester and Liverpool, formal examinations and evening classes were introduced to improve the education of all officers, including detectives. According to Klein's study, in the early decades of the twentieth century, entrants to the police in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham were required to pass an education examination.[109] She further asserts that 'effective' head constables created opportunities for education and training for their serving officers.[110] However, she does not specify starting dates for these learning activities nor offer any detail. The archival evidence confirms these initiatives and provides further information.

In 1898, the Manchester Watch Committee resolved that all police constables should be required to pass an examination before appointment into the force or for promotion to a higher rank.[111] In addition, DHC Fell Smith recommended that 'a systematic course of instruction and examination' be adopted. The classes would be obligatory for new recruits and given under the direction of 'a competent officer' holding the minimum rank of inspector. They were to be held weekly and a report of the number of officers in attendance would be submitted to the head constable.[112] The only reference to content is familiarisation with the police instruction book provided to all members of the force. This is in conformance with the description of the components of the formal examinations for recruitment into the Metropolitan Police, as described by Shpayer-Makov, which comprised a knowledge of the police instruction book and 'general intelligence and aptitude'.[113]

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[108] This concords with the argument that reading rooms were used in mining communities to mitigate their behaviour and attitudes. See Iona Craig, "Control and Enlightenment: Nineteenth-Century Miners' Reading Rooms," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 20, no. 20 (2022): 1-12.
[109] Klein, *Invisible Men*, 13.
[110] Klein, "Best Police Officer," 136.
[111] Greater Manchester Police Archives (hereafter GMPA), Watch Committee Minutes (hereafter Watch Committee), Volume 4, 27 January 1989.
[112] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/25, Watch Committee, 27 January 1898.
[113] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 93.

On 15 September 1899, the newly-appointed head constable opened the first session of 'Educational Classes' for the Manchester Police. These voluntary lessons were provided by the Manchester School Board at the instigation of the watch committee. In his inaugural speech, HC Peacock declared that: 'promotion will be made solely by examination – the best educated, the most intelligent, and the best conducted men being promoted in preference to others who may have longer service but are devoid of these qualifications'.[114] Peacock further requested that law publications and copies of local government acts be placed in divisional police stations.[115] He also called for the reopening of the police library to support the officers' continuing education.[116] Following the introduction of the educational classes, the watch committee ordered a new manual to be printed for all police officers, which included the series of lectures given by the head constable.[117]

At the end of the first year, the Inspector of Constabulary reported that more than 200 officers had attended the evening classes in Manchester.[118] In 1900, the head constable and representatives of the watch committee visited police evening classes at three venues and reported that: 'There was abundant evidence of the most assiduous attention to their studies,' which included 'arithmetic, writing and shorthand'. Certificates in these skills were awarded by the Lancashire and Cheshire Union of Institutes and formal examinations were later introduced.[119] In 1907, HC Peacock requested that elementary evening classes for probationers should continue through the summer months and that there should be separate advanced classes for those already serving in the force. He further proposed that both elementary and intermediate classes be provided in reading and elocution.[120]

By 1900 in Liverpool, the watch committee required 'that detective sergeants and clerks must necessarily possess superior qualifications to those required for sergeants on

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[114] Eric J. Hewitt, *A History of Policing in Manchester* (Manchester: E. J. Mortem, 1979), 106.
[115] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/27, Watch Committee, 5 October 1899.
[116] Ibid., 29 November 1900.
[117] GMPA, Watch Committee, Volume 9, 26 October 1899.
[118] *Reports of IOC*, 1900, 117.
[119] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/29, Watch Committee, 29 November 1900.
[120] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/37, Watch Committee, 21 March 1907.

ordinary duty'.[121] A request for payment in the watch committee minutes in 1901 demonstrates that examinations were in place in the city's police force for promotion to the rank of inspector. Examination papers were set by Oxford University Press, which also provided the services of a 'controller' for supervision.[122] Similar evidence from 1907 refers to examinations for sergeants and constables.[123]

Internal recruitment into the detective police remained in place during the entire period under study. However, there was a need for detective officers with modern foreign language skills, as stated by Shpayer-Makov, for which watch committees recruited externally.[124] In 1877, HC Bond stated the necessity for police officers with knowledge of foreign languages, for which he recruited outside the force.[125] HC Greig of the Liverpool Police agreed that it was essential to have police officers with foreign language skills 'to worm out the secrets' of criminals by using their native tongue. He confirmed that recruitment for officers with these skills was external and that he paid five shillings for each time they worked as interpreters.[126] One such interpreter was Adrien D'Espiney, who held the rank of detective inspector. D'Espiney was a French speaker and although he was born in Liverpool, his mother, who worked as a teacher, was from France.[127] When he resigned in 1888, after being appointed head constable of Bootle Police, candidates for the vacant position were required to have 'a thorough knowledge of German and French (both colloquially and for correspondence), and other languages if possible'.[128] The post was advertised in the newspapers in Liverpool and Manchester, and the successful candidate was Charles Hippolyte Meyer who was recruited into the force with the rank of sub inspector and whose duties entailed acting as interpreter in the police court, assisting with 'foreign and

[121] LRO, 352 POL/2/11, Head Constable, 1 March 1900.
[122] LRO, 352 POL/1/31, Watch Committee, 20 May 1901.
[123] Ibid.,17 September 1907.
[124] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 65.
[125] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 118.
[126] Ibid., 126.
[127] 1861 England Census, RG9/2683, ancestry.com.
[128] LRO, 352 POL/2/11, Head Constable,19 March 1888.

other correspondence', and performing 'other duties in connection with the detective department'.[129] Meyer was a French national whose father was vice-consul for Germany.[130]

In 1900, the Liverpool Police's interpreter was Detective Sergeant Thomas Osborne, who had been a foreign languages teacher prior to joining the force.[131] Whilst serving in the police, he was granted permission by the watch committee to teach a Spanish class for the Birkenhead School Board.[132] In 1907, a payment was made by the watch committee to Joseph Petrovsky for acting as interpreter, although it is not clear whether this was an additional fee paid to a serving member of the force or to an external provider.[133]

In her study of the Detective Department of the Metropolitan Police, Rachael Griffin highlights the use of officers with modern foreign language skills, who were deployed for transporting prisoners to and from other countries, as well as translating evidence for the prosecution in trials at the Old Bailey.[134]

To summarise, throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, there were increasing opportunities for police officers to improve their basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, through general education classes, as well as receiving instruction in police-related topics such as law and policing guidance. However, although there is no evidence that these educational classes provided any instruction specifically related to crime investigation, detective officers would have benefited from improved levels of general education, which would have had an indirect impact on the performance of detective duties, such as the ability to write notes in shorthand and to prepare evidence for court cases more accurately and cogently. Furthermore, the archival evidence supports Shpayer-Makov's contention that officers with foreign language skills were recruited externally and employed as members of the detective department. This was particularly notable in Liverpool which, as

[129] LRO, 352 POL/1/21, Watch Committee, 16 October 1888.
[130] LRO, 283 ALP/3/1, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 29 June 1889, ancestry.com.
[131] 1881 England Census, RG11/3817, ancestry.com.
[132] LRO, 352 POL/1/27, Watch Committee, 25 September 1900.
[133] LRO, 352 POL/1/31, Watch Committee, 25 November 1907.
[134] Rachael Griffin, "Detective Policing and the State in Nineteenth Century England: The Detective Department of the Metropolitan Police, 1842-1878" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 2015), 99.

a seaport, would have had a considerable number of inhabitants for whom English was not their first language. As demonstrated, the police interpreters were from a higher social class and were well educated. This topic could be developed through further research.

3.3. Detective duties and daily routines

All three borough forces formed a separate detective department during the first years of their existence, as presented in Chapter 2. As confirmed by the recent discovery at Manchester Town Hall, the detective departments were located in the central office of the police headquarters. From this location detective officers undertook a range of additional tasks, which were not consistently linked to crime detection, but were a key component of their daily work and contributed to the administration and effectiveness of the detective department. In Liverpool, the detective team was an integral part of the 'Indoor Division', also referred to as the 'Staff Division', which included clerks and official posts connected to the courts, such as the court crier, the summons server and the sub-bailiffs.[135] The combination of detective police officers and auxiliary roles continued throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, although the composition within individual borough departments varied and the distinction between active investigative work and purely administrative tasks is difficult to delineate.

References to the daily duties of police officers are of a general nature in the existing police historiography, with research mostly pertaining to uniformed officers and with limited distinction between their duties and those of the detective police. Shpayer-Makov considers the role and duties of detectives specifically, noting that in some borough police forces, detectives undertook a range of duties not directly linked to crime investigation, such as serving as poor-law relief officers, inspectors of weights and measures, and dealing with lost children. In addition, she acknowledges that some of their duties were more closely

[135] LRO, 352 POL/1/2, Head Constable, 10 January 1845.

connected with crime investigation, including the monitoring of known thieves, public houses and lodging houses, and attending court. Shpayer-Makov cites the example of the Liverpool force in which detectives undertook the roles of court usher and messenger as well as patrolling. However, her research is limited to a few examples rather than an in-depth examination of primary sources such as watch committee records.[136]

Research into this specific area is further complicated by inconsistent, and often inadequate, recording of personnel in primary sources at both a local and national level. There is some evidence from the Liverpool and Manchester Police, but very little pertaining to the Birmingham force. However, it is important to establish, in so far as is possible, the formal duties and roles of detective department personnel as a further contextual layer for the analysis of detective crime investigation strategies in Chapter 4.

3.3.1. Formal roles and additional duties

The information recorded in the Inspectors of Constabulary reports in relation to specific duties carried out by detective officers is incomplete and inconsistent. For example, it was recorded that in Halifax a detective inspector was deployed as inspector of common lodging houses and brokers, and a detective sergeant was the inspector of hackney carriages and of explosive substances.[137] In the borough of Plymouth, a detective inspector and detective sergeant were also inspectors of common lodging houses.[138] However, this detail is sporadic and often omitted, and there is little evidence in the reports of the additional duties of detectives in the police forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. Similarly, relevant data in the watch committee minutes is fragmentary, often with no distinction between whether key roles were undertaken by uniformed or detective police. In the Birmingham Watch Committee minutes for 1870, formal roles undertaken by the police were listed,

[136] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 45.
[137] *Reports of IOC*, 1881, 195.
[138] Ibid., 232.

including inspectors of common lodging houses, nuisances and weights and measures, and assistant relieving officers for vagrants and those applying for workhouse relief. It was not stipulated which duties were assumed by detective officers.[139] However, in Manchester, detective responsibilities were more clearly defined from the earliest decades of borough policing. In 1850, detective duties were stated to be 'of a general character, such as following up informations of robberies and other offences, attendance at court, serving summonses and executing warrants, collecting court penalties, with a variety of other duties', combining administrative tasks, in particular relating to court business, and crime investigation.[140] The archival evidence thus demonstrates, particularly in the Liverpool and Manchester Police, that detective police officers undertook a range of additional responsibilities which were mostly attached to the court and its daily operations, as well as clerical and administrative tasks. However, there were also some administrative roles undertaken by ancillary staff in the detective department, who were not actively involved in crime detection.

The most prominent of the administrative roles was the use of clerks in the detective office, which was a key position in all three constabularies and remained constant throughout the period. In Liverpool, from the establishment of the Indoor Division in 1845, clerks undertook police duties, when necessary, along with the other ancillary officers. HC Greig specified in 1877 that the clerks were responsible for the handling of confidential documents in the detective office, which included entering reports from detective officers into the appropriate record book. He confirmed that all nine clerks currently employed had undergone detective training and that they were occasionally employed for 'detective purposes'.[141] John Wilson, detective storekeeper and corresponding clerk in the Liverpool Police described his responsibilities: 'I attend to the work of the office, and the detective constables, after making inquiries, come to me for advice.' In addition, he undertook

[139] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee, 1 November 1870.
[140] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/2, Watch Committee, 16 April 1850.
[141] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 128-129.

detective office correspondence on the detective superintendent's behalf and even deputised for him when he was absent, making enquiries regarding prisoners on remand and stolen property. Wilson clarified that his activities were generally confined to the office and therefore he did not participate in active investigation. Originally a solicitor's clerk, Wilson had joined the force 21 years earlier but was not a police officer.[142] This evidence would suggest that clerks employed in the detective office, particularly in Liverpool, were integral to the process of crime detection, albeit not actively. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Francis Caldwell, who was appointed head constable of the Liverpool Police in 1912, had also joined the force as a clerk. When he later enlisted formally as a police constable, he undertook the dual role of 'clerk constable' and eventually led the detective department before rising to the most senior position.[143] This further supports the contention that in Liverpool there was a link between the role of clerks and detective work.

Other ancillary roles within the Liverpool and Manchester forces comprised coroner's officers (also recorded as 'beadles'), storekeepers, bridewell keepers, police court ushers, court messengers, marine stores inspectors and ticket-of-leave license inspectors. However, it is not always specified in the official records, such as the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, whether these roles were undertaken formally by uniformed or detective police. In his evidence before the 1877 Commission, HC Greig referred to these roles as the 'Auxiliary Detective Staff', clarifying that the responsibilities were undertaken by detective constables, but the officers did not engage in crime detection.[144] Shpayer-Makov cites this as an example of the range and mix of 'preventive and reactive' tasks assumed by police detectives.[145] However, in her work on medico-legal practice, Katherine Watson describes the role of the coroner's officer, undertaken by police officers, as 'semi-forensic' in that they were responsible for the decision on whether a death was suspicious and thus justified the

[142] LRO, 352 POL/2/8, *Detective Department,* Head Constable, 1878, 9-11.
[143] Klein, "Best Police Officer," 126; *Reports of IOC*, 1907, 101.
[144] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.
[145] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 45.

need for an inquest.[146] This would suggest that this role had, to a certain extent, an investigative function which required the skills of a detective officer.

Examination of regional archival records provides further evidence to demonstrate the range of tasks undertaken by detectives and, to a certain extent, the rationale for the decisions to appoint detectives to specific roles in response to individual requests, local issues and government legislation. Watch committees and head constables received numerous requests from external agencies, private individuals and other constabularies for detective services, which sometimes led to the creation of a specific duty. In 1858, the government emigration officer, Captain Schomberg, wrote to the Liverpool Watch Committee requesting protection after receiving anonymous death threats. The watch committee instructed the head constable to investigate the malicious letters and to provide personal protection for the captain.[147] Shortly after, the head constable reported that he had received a communication from the Government Emigration Board in London, requiring him to appoint a detective officer for 'watching and controlling' the emigrant runners under the command of Captain Schomberg, to be funded by the board. HC Greig emphasised that the appointment would be temporary and 'experimental' and would not be continued if deemed unnecessary. He reminded the committee that two of his 'most efficient' detectives had already been appointed to formal duties at the General Post Office and the Local Marine Board, and that to lose a third officer to the Emigration Board would 'weaken the strength materially of the detective department'.[148] The watch committee responded by instructing the head constable to 'carry out the arrangement'.[149] DI Samuel Povey was appointed to the role.[150] It is interesting to note that Captain Schomberg had previously written to the press stating that some emigrant runners, who acted as agents for those leaving the country from ports such as Liverpool, were alleged to be committing frauds and scams upon vulnerable ship

[146] Katherine D. Watson, *Medicine and Justice: Medico-legal Practice in England and Wales, 1700-1914* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 93.
[147] LRO, 352 POL/1/5, Watch Committee, 27 March 1858.
[148] LRO, 352 POL/2/1, Head Constable, 19 April 1858.
[149] LRO, 352 POL/1/5, Watch Committee, 8 May 1858.
[150] Ibid., 22 May 1858.

passengers.[151] Therefore, it is clear that this temporary detective role to assist the emigrant commissioner was linked to crime prevention and investigation, rather than solely in response to a personal request to protect the commissioner. It was also specific to Liverpool as a seaport (see Section 1.2.1).

Furthermore, it is evident that local needs and issues were a significant factor in the engagement of detectives in additional duties. Although not included in the formal lists published in the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, there were other court-related duties performed by police detectives. In 1881, the Liverpool Police clerk produced a list of all detective officers who received payment for additional duties, which comprised a sub-bailiff for the petty jury and the court of assuage, two deputy water bailiffs, a mace bearer, a grand jury bailiff, a billet clerk and four assistants.[152] Apart from the deputy water bailiffs, these roles were all linked to the local courts, and were mostly supervisory and administrative. Moreover, of the 37 members of the detective department at this time, 11 were assigned to these additional roles, which is almost a third of the strength. There is no evidence to suggest that this was considered unacceptable by the watch committee, but it is notable that in Manchester in 1899, a subcommittee recommended to the watch committee that summonses from other towns should be served by court officials rather than police officers.[153] This may have been an attempt to reduce the involvement of detectives in court matters during their reorganisation of the detective department, following their visits to other forces, such as Liverpool and Birmingham (see Section 2.2.4).

In relation to local needs, one salient example is that of fire prevention and investigation, which was a key detective role in the Liverpool Police. Prior to 1941, firefighting provision was organised and managed on a local basis, with some larger towns employing a police fire brigade.[154] The Liverpool Police Fire Brigade was formed in 1836 and

[151] *The Liverpool Mercury,* 8 January 1858, 6.
[152] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 18 October 1881.
[153] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/27, Watch Committee, 18 May 1899.
[154] Jonathan R. Powner, "Provincial Fire-Fighting in England, 1666-1941" (PhD diss., University of Keele, 1991), 4.

was managed by the police on behalf of the watch committee.[155] (This was also the case in Manchester and Birmingham.) The Inspectors of Constabulary noted that, in Liverpool in 1868, the town police included a fire brigade which comprised one superintendent and 149 fire police officers.[156] In 1866, the Liverpool Watch Committee approved the deployment of two additional detective officers to be engaged on visits to warehouses as fire prevention officers. Their duties included removing items, such as damaged pipes, which might cause fires, particularly in cotton warehouses. These officers were not employed on crime investigations.[157] However, the watch committee minutes demonstrate that, in addition to fire prevention duties, there was one detective deployed as a fire investigation officer since 1866, a duty which DSI Kehoe described as requiring 'the utmost discretion, tact, and ability'.[158] In 1878, one of the responsibilities of DI William Cozens who, by this time, had 32 years' service on the Liverpool force, was the investigation of arson.[159] There is also evidence of detectives investigating the origin of fires in Manchester.

Finally, specific detective duties were created in response to government legislation and parliamentary acts. In all three borough forces, detectives were deployed to enforce the Old Metal Dealers Act 1861 by carrying out formal inspections of marine stores and second-hand dealerships. This amendment to the Merchant Shipping Act 1854, required the regulation of those selling old metal in an attempt to reduce opportunities for the sale of stolen goods. In response to this provision, Birmingham Watch Committee promoted seven police constables to the honorary rank of detective sergeant to empower them to enforce the act.[160] The same action was taken in Liverpool, with an extension of the detective role to grant licenses to metal brokers.[161] HC Greig observed that 'marine store dealers are people who encourage young thieves to steal', confirming the need for the deployment of

[155] Ibid., 34.
[156] *Reports of IOC,* 1869, 91.
[157] LRO, 352 POL/1/8, Watch Committee, 14 August 1866; TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.
[158] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[159] LRO, 352 POL/2/8, *Detective Department,* Head Constable, 1878, 13-14.
[160] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/10, Watch Committee, 22 April 1862.
[161] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head constable, 22 February 1869, 5.

detectives.[162] In Manchester, the rank of the detective officer engaged for this role was upgraded to inspector in 1876, and four additional officers were deployed to support him.[163]

Detective officers were employed in all three police forces to enforce licensing laws in relation to public houses throughout the Victorian period, and the nature of this duty changed in response to government legislation. In Liverpool, two inspectors and four constables in plain clothes had been deployed to prevent illegal trading by publicans and beerhouse keepers on Sundays since 1852.[164] Following the passing of the Prevention of Crimes Act 1871, the head constable extended and formalised this role by appointing one of the 'very best' detective officers to each division to work with their uniformed colleagues to supervise public houses 'frequented by thieves and prostitutes'. The officers were selected on the basis of their 'respectability…judgment, disposition and good temper'. They were required to make regular visits to such public houses and to report on the inhabitants.[165] Consequently, the detective police not only enforced the licensing laws but carried out the provisions of the Prevention of Crimes Act, as confirmed by HC Greig: 'they (detectives) constantly patrol in plain clothes, under the Crimes Prevention Act; they visit brothels, where there are young children, and they visit public-houses where thieves may assemble'.[166]

Following a report on the increase of drunkenness in Birmingham in 1876, the watch committee decided that the application of licensing laws and inspections of public houses needed to be more effective. This was deemed too important to be carried out by uniformed constables and was to become a 'special' duty, for which five detective officers were to be selected according to their 'sobriety, integrity and firmness'. One inspector of licensed houses would be placed in each division and would be accountable to the head constable. The inspectors were to compile a list of 'well conducted' public houses and of those with 'a bad reputation'. In particular, they were required to focus on those establishments that were:

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[162] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.
[163] *Reports of IOC*, 1877, 156.
[164] LRO, 352 POL/2/1, Head Constable, 29 January 1861.
[165] LRO, 352 POL/2/7, Head Constable, 11 January 1876.
[166] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 123.

- Supplying drink during prohibited hours.
- Selling drink on or from unlicensed premises.
- Supplying drink to persons when drunk.
- Allowing disorderly conduct in-house or harbouring improper characters therein.
- Supplying drink to police constables when on duty.
- Supplying spirits to children under 16 years of age.

The watch committee approved the appointment of the five inspectors of licensed houses.[167] This evidence confirms that specific detective duties were created and developed to tackle local issues in relation to crime, and also in response to government legislation, often with multiple objectives. Although many of the duties undertaken by police detectives appear to be administrative in nature, on closer analysis it is clear that there was an investigative purpose. A further example is that of the supervision of hackney carriages by the Manchester Police. In 1900, the watch committee appointed a detective inspector to manage and inspect the hackney carriages in the city, and to grant licenses for the vehicles.[168] He was also responsible for investigating possible crimes connected with the hackney carriages, such as thefts.[169]

In summary, the formal duties of police detectives were variable, as asserted by Shpayer-Makov, but there were similarities in deployment by the three borough forces. They all responded to specific factors, such as local issues and increases in crime, and individual requests. Most significantly, administrative duties performed by detectives were intrinsically linked with crime investigation. Finally, the archival evidence demonstrates that watch committees selected detective officers for such duties due to their superior characteristics, experience or qualifications. Furthermore, specific duties, such as the supervision of marine

[167] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/114, Watch Committee, 11 January 1876.
[168] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/29, Watch Committee, 11 October 1900.
[169] Ibid.,16 August 1900.

store dealers, were accorded a higher police rank, thus confirming that these roles and the detectives who undertook them were held in greater regard within the borough police hierarchy.

3.3.2. Detective office procedures

In addition to formalised roles and duties, the borough forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham had systematic procedures and processes for the management and daily operations of their respective police detective departments. This aspect of detective policing has largely been omitted from the historiography. However, Churchill acknowledges the nascent bureaucratic processes of the main borough police forces outside London, which he links to the role of the indoor superintendent (see Section 3.3.1), although he does not offer any insight into how the detective departments were managed on a daily basis.[170]

By the mid-1840s, daily record keeping was already established in the Manchester Police. The first reference to this appeared in 1846, when the head constable reported his observations that in the police forces in London and Dublin no information was recorded in any of the divisional police stations in relation to 'houses and places of ill resort', and that Manchester was the only place where this information was held. He further noted that the City of London Police kept only one book at each police station into which 'every sort of matter or occurrence is entered without form or plan'. In his opinion, the police force in Manchester was superior to the others in this respect, as information was collected, recorded and classified.[171]

In 1857, the Inspector of Constabulary for the Northern District remarked that the recording and management of information was already well established in the Liverpool force: 'Every man is supplied with a book of rules and regulations and is required to keep a

[170] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 52.
[171] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 2 July 1846.

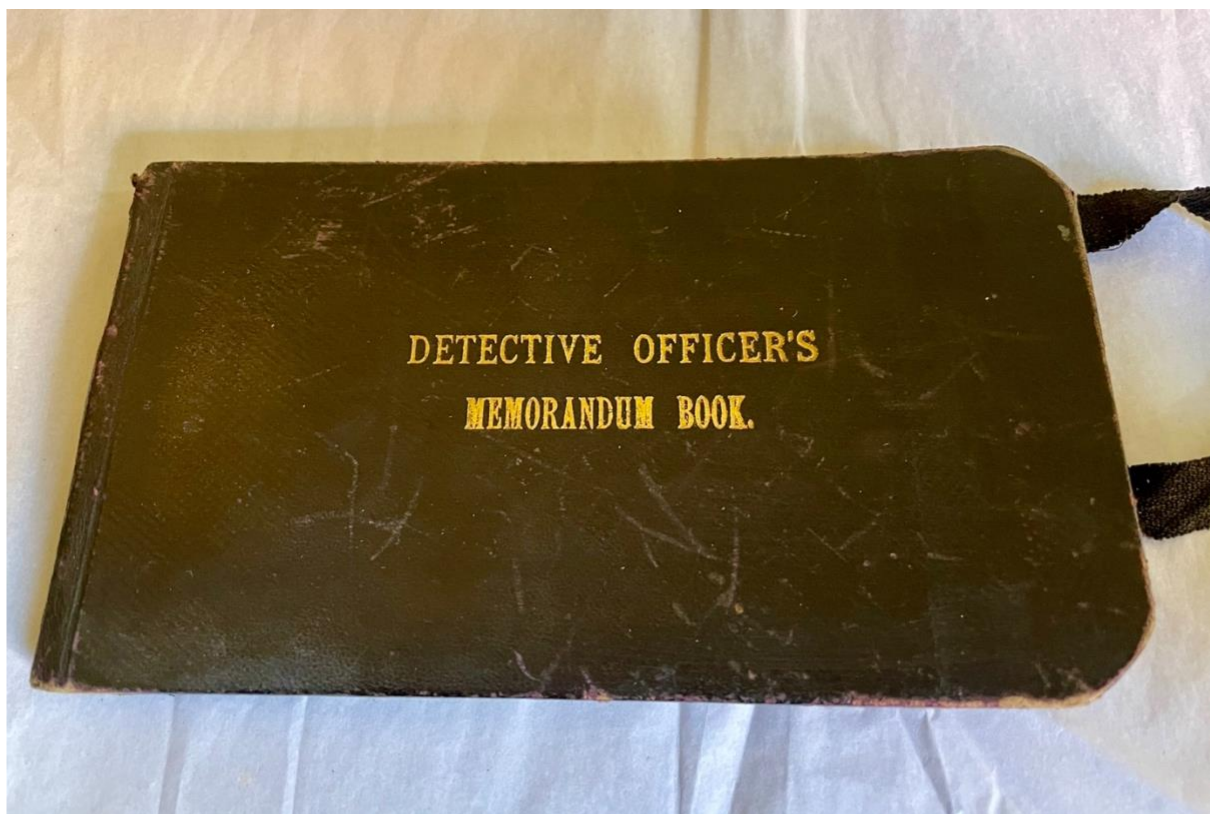
journal of his duties.'[172] By the late 1870s, a regimented and detailed set of procedures had been fully implemented into the everyday working of the detective department. Reports of felonies, indictable offences and misdemeanours were submitted to the detective superintendent by uniformed officers on the beat. In addition, information was received directly into the detective department at the central police office from members of the public, either in person or by letter; from the watch committee and the head constable; and from external agencies and other constabularies throughout the country. The detective superintendent recorded the details of each report in the appropriate ledger.[173] In 1877, there were 13 ledger books in the detective office.[174] Robberies, for example, were divided between two 'robbery' books, one for those committed within the borough, and the other for those committed elsewhere.[175] Important documents, such as letters containing requests or information, were 'ticketed and labelled', and then placed into a pigeon hole or a safe, with sensitive documents only being handled by the chief clerk and officers bearing the rank of inspector or above. Confidential information was recorded in a special report book, to which access was limited to senior officers.[176] Once the entries relating to specific cases had been recorded, the detective superintendent made a note in a special column in the relevant ledger book, outlining the steps to be taken, and prioritising cases from the borough before those from outside. Should a case require the services of a detective officer, he selected one who from his 'special experience' would be the most suitable, such as a detective officer with expertise in pickpocketing, burglary and Post Office thefts.

Each detective officer began his shift at 9 a.m. when he signed himself into the duty book. If he had been assigned a special duty, he would receive a copy of the information from the clerk, including the original referral and the detective superintendent's notes. He then entered the details of his planned activities for the day in the officers' time book and

[172] *Reports of IOC,* 1857, 54.
[173] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[174] LRO, 352 POL/1/15, Watch Committee, 7 April 1879.
[175] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[176] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 128-130.

made a further note in the corresponding robbery book. Following this, he commenced his inquiries by calling first on the person who had alerted the police to the alleged offence to verify the details and acquire any additional information. He would then proceed to following up information and any clues to the case, which he recorded in a diary or notebook, which could fit into a large pocket,[177] as shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. Detective officer's memorandum book



Source: Manchester City Police, Greater Manchester Museum and Archives.

The detective officer called into the detective office throughout the day, if feasible, to report the details of his activities so far and to receive any further information which might have

[177] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869; TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 123-124.

come to light during his absence from the office.[178] If detectives were deployed out of the city, they were required to telegraph the detective office on their arrival and departure so that the detective superintendent would know their movements.[179] The detective officer returned to the office between 7 and 8 p.m., after which he entered the details of his day's activities in the appropriate memorandum book. He remained in the office until the end of his shift at 8 p.m. However, if the investigation required it, he would continue to work through the night if necessary, such as was usual in complex fraud cases. The detectives' time books were collated daily by the detective superintendent, who reported the information to the head constable at the start of the following day.[180] Information about the investigation of each alleged offence was also entered in the original ledger books in another separate column, so that the results were recorded alongside the steps that were to be taken.

In the Birmingham Borough Police, from at least 1851, detective officers were required to keep a daily journal of their activities. At the end of each day, they were required to enter a report into the appropriate book, which included the steps taken in specific cases.[181] By the late 1870s, this practice had developed, and the detectives were required to place their diaries in a bag with a sealed cover to send every morning to the head constable, for which only he and the detective superintendent had keys. When the bags containing the diaries arrived in the head constable's office, he would break open the seals and once he had read the reports, he replaced them in the bag, together with any additional information, and then returned them to the detective superintendent for further division of the department's work. The diaries were then kept in a locked desk.[182]

Although detective officers had more autonomy than uniformed officers, they were still required to account for their case-related activities and lines of enquiry. The meticulous recording and paperwork, as well as the careful attention paid to confidentiality and

[178] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[179] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 123.
[180] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 22 February 1869.
[181] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/4, Watch Committee, 16 December 1851.
[182] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force,* 120.

supervision further supports the importance of the detective superintendent and his essential role in detective practice. Moreover, it is additional evidence of the systematic management and operations of borough detective police departments.

3.4. Conclusion

From the existing police historiography, it would appear that there was little change throughout the Victorian and Edward periods in relation to the roles, duties and practices of detective officers within the context of their daily operations. To date, the research into the functioning of detective departments, including internal managers and ancillary staff, has been limited, with the focus mainly on the Metropolitan Police albeit with some references to borough forces. Based on archival evidence, this chapter presents new insights into not only the organisation, management and procedures of borough detective departments, but also into the complex, and often ill-defined, roles and duties of detective officers, which were both directly and indirectly linked to crime investigation.

Through this study, the detective superintendent emerges as a key rank within the organisational structure of the entire police force and, at the same time, in the detective office. The detective superintendent was the main communicator and facilitator between senior officers and his subordinates in the detective department. Performing the functions of a chief operating officer, he was responsible for regulating and overseeing the processes and procedures of the detective office and assigning individual detectives to crime cases. Thus generally, detective superintendents held a dual role which was procedural and investigative. In addition, in all three borough forces, at times the detective superintendent also held the rank of deputy head constable, which formalised the role and signalled the importance of crime investigation over prevention. Moreover, there were initiatives to recruit detective superintendents with a higher level of education, although this remained inconsistent throughout the period.

Even though detective officers were recruited mostly from the working classes, as uniformed constables, and were promoted into the detective department based on internal recruitment, there were formal practices in existence in all three borough police forces which, to a certain extent, rendered the appraisal and judgment of the performance and suitability of individual officers more objective, with head constables experimenting with different methods, such as the system of commendation introduced by HC Bond in the Birmingham Police. In all three borough forces, the deployment of detectives in the uniformed divisions provided an opportunity for selection into the central detective division, and for training. Furthermore, the ongoing education of all police officers was supported through police libraries and later educational classes, even though they were both of a general nature. Throughout the period there was the beginning of a gradual shift towards the recruitment of uniformed police with higher levels of education, as well as a change to external recruitment for specific purposes, such as the employment of individuals with foreign language skills. There is evidence of informal yet systematic detective training throughout the period under study. Although the basic formal training undertaken by all new recruits was deemed adequate for crime investigation, newly appointed detective officers spent time shadowing experienced detectives, which was an essential component of their 'on-the-job' training, after which they were required to pass a further period of probation before being fully deployed on detective duty.

Finally, this study shows that the role and duties of detective officers which on the surface appear to be administrative in nature, were in fact closely linked to crime investigation. Watch committees and head constables in all three borough forces deployed detectives to undertake a wide range of formal duties, in response to individual requests, local issues and legislative change. These roles, such as clerk, fire officer and inspector of marine stores, also had a detective function.

This chapter demonstrates that there was a degree of professionalisation of the borough detective departments and detective officers which developed gradually, and often inconsistently, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The archival

evidence reveals that the occupational life of detectives was more formalised and systematic than previously understood. Furthermore, the practices in the borough detective departments had a direct impact on the development of the Metropolitan Police. The departmental commission in 1877, after taking evidence from borough head constables, made recommendations for the improvement of practices at Scotland Yard based on those already in existence in regional forces, including the recruitment and selection of detectives, the management of central and divisional detectives, and administrative procedures. The commissioners concluded: 'On the evidence of these witnesses and the statistics they produced, your Commission have no hesitation in saying that in their opinion the present division of detective power has utterly failed in leading to a proper detection of crime'.[183] This led to the well-documented reorganisation of the detective department of the Metropolitan Police and the creation of the CID in 1878. It can be argued therefore that the practices of borough detective departments and the occupational working life of their detectives had a significant impact on the development of national detective policing, given the later pre-eminence of Scotland Yard. Further research into the relationship between the Metropolitan Police and the borough police forces would be beneficial, in addition to a comparative study between the borough and county forces.

This chapter completes a thorough examination of the overall history of regional detective history. It calculates the number of detective officers serving in the three constabularies for the first time and provides a comprehensive analysis of the organisational and management structures, the operations of the detective departments, and the daily duties of detectives. This forms a multilayered and complex background to the more detailed research into crime investigation in Chapters 4 and 5.

[183] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force,* xiv-xv.

Chapter 4

The Police Detectives' Modus Operandi: The Nature and Development of Investigative Technique

When Charles Dickens invited Scotland Yard officers to his editorial office for a 'social conference' in 1850, he concluded from his close observations:

> For ever on the watch, with their wits stretched to the utmost, these officers have, from day to day and year to year, to set themselves against every novelty of trickery and dexterity that the combined imaginations of all the lawless rascals in England can devise, and to keep pace with every such invention that comes out.[1]

Dickens and his contemporaries were fascinated by police detectives and their sleuthing abilities, which were portrayed as affirmative and proactive in order to reassure the general public during a time when confidence in policing was low and the fear of crime high.[2] However, this image of the early Victorian police detectives has remained in both fictional and non-fictional accounts which, according to Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, may have been a distraction from their inclusion in police histories as 'the reality was invariably much more plodding and bureaucratic if, at times, scientific'.[3] Almost two centuries after Dickens' famous meeting with Scotland Yard detectives, there has been limited research into the exact nature of their investigative skills and strategies, most of which has been focused on the Metropolitan Police. Shpayer-Makov acknowledges this and, in consensus with other police historians, calls for more detailed study of police detectives' modus operandi.[4]

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[1] Charles Dickens, "A Detective Police Party," *Household Words* 1, no. 20 (10 August 1850): 459-460.
[2] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009), 60-61; Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011),195-196.
[3] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, "The Police Detective and Police History," in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950,* eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 9.
[4] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 9.

This chapter examines in detail, for the first time, the nature and evolution of the crime investigation techniques employed by Victorian and Edwardian police detectives in the borough forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. It identifies the type of offences investigated by the detective officers and the range of crime detection tools used to track down perpetrators and build a judicial case against them. The study analyses the principal factors which influenced detective practice, such as local watch committees, central government guidance and legislative changes. Moreover, it assesses whether and to what extent investigative procedures evolved throughout the period under study and highlights innovations in crime detection initiated within the borough detective departments. This chapter sheds light on how the police detectives outside London tackled crime in their respective cities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It reveals innovative strategies which have not been previously recognised and serves as a foundation for further research into this specialised area of historical policing.

Most general police history publications include some references to crime detection and, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there has been a greater focus on police detectives and investigative technique (see Section 1.1.2). Philip Rawlings traces the theme of detective policing through his wider history of policing and contends that, in the nineteenth century, despite the emergence of detective officers, the majority of arrests were made by uniformed officers who undertook random searches, received information and carried out surveillance.[5] Within this context, he questions the competence of Victorian detectives and suggests that their methods did not evolve during the course of the period.[6]

Emsley also dismisses Victorian detective policing methods as rudimentary prior to the introduction of forensic techniques such as fingerprinting. He adds that the investigative methods of the ‘new’ detectives did not differ significantly from those of their predecessors, for which he cites examples including the comparison of footprints at a crime scene with those of the suspect’s footwear which, although modified and improved, remained a basic

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[5] Philip Rawlings, *Policing: A Short History* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 172.
[6] Ibid, 177.

tool throughout the period.[7] However, Emsley admits that the professionalisation of police detectives acted as a deterrent to a certain extent,[8] which underpins his contention that crime prevention was more of a priority than detection for most head constables.[9]

In their collaborative work on detective police, Emsley and Shpayer-Makov define detectives as 'those police officers whose task it is to obtain information and evidence about offences committed against the law, to detect and apprehend the offenders and to present evidence against them in court', thus establishing the dual role of investigator and prosecutor. However, they do not examine this key theme specifically within their edited publication.[10] Shpayer-Makov further emphasises the police detective's role as being 'the linchpin in the criminal justice administration',[11] and lists the detectives' duties, which include securing intelligence about crimes already committed, informing the judicial authorities about previous convictions, deterring offenders and gaining an understanding of the criminal fraternity.[12] Shpayer-Makov states that 'plain clothes detectives' emerged as the key role in crime investigation and adds that, despite their relatively low numbers, the impact of this role was 'considerably greater than the sum of its tasks'.[13] However, she observes that detective police knowledge evolved by experience, but was gradually enhanced by the formalisation of rules and investigative practices, as well as increased specialisation and expertise, the latter led predominantly by Scotland Yard.[14]

In her later research into the use of forensic science in crime detection, Shpayer-Makov states that investigative techniques did not change significantly throughout the period under study, and that police detectives continued to rely on traditional practices such as information gathering, personal characteristics including common sense and observational

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[7] Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750-1900*, 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 242.
[8] Ibid., 41.
[9] Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson,1996), 73.
[10] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, "Police Detective," 3-4.
[11] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 298.
[12] Ibid., 36.
[13] Ibid., 1.
[14] Ibid., 299-300.

skills.[15] She concludes that the professionalisation of the detective police was not linear and that practices varied between police forces and detective departments.[16]

Mike Maguire contends that contemporary crime investigation, which he defines as ‘the routine application by the (public) police of an established body of practices and techniques to gather evidence and detect offenders’, can be tracked to the mid-to late nineteenth century. He cites examples of current practices which are rooted in the past, such as the use of informants.[17] Maguire assesses the prosecutorial aspect of this dual detective role, as referenced by Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, as the first step into the criminal justice system. He opines that the intrinsic link between criminal investigation and the judicial process is the principal objective of police detectives and that it acts as a deterrent and an assurance of public protection.[18] In addition, Maguire distinguishes between the ‘reactive’ and ‘proactive’ approaches to crime investigation, which he suggests leads to a differentiated deployment of investigative resources such as the employment of suspect identification strategies as a reactive response to a crime already committed, and strategies such as surveillance as a proactive approach to crime prevention. Maguire proposes a further distinction within the range of investigative tasks undertaken by detective police as the assimilation of knowledge or information, and the production of evidence.[19] Although these distinctions do not relate specifically to early detective policing, they are nevertheless valuable in assessing historical practices, which Maguire reiterates are still in existence today.[20]

Through a comprehensive analysis of primary sources, including watch committee minutes, governmental commission reports and detective department accounts, this chapter

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[15] Haia Shpayer-Makov, “Detectives and Forensic Science: The Professionalization of Police Detection,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice*, eds. Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 483.
[16] Ibid., 490.
[17] Mike Maguire, “Criminal Investigation and Crime Control,” in *Handbook of Policing*, ed. Tim Newburn, 2nd edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 431.
[18] Ibid., 432-434.
[19] Ibid., 437-438.
[20] Ibid., 431.

first establishes the types and range of crimes investigated by police detectives. It then assesses investigative strategies, including surveillance and information gathering, local knowledge and crime detection aids. The second part focuses on the collation and use of criminal records and the advance of scientific methods, such as biometric measurements and fingerprinting, and their impact on regional offender identification. Through an examination of these key topics, this chapter ascertains to what extent investigative practice during the period under study evolved and whether developments were based on experimentation, as suggested by Shpayer-Makov, or on the implementation of new investigative procedures and the formalisation of detective practice.

4.1. Detective deployment and the evolution of regional crime detection practice

Crime investigation has been the preoccupation of many societies throughout history.[21] In the United Kingdom, agents were employed by the government to investigate crime from the seventeenth century, particularly in the detection of smuggling and coining, whereas investigations into many other offences were initiated by victims, under the direction of magistrates who were assisted by parish constables and members of the old police watch.[22] As J. M. Beattie explains, the old police were mainly engaged in keeping the peace. Constables attended crime scenes but offered minimal assistance to victims, as they were inexperienced and the local authorities had no expectation that they would investigate beyond arresting immediately obvious suspects.[23] In the eighteenth century, thief-takers emerged as a key role in crime detection, acting on behalf of victims, and motivated by financial reward.[24] These private individuals operated not only in London, but also in other towns and cities, such as Richard Green in Manchester, whom Emsley describes as 'a semi-

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[21] Maguire, "Criminal Investigation," 381.
[22] Rawlings, *Policing*, 76.
[23] J. M. Beattie, "Early Detection: The Bow Street Runners in Late-Eighteenth Century London," in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950,* eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 15.
[24] Rawlings, *Policing*, 76.

official' detective, and who was engaged in investigative work in addition to his position as keeper of a town-centre lock-up.[25] The Birmingham Court Leet also employed thief-takers to assist the two constables responsible for crime detection prior to the formation of the new police force.[26] Emsley confirms that the employment of thief-takers outside London was variable and dependent on local need, as it was considered less of a priority in the provinces. When Bow Street Magistrate Sir John Fielding proposed police reforms in London in 1775 due to rising crime in the capital, there was little interest in other parts of the country due to a lack of concern about lawbreaking in their areas.[27] Thus, there were no formalised groups of thief-takers similar to the Bow Street Runners in regional cities, and individual investigators such as Manchester's Joseph Nadin, renowned for his actions during the Peterloo Massacre, continued to operate in a semi-private capacity during the first decades of the nineteenth century.[28] Although outside the scope of this thesis, further study of provincial thief-takers would be valuable.

In summary, police historians consider eighteenth-century investigative practice to be rudimentary with variable and localised responses, rather than any formalised strategy.[29] According to Maguire, there was an absence of crime detection techniques; offenders were brought to justice through rewards, witness statements and collaboration, and 'chance encounters'. Apprehension did not necessarily lead to conviction and actions were limited to the recovery of stolen property.[30] Shpayer-Makov confirms this by stating that, prior to the nineteenth century, local law enforcers such as magistrates, justices of the peace and parish constables did not routinely initiate the investigation of criminal cases, nor did they seek out evidence, as crime detection was still victim-led at this time. She concludes that crime

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[25] Clive Emsley, "Detection and Prevention: The Old English Police and the New 1750-1900," *Historical Social Research* 37 (1986): 71.
[26] Michael Weaver, "The New Science of Policing: Crime and the Birmingham Police Force, 1839-1842," *Albion* 26, no. 2 (1994): 261.
[27] Emsley, "Detection," 73.
[28] Eric J. Hewitt, *A History of Policing in Manchester* (Manchester: E. J. Mortem, 1979), 35.
[29] Maguire, "Criminal Investigation," 431-432.
[30] Rawlings, *Policing*, 80.

investigation was ad hoc, voluntary and inexpertly executed.[31] Beattie offers more detail on the thief-takers' investigative techniques, which included the use of local knowledge and informers. He concludes that the Bow Street Runners developed specialised skills and were more effective than any previous law enforcers.[32] Early crime investigators, such as the thief-takers, were the forerunners of the new detectives of the nineteenth century. However, Emsley states that the latter's modus operandi did not differ greatly from that of their predecessors, which mostly involved surveillance, until the advent of the forensic science techniques.[33]

4.1.1. Detective deployment

Shpayer-Makov asserts that detectives tackled the 'higher classes of crime' such as murder, violent assault, forgery, fraud, extradition cases and missing persons. They were also responsible for dealing with official inquiries initiated by the government and overseas authorities. She draws a distinction between central and divisional detectives, suggesting that the former did not undertake regular investigative duties in the divisions, but intervened in localised crime cases when the divisional detectives needed assistance, or when a more serious offence was committed.[34] Shpayer-Makov mostly alludes to Scotland Yard officers in her observations and makes brief references to the deployment of regional detectives on investigative work, such as William Cozens of the Liverpool Police, who developed several specialisms including fire investigation as noted in Section 3.3.1.[35]

Liverpool Watch Committee minutes provide some more detailed information about the nature of the detectives' everyday investigative work and inquiries. In 1878, DI Cozens described his duties and the types of crime he generally investigated: 'They (duties) consist

[31] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 19.
[32] Beattie, "Detection," 26-28.
[33] Emsley, "Detection," 82.
[34] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 37.
[35] Ibid., 48.

of investigating important cases, such as burglary, robbery on the high seas, cotton robberies, murders, and suspected cases of arson.'[36]

During the same period, the inquiry into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police offers further information including tables of cases investigated by Liverpool and Birmingham detectives.[37]

Table 4.1. Number and nature of offences investigated by Birmingham divisional detectives, year ending 29th September 1877.

Nature of offence	No. of cases inquired into	No. of cases in which arrests were made	No. of persons arrested	No. of persons convicted summarily	No. of persons committed for trial
Burglary and housebreaking	65	8	10	0	6
Shopbreaking	12	4	6	0	6
Fraud	30	17	18	4	6
Embezzlement	9	9	9	3	0
Horse stealing	2	1	1	0	1
Larceny from the person	138	28	28	19	8
Larceny by servants	39	28	28	20	6
Larceny, simple	908	241	293	174	29
Total	1,203	336	397	220	62

Source: The National Archives, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force of the Metropolitan Police*, Birmingham Police. A Return of All Offences inquired into by Divisional Detectives and Apprehensions effected by them during the Year ended 29th September 1877 (London: HMSO, 1878), 264.

[36] Liverpool Record Office (hereafter LRO), 352 POL/2/8, *Detective Department. Minutes of Evidence taken by the Watch Committee* (hereafter *Detective Department*), Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee (hereafter Head Constable), 1878, 13-14.
[37] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force of the Metropolitan Police* (hereafter *Report on Detective Force*) (London: HMSO, 1878), 264.

Table 4.2. Number and nature of offences investigated by Liverpool detectives, year ending 29th September 1876.

Nature of offence	No. of cases inquired into	No. of cases in which arrests were made	No. of persons arrested	No. of persons convicted summarily	No. of persons committed for trial
Crimes against the person, from common assault to murder	90	54	54	12	12
Crimes against property, including burglary, house-breaking, robbery and larcenies	1,638	474	554	182	210
Crimes – other felonies and misdemeanours	36	12	12	0	12
Total	1,764	540	620	194	234

Source: As in Table 4.1. Return giving the Number of Cases of Crime inquired into by the Liverpool Detectives; the Apprehensions for the Same; Approximate Value of Property Stolen and Recovered; also, the Results of Apprehensions from 30th September 1875 to 29th September 1876.

It is difficult to compare these two datasets as the Birmingham data, noted in Table 4.1, relates only to divisional detectives, whereas the statistics from Liverpool in Table 4.2 refer to both central and divisional detectives. The latter was confirmed by HC Greig, who stated that no separate record was kept of cases investigated by detectives.[38] However, Greig conceded that the detective department dealt with serious crimes including cases of murder, manslaughter, larceny, burglary, arson, fraud and forgery. He further testified that common assaults, theft of fixtures and shrubs, attempts to steal, damage to property, keeping a disorderly house and suicide attempts were 'ordinary police cases'.[39]

From the data presented, it is clear that detectives in both the Birmingham and Liverpool forces were responsible for investigating all types of crime, including those classed as 'misdemeanours' and 'simple larceny', which would have included minor thefts such as

[38] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 123.
[39] Ibid., 127.

pickpocketing. The fact that most detective investigations were related to cases of theft reflects the high incidence of the offence in their respective cities. David Churchill observes that this led to detective officers developing a more systematic approach to the detection of the circulation of stolen property, through the recovery of stolen items and the recording of thefts, which also facilitated evidence gathering for court proceedings.[40]

It is also interesting to note the arrest and conviction rates in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Of the cases inquired into, the arrest rate in Birmingham was 27.9 per cent compared to 20.3 per cent in Liverpool. The difference may be accounted for by the divisional detectives having greater knowledge of likely offenders than those employed in the central office, as was the case in the Metropolitan Police.[41] Moreover, in both cities 71 per cent of those arrested were either convicted summarily or committed for trial. Although this does not take into account the result of later trials, comparison of the number of cases inquired into with positive outcomes reveals that in Birmingham detective inquiries resulted in 23.4 per cent of cases leading to a conviction or trial in a higher court, and 18.4 per cent in Liverpool. Although this data is insufficient to form any significant conclusions in relation to detective efficiency, it demonstrates the nature of offences investigated by detective officers.

Further evidence from the Manchester Police reveals the types of crimes investigated by detectives during a specific three-month period at the end of the nineteenth century, offering a snapshot of detective activities.

[40] David Churchill, *Crime Control and Everyday Life in the Victorian City: The Police and the Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 82.
[41]TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, vi.

Table 4.3. Nature and details of offences reported by central detectives in Manchester from April 1899 to June 1899.

Nature of offence	Details of offence	Evidence of investigative technique	Outcome (where stated)
Breaking and entering a warehouse	Theft of clothing Two persons arrested	Surveillance – one suspect detected from clothing Second suspect arrested following private information and being found in possession of stolen clothing	Committed for trial
Robbery by force	Theft of cash from person Three persons arrested	One suspect arrested on receipt of private information	All three convicted, two received one month imprisonment, and one of 6 weeks
Burglary	12 charges of breaking into jeweller's shops, pawnbrokers', houses with theft of silver plate and clothing Four persons arrested	All suspects arrested from private information and descriptions given	Three prisoners committed for trial, one discharged Most of stolen property recovered
Breaking and entering	2 charges of stealing four hens from a hen-cote, and a tin of biscuits from an unnamed property Seven persons arrested	No details of investigative technique stated	All seven prisoners were summarily convicted. Five received 10 strokes, one received 18 strokes and one was bound over.
Breaking and entering	2 charges of breaking into a lock up stable with the theft of a set of harnesses One person arrested	No details of investigative technique stated	The prisoner was summarily convicted and received a sentence of one month. Stolen property was recovered.
Burglary	Breaking into a lock up shop and theft of cash One suspect	No details of investigative technique stated	Prisoner committed for trial
Loitering with intent to commit a felony and robbery with violence	Theft of a gold watch and chain Two persons arrested	No details of investigative technique stated	Both prisoners were convicted summarily and sentenced to three months' imprisonment

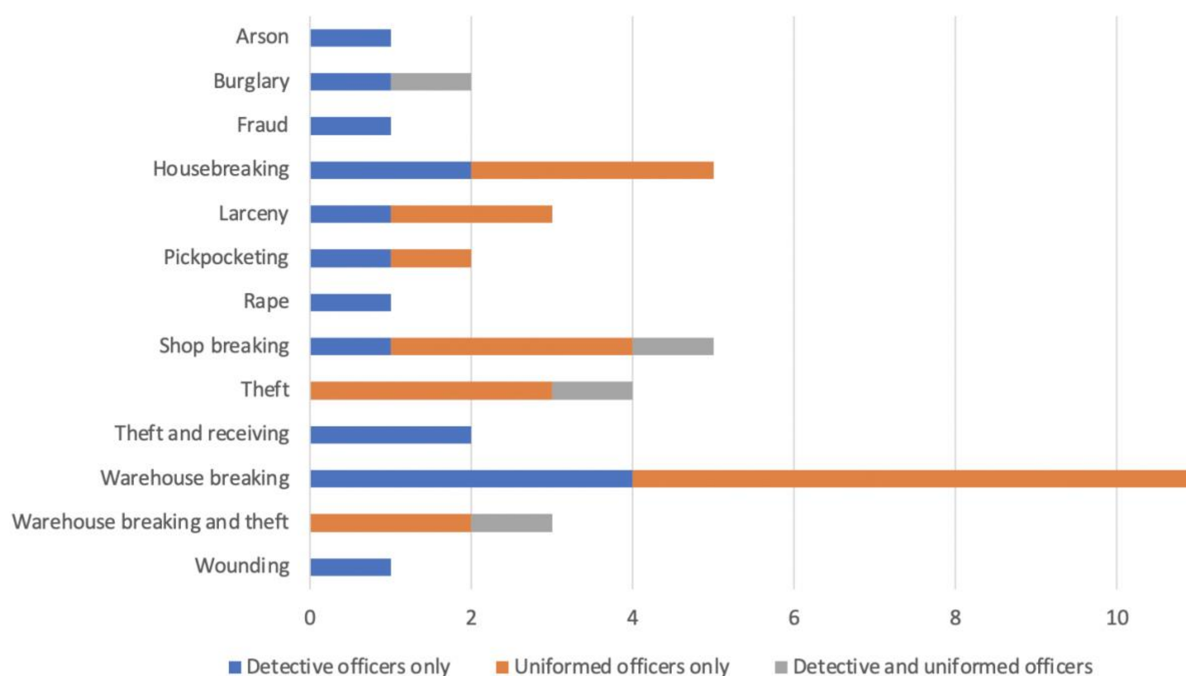
Shopbreaking	Breaking into a lock-up boot shop and stealing several pairs of boots One person arrested	No details of investigative technique stated	Prisoner pleaded guilty and was sentenced to three months' hard labour Stolen property was recovered
Warehouse breaking	Three persons arrested	No details of investigative technique stated	All three prisoners were committed for trial. Stolen property was recovered.
Murder	Two persons arrested	Detectives received private information and arrested suspects on descriptions given	One prisoner sentenced to death

Source: Greater Manchester Police Museum and Archives, Watch Committee Minutes, Volume 7, 7 April 1899-29 June 1899.

Although these detective division reports were filed solely with the purpose of securing rewards for individual detective officers and therefore only include successful outcomes, they offer a realistic glimpse into the kinds of cases investigated on a daily basis throughout the three-month period. (Strategies utilised will be further discussed in 4.1.2.) As already demonstrated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, detectives were mostly engaged in inquiries relating to burglary and theft, which comprised the theft of low-value goods as well as those of a higher value. As stated in Table 4.3, the stolen property was recovered in five out of nine cases. It is also significant that where details of investigative practice were recorded, their actions mainly involved surveillance, the receipt of private information and witness descriptions.

Entries in the Birmingham Watch Committee minutes from 1900 to 1902, which were also for rewards, record the offence only, with little extraneous detail. Nevertheless, they show the range of crimes investigated by detective and uniformed officers separately and together.

Figure 4.1. Nature and number of cases investigated by detective and uniformed police as reported to Birmingham Watch Committee from 25th September 1900 to 26th November 1902.



Source: Birmingham Archives and Collections, BCC/1/AC/1/1/22, Watch Committee Minute Books, 22 May 1900, 25 September 1900, 12 February 1901, 15 May 1901, 31 July 1901, 27 November 1901, 9 April 1902, 14 May 1902, 18 June 1902, 3 July 1902, 24 September 1902, 26 November 1902.

Of the 41 cases reported to the watch committee, 21 were successfully investigated by uniformed officers, 16 by detectives and four by both working together. The officers in uniform were mostly responsible for arrests pertaining to property break-ins, presumably due to their encountering potential felons whilst on patrol. In relation to cases of theft, there is insufficient detail to assess whether the value of the stolen item correlated with the rank of the investigating officer, but it appears that thefts were mostly investigated by uniformed police. Recorded stolen goods included live birds, food and a bicycle. Moreover, it is clear from the data that detectives investigated more serious crimes, such as fraud, wounding and rape, although there were fewer such cases recorded.

In conclusion, although there is insufficient archival data to assess fully the nature of crime cases investigated by detective officers and their uniformed colleagues, the available

information demonstrates that both uniformed and detective ranks were responsible for crime prevention and detection, and there was no clear or consistent differentiation between them. Moreover, the data shows that the conclusions drawn by police historians on the deployment of detectives are somewhat generalised and simplistic. For example, Rawlings contends that the majority of arrests in the nineteenth century were made by uniformed officers,[42] and Maguire suggests that uniformed officers have always played a more significant role in crime detection than has been acknowledged.[43] However, Churchill develops this latter point in his study of regional policing in which he gives examples of uniformed officers in plain clothes undertaking crime detection, such as inspecting public houses.[44] The evidence in Figure 4.1 seems to support these contentions, but also demonstrates that there were some differences in the nature of the crimes investigated by each rank, which renders the actual picture more complex than suggested by previous academic research. It is also important to bear in mind that there were greater numbers of uniformed police than detective officers, which will be examined in relation to homicide investigations in Chapter 5.

Moreover, the primary data confirms that whilst detectives were deployed to investigate more serious offences, such as fraud, arson, violent assault and murder, they investigated other types of crime depending on their local environment and the nature of the offences committed within their jurisdiction.

4.1.2. Surveillance and information gathering

Whether the detective police were investigating minor or major crimes, surveillance and information gathering were key crime detection strategies, which were subject to discussion and modification during the period under study. Beattie establishes surveillance as one of

[42] Rawlings, *Policing*, 172.
[43] Maguire, "Criminal Investigation," 432.
[44] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 70.

the principal ‘crime-fighting functions’, adding that the practice has existed throughout the history of English policing.[45] As already noted, Rawlings posits that the main crime detection activities of police constables throughout the nineteenth century were surveillance, random searches and information gathering.[46] Maguire states that the two main objectives of investigative tasks were the assimilation of information and evidence gathering, and he highlights surveillance as a proactive, preventive approach to crime detection.[47]

As seen in Table 4.3, the reports of the Manchester Detective Division confirmed that surveillance and information gathering were still widely used by police detectives at the end of the nineteenth century as key aids to their investigative work and, on the surface, there appears to have been little change in the use of these crime detection tools. However, there is evidence that the practices of surveillance and information gathering were discussed and refined by borough watch committees and head constables from the earliest days of the new police.

Manchester Police had detective patrols from the first years of its existence. These were highly organised and subject to change due to collaboration with other constabularies. Following a visit to the Metropolitan, City of London and Dublin Police forces in 1846, HC Willis shared information with the watch committee about plain-clothes patrolling, as initiated in the Metropolitan Police by the detective inspector of Scotland Yard.[48] In each Metropolitan division, six constables were deployed at night in plain clothes to investigate robberies and ‘suspicious characters’. They paid special attention to those potential lawbreakers who might have been watching the uniformed police for opportunities to commit burglaries. Under this plan the ‘watchers’ were watched in turn by divisional detective officers. If there were no reports of likely crimes, the designated detectives would be deployed to specific divisions for general surveillance and patrolling, their key objective being that of ‘tracing out offenders’.

[45] Beattie, “Detection,” 15.
[46] Rawlings, *Policing*, 172.
[47] Maguire, “Criminal Investigation,” 437-438.
[48] This was likely to be Nicholas Pearce as, although his name was not recorded, he was promoted to the head of one of the most important Metropolitan Police divisions, which was referred to in the document.

This decentralised practice was considered to be beneficial for crime detection and for the collation of evidence for criminal prosecutions as ‘the men of the divisions many of whom, from being located in particular districts, were better acquainted with the thieves and bad characters than the (central) detective officer’.[49]

HC Willis further stated that a similar plan to the one adopted in London had been partially in operation in Manchester for some time and he agreed that the results had proved effective, both in preventing crime and in the apprehension of offenders.[50] This confirms that the Manchester Police had a system of plain-clothes patrolling in place within the first six years of their existence, albeit less formalised than that of the Metropolitan Police. Moreover, it is a clear example of a borough watch committee in discussion with its head constable about a specific crime prevention and detection technique. It further reveals that the new police shared good practice and learnt from other forces from the beginning of their operational history.

In Liverpool, detective patrolling was also in place as a preventive and crime detection strategy. In 1852, HC Greig justified his authorisation of plain-clothes officers to collect evidence from public houses alleged to be selling alcohol illegally on Sundays, by stating that ‘the police constables in uniform cannot reach the parties in most instances either employing scouts or being assisted by their customers.’[51] He maintained his belief in the value of plain-clothes patrolling throughout his three decades as head constable, stating that the practice had led to ‘a great many apprehensions’.[52] However, the deployment of detective officers on patrol was not consistent between the three police forces under study, as HC Bond of the Birmingham Police did not consider there to be any value in detective patrolling. He admitted that plain-clothes surveillance might deter pickpocketing but stated that detectives were only deployed for this purpose at certain events such as on market days

[49] Manchester Archives and Local History (hereafter MALH), GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee Minutes (hereafter Watch Committee), 2 July 1846.
[50] Ibid.
[51] LRO, 352 POL/3/1, Head Constable’s Special Order Book, 24 April 1852.
[52]TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 125.

and at race meetings, rather than as a general duty. He confirmed that detectives only acted in response to reports of a crime and were not detailed to watch out for specific offences such as theft.[53] These opposing views reveal the variation in detective patrolling in borough police forces and it is interesting to note that in Birmingham detectives were not deployed in regular surveillance activities, but only as a reaction to individual crimes in conformance with the beliefs of the force's head constable.

The closely-linked practice of eliciting intelligence and evidence from informers is often typified by examples such as described by former detective Edwin Coathupe: 'As a detective officer you cannot ask a question in the street of anybody without giving him a glass of ale or something of the kind.'[54] Although examples such as this appear to be anecdotal, there is evidence that this practice was also subject to discussion by senior management, as some head constables gave clear guidance on the limits of information-gathering activities.

Following a visit to Scotland Yard in 1873, HC Greig made some observations to the Liverpool Watch Committee in relation to the undercover practices of Metropolitan Police detectives. Referring to their 'spy system', he described how on one occasion two Scotland Yard officers were sent to a 'supper room' near Haymarket, in the company of two 'courtesans' to observe possible offenders whilst they were dining and drinking wine. The head constable criticised this action and stated that it was not permitted in Liverpool.[55] Three years later, he condemned the practice of 'straining a case' or 'trapping' witnesses whilst investigating the illicit sale of alcohol in public houses and beerhouses on Sundays: 'I will have no peeping through keyholes, no climbing over walls, no dressing up as coal heavers or low labourers, no intrusion into women's bedrooms, and no useless rummaging.' He cited another example of poor practice by the Metropolitan Police on an occasion when an inspector and sergeant remained more than four hours in a refreshment house, during which

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[53] Ibid., 113-114.
[54] Ibid., 176.
[55] LRO, 352 POL/2/6, Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee (hereafter Head Constable), 25 February 1873.

time they searched a servant's bedroom and gained access into the landlady's bathroom, where she was having a bath. Greig stated; 'However bad a person may be there should be no – straining – no weak cases - and no trapping, either as regards betting houses or public houses.'[56] Although this advice appears to be reactive rather than proactive, it nevertheless demonstrates that there were accepted standards of professionalism required when eliciting intelligence, which were likely linked to the detective police's prosecutorial role and, in this case, it was the influence of the head constable that led to an improvement in the methods used by detectives.

Investigative practices were also subject to change due to practical challenges, as the police responded to unique situations within their jurisdiction. One such was in Liverpool in 1864, when robberies were reported at St George's Hall, which housed the city's courts. In this instance, the detective department deliberately deployed uniformed officers in plain clothes to investigate the crimes, rather than the detectives themselves, as the latter were too familiar to potential offenders.[57] This shows a pragmatic approach to the difficulties of surveillance and the over-familiarisation of individual detective officers within the criminal fraternity. This is closely linked to the occasional need for police officers to disguise themselves to conceal their professional identity, a technique which had been in use since before the advent of the new police.[58] There is further anecdotal evidence from the primary sources to demonstrate that the practice of disguise continued throughout the nineteenth century, as described by Edwin Coathupe: 'I spent whole nights in the different thieves' haunts, going about in disguises and endeavouring to find them'.[59] However, references to the use of disguise by detective officers is minimal in primary sources such as watch committee minutes, and the topic would warrant further research.

Finally, there is evidence to suggest that investigative techniques such as surveillance were also used for the internal supervision of officers, as well as in crime

[56] LRO, 352 POL/2/7, Head Constable, 11 January 1876.
[57] LRO, 352 POL/2/3, Head Constable,18 March 1864.
[58] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 29.
[59] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 180.

detection. Former Manchester Detective Superintendent William Henderson described how detectives were employed to supervise their colleagues, in what was known as 'chalk duty'. This involved making chalk marks or tying threads onto padlocks in 'unlikely places' to ensure that those police officers on patrol, including detectives, had checked premises for break-ins. This is outside the scope of this thesis, but again further study would be beneficial.

In addition to the influence of head constables and watch committees, the practices of surveillance and information gathering were also subject, to a certain extent, to modification through legislative change. As already discussed in Chapter 3, borough detective departments, such as Liverpool, responded to the Prevention of Crimes Act 1871 by formalising surveillance on public houses and other premises where potential offenders might congregate (see Section 3.3.1). Other key legislative acts, including the Penal Servitude Act 1853 and the Habitual Criminals Act 1869, had a significant impact on the evolution of borough crime detection, in particular in relation to record keeping, which will be examined in Section 4.2. The archival evidence demonstrates that, especially in the mid-nineteenth century, changes to surveillance and information gathering were due to local influences such as those of the watch committee and head constable, as shown.

4.1.3. Local knowledge and inter-force collaboration

It is generally agreed among police historians that one of the most prominent characteristics of Victorian and Edwardian police detectives was their knowledge of offenders, both potential and actual, operating within their community. Emsley summarises this innate skill as 'knowing where to look, who to question, who was likely to reoffend'.[60] The report on the detective force of the Metropolitan Police stated that:

[60] Clive Emsley, *British Bobby*, 167.

> one of the principal advantages of a detective force seems to be, that through it you ought to obtain such a knowledge of the criminal population and their habits as to be able to a great extent to supervise their actions, and thus render their apprehension so probable as to deter them from crime.[61]

Eleanor Bland examines the impact of local knowledge on arrests in London and posits that police officers apprehended suspects because they knew them and were aware of their 'bad characters'. This knowledge also reinforced the validity of police testimonies in court.[62]

This valuable investigative tool was not limited to individual detectives but used collaboratively throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods for crime prevention and detection both locally and nationally. Firstly, there are many examples in the archival data of requests from other constabularies for detectives to assist in the policing of public events. HC Greig described how Liverpool detectives were sent to the races at Southport, Manchester and Chester 'because we suppose that the Liverpool rabble constitute a good part of the crowd.'[63] The deployment of officers from other constabularies for such events was generally considered to be successful in detecting crime, as shown in 1869 when DI Manton from Birmingham was engaged on special duty with the King's Lynn Police during the visit of the Prince of Wales for the opening of the new dock. Manton's 'extraordinary exertions and shrewdness' led to the arrest of three notorious and experienced thieves on charges of housebreaking and the recovery of stolen property. He also apprehended several 'travelling thieves' who were in town 'on the express purpose of plunder'. They were all convicted and sentenced to three or four months' imprisonment.[64]

These collaborative arrangements were often reciprocal, with constabularies assisting and learning from one another. In 1851, the Metropolitan Police commissioners sent requests to Manchester and Birmingham for detective officers 'well acquainted with

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[61] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, ix.
[62] Eleanor Bland, "The Identification of Criminal Suspects by Policing Agents in London, 1780-1850" (PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 2018), 143-144.
[63] Ibid., 122.
[64] Birmingham Archives and Collections (hereafter BAC), BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee Minute Book (hereafter Watch Committee), 6 July 1869.

thieves' to attend the Exhibition of All Nations in Hyde Park.[65] Both forces complied, with Birmingham sending its most senior detective.[66] Six years later, the Manchester Police requested the assistance of an experienced officer from the Metropolitan Police, who had been involved in the Special Exhibition in 1851, to support the policing of the Art Treasures Exhibition at Old Trafford. Former detective Nicholas Pearce was deployed to control and manage policing arrangements for Manchester's exhibition.[67] Pearce organised the detectives under his temporary command, which included officers from other forces such as Birmingham, into a day and night patrol,[68] thus combining surveillance with local knowledge.

Central government also utilised regional knowledge for the prevention and detection of crime, such as in 1864 when the Home Office communicated with the Mayor of Liverpool requesting information about individual ticket-of-leave convicts in the town. The head constable selected detectives with personal knowledge of the licensed convicts to make enquires, which included interviews with the individuals. The information was compiled and returned to the Home Office.[69] These examples all confirm that individual regional detectives were selected and deployed based on their local knowledge for different police-related matters, including public events, specific initiatives and crime investigation.

Secondly, throughout the period under study, the familiarity of borough detective officers with the criminals within their jurisdiction was used as a key strategy in tackling serious offences that occurred across several police authorities, particularly in complex thefts, frauds, and homicides. A typical example is a case of theft and receiving stolen money at a London bank in 1855. Acting on information received, DS Watson of the Manchester Police recognised two of the suspects in his district. After arresting them, he accompanied them to the capital, where inquiries were being made by both the Metropolitan and City of London forces. In court, Watson produced evidence of one of the prisoner's

[65] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/2, Watch Committee, 10 April 1851.
[66] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/14, Watch Committee, 29 April 1850.
[67] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/4, Watch Committee, 23 April 1857.
[68] George Scharf, "On the Manchester Art-Treasures Exhibition, 1857," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 10 (1857-1858): 309-310.
[69] LRO, 352 POL/2/3, Head Constable, 14 March 1864.

previous convictions.[70] Similarly, in 1867 DI Cozens from Liverpool collaborated with the City of London Police in the investigation of insurance fraud after the sinking of a ship which had set sail from his city's port. Cozens received instructions to search for two of the four suspects, with whom he was acquainted. He failed to locate them in Liverpool but was later instructed to search for evidence following their arrest in London. Cozens visited the alleged offenders' premises and collected documents to assist the London police in their prosecution.[71]

It is evident from such examples that borough detectives were deployed to work with other forces in the investigation of specific cases due to their local knowledge. However, this is particularly relevant in incidents of threats to national security, such as successive Fenian campaigns throughout the nineteenth century, for which detective officers from many constabularies worked together and developed increasingly sophisticated investigative techniques, as well as using their local knowledge. In 1870, when Irish Republicans John Wilson and Michael Davitt were tried at the Old Bailey for treason, detectives from ten police forces were involved in a nationwide investigation. DS Seal from Birmingham was deployed due to his acquaintance with Wilson, who was a gunmaker in the city. In the company of a colleague from the Royal Irish Constabulary, Seal watched a building linked to Wilson and located firearms that were directly connected with the suspect. DCI Henderson from Manchester recognised Davitt in his city and followed him to a parcel office where he too was discovered to have received a consignment of firearms. In addition, DI Horne testified to the nature of previous Fenian activities in Liverpool and identified Davitt. Both men were convicted, with Davitt receiving 15 years' penal servitude.[72]

Evidence from the Liverpool Watch Committee offers more detail of the routine detective work undertaken by their officers in collaboration with those from other forces in

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[70] *Old Bailey Proceedings* (hereafter OBP), trial of Mary Ann Pollitt, Mary Ann Conton, Samuel Woodhouse and Edward Foley, ref. t18550917-889.
[71] OBP, trial of Charles William Lee Webb, Thomas Berwick, Lionel Holdsworth and Joseph Stansfield Bean, ref. t18670128-244.
[72] OBP, trial of John Wilson and Michael Davitt, ref. t18700711-602.

relation to alleged Fenian activity in the borough, on which they regularly received information from central government, other constabularies, their own divisional police officers and informers. In 1865, for example, the head constable instructed detective officers to investigate the presence of Fenians in Liverpool at the request of the Secretary of State, following arrests in Dublin and rumours circulating in the local newspapers. The officers found no evidence of Fenian activity.[73] However, detectives from Liverpool and Dublin maintained a watch over the borough for any signs of disturbance.[74] They also searched premises for flammable substances and firearms. Two months later, another communication from the Home Office was sent to the Liverpool force with the description of a man believed to be carrying Fenian documents, who was to arrive by ship in England from the United States. DI Horne was instructed to investigate. On the vessel's arrival, Horne checked the passenger list and searched the baggage. In collaboration with colleagues from Ireland, he followed a suspect and, when he discovered that the man was travelling on to Dublin, he telegraphed the Dublin Constabulary with his description.[75] Further similar investigations were made, with the Liverpool detectives following key suspects as they reportedly arrived in England via the borough's port throughout the mid-1860s.[76] Following the murder of Sergeant Brett by Fenians in Manchester in 1867, the Liverpool head constable took the precautionary measures of instigating a nightly patrol of detective officers and using informants from within the Fenian organisation to gain information. Liverpool detectives also maintained regular correspondence with their colleagues in London, Dublin and Manchester.[77]

During the Fenian dynamite conspiracy in the early 1880s, evidence from the Birmingham Watch Committee demonstrated that their force also worked in collaboration with other constabularies to tackle this threat. In 1883, when the Birmingham Police received

[73] LRO, 352 POL/1/9, Orders of the Watch Committee to the Head Constable (hereafter Watch Committee), 26 September 1865.
[74] Ibid., 22 January 1866.
[75] Ibid., 3 November 1865.
[76] Ibid., 9 November 1865.
[77] Ibid., 11 October 1867.

reports of the purchase of an unusually large quantity of nitro-glycerine in the city by a painter named Whitehead, suspicions were aroused that it might be intended for use in manufacturing explosives. DI Black and PS Price investigated the matter through surveillance, with the latter donning a disguise to engage with the suspect. They also used skeleton keys to enter a property to conduct a search. After linking the individual with the United States, based on evidence found at his house, the Liverpool officers telegraphed Scotland Yard with the description of a possible accomplice who had travelled to the capital. Whitehead and two others were convicted and sentenced to life.[78] In the same year, Liverpool detectives received rewards from the Home Office for their work in relation to the Fenian dynamite conspiracy, confirming that they too had been involved in this significant threat to public order.[79]

Although the data relating to investigative technique is limited in the regional archives, often with only brief descriptions of cases and usually collated for administrative purposes such as financial compensation, it confirms that detectives employed a range of strategies, based on a comprehensive personal knowledge of the offenders in their region. They carried out complex investigations for which they often collaborated with colleagues from other constabularies on an equal footing.

Finally, there are some indications that regional detectives actively developed their local knowledge and memory skills, although this is not consistent between the forces under study. When stipulating the nature of detective duties, the report on the Metropolitan Police detective force stated: ‘They are supposed also to visit the prisons frequently so as to become familiar with the faces of the criminal classes, and, as far as possible, to make themselves acquainted with their residences and mode of life.’[80] This practice was not in place in all three borough detective departments and HC Greig of the Liverpool Police did not see any value in it. After noting that, in the Metropolitan Police, detectives were sent to

[78] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/17, Watch Committee, 3 August 1883.
[79] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 11 September 1883.
[80] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, v.

prisons to gain a knowledge of offenders, he claimed that this was not necessary in Liverpool as all information about 'criminal detective business is focussed into one grand centre'.[81] (This will be examined in more detail in Section 4.2). DI Robertson confirmed to the 1894 commission on the identification of habitual criminals that: 'No periodical visits are paid to the prison by the police', although he conceded that detective officers visited the city's main bridewell to identify individual prisoners.[82] It was also recorded by the committee that prisoners from the county and neighbouring boroughs were brought to the Liverpool bridewell in case the city's police could identify them. This practice was recommended to be undertaken by all detectives, despite the use of photographs and record keeping which by the 1890s was standard practice in all three borough forces.[83]

In Manchester, there is some evidence that detective officers undertook prison visits. Detective Caminada described his experiences of visiting prisoners for the purposes of identification in 1872, which he continued to do for many years.[84] In contrast, HC Peacock stated in 1901 that this was not routine due to the complexity of a prison such as Strangeways in Manchester being within the jurisdiction of at least 20 different police authorities.[85]

Finally, in relation to local knowledge and the sharing of good practice, former Manchester detective William Henderson described a system of exchange in which he participated with the Glasgow Police:

> I was sent down to Glasgow for the purpose of seeing the Manchester thieves who had migrated there and pointing them out to the Glasgow officers, whilst in exchange a Glasgow officer was sent down to Manchester for the purpose of pointing out the

[81] LRO, 352 POL/2/6, Head Constable, 25 February 1873.
[82] *Identification of Habitual Criminals, Report of a Committee Appointed by the Secretary of State to Inquire into the Best Means Available for Identifying Habitual Criminals* (hereafter *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*) (London: HMSO, 1894), 47.
[83] Ibid., 11.
[84] Jerome Caminada, *Twenty-Five Years of Detective Life*, Volume II (Manchester: J. Heywood, 1901), 337.
[85] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report of a Committee appointed by the Secretary of State to inquire into the Identification of Criminals by Measurements and Finger Prints* (hereafter *Report on Identification of Criminals*) (London: HMSO, 1901), 32.

Glasgow thieves to the Manchester officers. We found that of very great service.[86]

Although there is no further information about this initiative, which can be dated to the early 1870s at the latest, it is a further example of the use of local knowledge in a collaborative venture between constabularies.

4.1.4. The dissemination of information and the advance in communication technologies

There were a range of publications available to detective police throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the *Police Gazette*, the *Police Review and Parade Gossip*, and the *Police Service Advertiser.*[87] These were mainly sources of general information, with details of habitual offenders and stolen property, as well as occasional reports on policing practices and crime detection techniques. The most significant was the *Police Gazette* which, from 1883, was collated and published twice weekly by the Convict Supervision Office at Scotland Yard.[88] Rawlings asserts that the circulation of the *Police Gazette* enabled close collaboration between the Metropolitan Police and other forces.[89] Robert Morris points out that the editing and publication of the *Police Gazette* and editions of Howard Vincent's *Police Code* from 1881 reinforced the Metropolitan Police's role in the dissemination of information.[90] However, borough forces were not required to subscribe to any of the publications and Emsley quips that the *Police Gazette* often remained unopened in provincial police stations.[91]

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[86] HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 135.
[87] Joanne Klein, "'The Best Police Officer in the Force': Chief Constables and their Men, 1900-1939," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 127; Emsley, "Detection," 83.
[88] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 49.
[89] Rawlings, *Policing*, 178.
[90] Robert M. Morris, "What the Met brought to the party - Reinforcement, Colonization, Specialization and Fusion," in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018),164.
[91] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 167.

The challenge of ensuring that the information was disseminated was highlighted in the Second Report of the Select Committee on Police in 1853, in which the Essex chief constable reported that once information had been circulated in the *Police Gazette*, action was not guaranteed: 'If information is sent from Scotland Yard, to Bath, Bristol, or Birmingham, there is nothing whatever to insure the information being acted upon; it is generally turned over to a detective officer, and it is only just when it suits his purpose that he acts upon it.'[92]

In the first report of the Inspectors of Constabulary in 1857, William Cartwright further highlighted the inefficiency of the *Police Gazette* due to its permitted sale to the general public, which 'is the means of giving notice to many offenders by which they escape detection.' He called for the publication to be restricted to the police.[93] References to police publications in the archival data relate primarily to cost. For example in 1882, the Liverpool Watch Committee granted permission for the purchase of 25 copies of the *Police Gazette* per annum for 'advertising criminals and stolen property'.[94] The force also purchased copies of the *Police and Constabulary Almanac*.[95] Similarly to the police library collections noted in Section 3.2.3, there is evidence of publications relating to policing, including crime detection, being available at borough detective departments, but it is impossible to know whether individual officers engaged with them. In the 1894 Commission report, in response to the question of the value of the *Police Gazette*, the Birmingham head constable responded that it, 'affords some assistance' and 'has on many occasions assisted us materially', whereas the Liverpool head constable replied that there were 'very few identifications effected thereby'.[96] Thus, although publications such as the *Police Gazette* were available to all police forces, their use and perceived value in crime detection was variable. However, there is anecdotal evidence of their effectiveness in specific crime cases, such as in the arrest of

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[92] *Second Report from the Select Committee on Police; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix* (London: HMSO, 1853), 95.
[93] *Reports of IOC,* 1857, 11.
[94] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 25 September 1882.
[95] LRO, 352 POL/2/7, Head Constable, 28 December 1875.
[96] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 68-69.

forger Arthur Foster in Manchester by Detective Caminada who, according to his recollections, cut out an image of the suspect from the *Police Gazette*, which enabled him to identify the felon.[97]

Throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, the dissemination of information about crimes and alleged offenders evolved from the simple route form, which was a handwritten message, to extensive telegraphic and telephonic systems, following advances in communication technology. There has been little focus on the role of communication in crime detection in the general police historiography. Chris Williams examines the organisational tensions caused by detective officers being reluctant to share information with their colleagues, which may have had an impact on investigations. This was due to the competitive nature of promotions and rewards, from which individual detectives could benefit.[98]

In addition to record keeping, Emsley highlights telegraphic communication as a technical aid in the collection and dissemination of information,[99] although as noted by Shpayer-Makov, even detectives in the Metropolitan Police were reluctant to use the telegraph due to concerns about cost.[100] In contrast, Churchill asserts that outside the capital, the large regional forces including Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham were leaders in the development of information management and communication, with the early adoption of new technologies such as the telegraph and telephone.[101]

Traditionally, route forms were used as the main form of communication within and between police forces from the earliest days of the new police. In 1846, the head constable of the Manchester Police reported that, whenever an offence was committed in one of the police divisions, a route or report was sent immediately to the detective office.[102] In the mid-

[97] Jerome Caminada, *Twenty-Five Years of Detective Life* (Manchester: J. Heywood, 1895), 431.
[98] Chris A. Williams, *Police Control Systems in Britain, 1775-1975: From Parish Constable to National Computer* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 110-111.
[99] Emsley, “Detection”, 82.
[100] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 114.
[101] Churchill, *Crime Control,* 52.
[102] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/1, Watch Committee, 2 July 1846.

1890s the route form was still the most widely used method of communication to circulate descriptions and photographs of prisoners on remand. As the forms passed between forces, detectives added any extra information. They were then returned to the issuing authority. Copies would also be sent to the Metropolitan Police, prison governors and the Habitual Criminals Registry. The 1894 Committee concluded that the forms which included a photograph generally led to positive identifications in the majority of cases.[103] However, their collated data demonstrated that in practice this was variable. For example, in Manchester between 1892 and 1893, 53 per cent of route forms resulted in a successful identification,[104] whereas in Liverpool the success rate for the same period was 86 per cent.[105]

DI Robertson, who was responsible for issuing and examining the routes in the Liverpool Detective Department stated that the forms were only issued when necessary, and that often information was obtained from a prisoner's acquaintances rather than via the official method. The detectives were also selective in where they sent route forms. Between 1892 and 1893, the Liverpool force issued 74 route forms to an average of 20 places, compared to 1,200 forms that they received from other constabularies. Robertson added that the most useful contributors to route forms were the Metropolitan, Glasgow and Edinburgh Police forces. In response to a questionnaire, the Liverpool head constable concluded that 'the route forms are found to be of the greatest value'.[106] However, DCI Van Helden of the Birmingham Police testified that his detectives only used route forms when a search for a prisoner in the central Habitual Criminals Registry had failed.[107] In 1901, HC Peacock stated that the Manchester force received about 2,000 route forms annually and that the detectives visited the courts every day to examine the forms. He also affirmed that they had discarded the use of route forms in their detective department by this time, and only used them for 'wanted' individuals.[108]

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[103] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 11-12.
[104] Ibid., 16.
[105] Ibid., 70.
[106] Ibid., 68.
[107] Ibid., 42.
[108] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 35.

Telegraphic systems were first introduced into the borough forces in the 1860s, primarily for incidents of public disturbance and fire.[109] The telegraph was already in use in Birmingham by 1858, as it is referred to in the instructions for the role of detective superintendent (see Section 3.1.1).[110] It is not clear whether he was required to use the public network or whether they had had a system installed in the police stations. The internal circuit was established by 1864, when it was extended to connect the police stations with the town clerk's offices.[111] In Liverpool, the telegraph was first proposed to the watch committee in 1858 to connect the fire and police stations. It was also recognised at this time that it would facilitate 'the detection of persons committing offences' and the dissemination of information relating to criminal investigations.[112] The proposal was rejected and the telegraph was not installed until 1866.[113] Similarly to Liverpool, discussions about the possible use of the telegraph for policing purposes began in Manchester in 1857, but it was dismissed due to the head constable's opinion that, in case of fires, information could be 'quite as speedily conveyed' by a messenger or police constable directly to the fire yard than by transmitting a message via telegraph, for which it was necessary to go to a police station first.[114] The network was extended to the police stations in 1863.[115]

The archival data confirms that the use of the telegraph in borough police forces began with its installation for the purposes of the fire brigade, which was run by the police (see Section 3.3.1), and that head constables compared provision within their area with that of others, particularly in order to convince watch committees to defray the costs. The 1877 Commission underlined the importance of the telegraph and proposed more extensive use of telegraphic systems in the Metropolitan Police, as a solution to the lack of communication

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[109] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 7 April 1879.
[110] BRO, BCC/1AC/1/1/7, Watch Committee, 20 April 1858.
[111] BRO, BCC/1/AC/1/1/11, Watch Committee, 22 November 1864.
[112] LRO, 352 POL/1/4, Watch Committee, 22 January 1858.
[113] LRO, 352 POL/1/8, Watch Committee, 11 September 1866.
[114] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/4, Watch Committee, 26 February 1857.
[115] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/6, 2 July 1863.

between central and divisional detectives.[116] There is no evidence of a similar directive for the regional forces.

In all three borough forces, the telephone replaced the telegraph in the early 1880s. This took place in Manchester in 1881, beginning with the police courts and prisons.[117] In Liverpool, the first telephone connection was established between the main police station and the detective office in 1883.[118] (Interestingly, the detective office was connected to the city network in 1898 to enable direct communication with the general public.[119]) Birmingham followed suit also in 1883 and the Inspectors of Constabulary reported that, during the first months of its use, it had already resulted in the arrest of an escaped prisoner within two hours of his absconding.[120] In 1899, the Inspectors of Constabulary highlighted the general usage of the telephone which they considered, along with bicycles, to be 'useful in the apprehension of offenders'.[121]

4.2. 'The usual suspects': monitoring habitual offenders

A crucial point of change in the evolution of detective practice in relation to offender identification during the Victorian and Edwardian periods was the adoption of technical and scientific aids, which included record keeping, photography, anthropometric measurements and fingerprinting. From the mid-nineteenth century there were increased efforts to record information about repeat offenders more methodically. Enhanced by the use of photography, the recorded information was used as an investigative tool for the identification and management of habitual criminals, and as a deterrent. It was also used by the police in the

[116] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, xii.
[117] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/18, Watch Committee, 27 October 1881.
[118] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 17 January 1883.
[119] LRO, 352 POL/2/15, Head Constable, 21 February 1898.
[120] *Reports of IOC,* 1884, 93.
[121] *Reports of IOC,* 1900, 74.

supervision of released prisoners.[122] Recording systems were further enhanced by Alphonse Bertillon's anthropometric measuring system and fingerprinting.[123]

In conjunction with the telegraph, Emsley cites the centralisation of criminal records, including photographs, as key technical aids in the development of investigative technique.[124] However, he draws attention to the challenge of developing such complex systems quickly and efficiently, inferring that offender descriptions and photographs were largely ignored by regional police forces.[125] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov further suggest that the use of photography for suspect identification was cumbersome and unwieldy, and that it was more important in representing the scientific nature of investigative policing rather than being effective in the actual detection of criminals.[126] In contrast, Morris argues that the 'bureaucracy of identification' is less 'fascinating' than investigative activities, but more effective in crime detection.[127]

Shpayer-Makov concludes that, despite the challenges of offender identification, such as unsystematic recording, the possibility of mistaken identity and the costs, the adoption and development of identification techniques during the nineteenth century contributed to the professionalisation of the police, even if detectives often continued to rely on traditional methods rather than using the new technologies.[128] Moreover, she accepts that existing research in this area is restricted to the Metropolitan Police and calls for further study into the use of scientific innovations, such as photography, 'Bertillonage' and fingerprinting in police forces outside London.[129]

Terry Stanford states that the principal challenge of the police was that of offender identification, which included the requirement to establish a suspect's name, age and any previous convictions. Although limiting his research to the Metropolitan Police, he concludes

[122] Shpayer-Makov, "Forensic Science," 483.
[123] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, "Detective," 9.
[124] Emsley, "Detection," 83; Emsley, *Crime,* 242.
[125] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 167.
[126] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, "Detective," 8.
[127] Morris, "The Met," 170.
[128] Shpayer-Makov, "Forensic Science," 484.
[129] Ibid., 492.

that identification remained problematic throughout the nineteenth century despite the use of photography, until the advent of fingerprinting in the twentieth.[130] He further suggests that localised identifications were made by both uniformed and detective officers, both of whom relied on personal recognition (see Section 4.1.3).[131] Furthermore, in relation to local policing, Churchill adds that the recording of information about suspects was a key feature of bureaucratic procedure in the regional police forces.[132] In his assessment of the impact of police detectives on crime control in the regional cities, he notes that fundamental changes included the use of records to proactively link victims and stolen property, with offenders. He concludes that surveillance and information management systems afforded the police greater control over known offenders.[133]

In a wider context, the use of technical and scientific developments in crime investigation were linked to legislative change, beginning with the Penal Servitude Act 1853 which, as Bailey posits, led to a significant shift in policing, as it marked the end of transportation and the introduction of the surveillance of released convicts by the police.[134] M. Heather Tomlinson examines this subject in more detail and highlights the mid-nineteenth century crisis in the penal system due to the threat of the abolition of hanging, transportation and prison hulks, which resulted in the need for a substitute sanction for those convicted of the most serious crimes. This led to the evolution of penal servitude, introduced in 1846 and developed through a series of parliamentary acts in the mid-1860s,[135] which led to the introduction of ticket-of-leave convicts. In turn, this resulted in a requirement for police supervision and more rigorous record keeping, including the use of photography, not only to monitor those individuals who were released under the system, but also to ‘trace second

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[130] Terry Stanford, “Who Are You? We Have Way of Finding Out!: Tracing the Police Development of Offender Identification Techniques in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Crimes and Misdemeanours* 3, no. 1 (2009): 54-55.
[131] Ibid., 56-57.
[132] Churchill, *Crime Control*, 52.
[133] Ibid., 97.
[134] Victor Bailey, ed., *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Ltd.,1981), 20.
[135] M. Heather Tomlinson, “Penal Servitude 1846-1864: A System in Evolution,” in *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. Victor Bailey (London: Croom Helm Ltd.,1981),126.

offenders'.[136] She argues that this key point of change set the precedent for the following three decades.[137] However, to date there has been minimal research into the response of regional police forces to the changes in the penal system as stipulated by central government and the relevant parliamentary acts.

4.2.1. Regional responses to legislative requirements and centralised record keeping

Following the Habitual Criminals Act 1869, a central register of all those convicted of a crime throughout the UK was established. In England, this was maintained by the Metropolitan Police.[138] Regional police forces were required to keep records of criminals within their jurisdiction and to coordinate inquiries in an attempt to keep offenders under greater surveillance.[139] (This included the photographing of prisoners, which will be examined in Section 4.2.3.) The central register was modified under the Prevention of Crimes Act 1871, which stipulated that those on licence were required to report to the local police every month, in person or by letter, and to notify them of any change in residence. The licence could be revoked if a holder failed to report to the police within 48 hours of arriving in the district.[140] In reference to data collection, the Secretary of State was empowered to prescribe the nature of the information required for the central register, which included the photographing of prisoners in prisons, the expense for which was to be borne by the individual penal institutions, whereas the cost of maintaining the central register was carried by the Treasury.[141] The register was reviewed in 1874 and was deemed to be a failure. According to Williams, this was due to its cumbersome nature, which had led to information overload

[136] Ibid., 141.
[137] Ibid., 144.
[138] Morris, "The Met,", 170.
[139] Rawlings, *Policing*, 172-173.
[140] Prevention of Crimes Act 1871.
[141] Ibid., s. 6.

and, in his view, more importantly to the conclusion that other methods such as the route form were more effective.[142] The register was amended in 1876.

The Prevention of Crimes Amendment Act 1876 reduced inclusion to offenders with at least one previous conviction and to those being discharged from a term of penal servitude. A list of those already on the register who met these new requirements was circulated to regional police forces to avoid further time-wasting. Furthermore, prison governors were required to submit returns every Saturday, including a photograph, of all those due for release, for which a form was created. Similarly, information about individuals sentenced to police supervision was to be circulated to the police authority in which they were intending to reside prior to their release.[143] Interestingly, a report on the Convict Supervision Office in 1886 concluded that police supervision was more effective in the borough and county forces as they were not hampered by the officer responsible having to be nominated by the police commissioner, as was the case in the Metropolitan Police, in which the role had been undermined by successive changes in the work force. However, it was acknowledged that supervision generally facilitated crime detection.[144]

This series of parliamentary acts formed the basis for centralised record keeping in England in the late Victorian period, with the main register being held by the Metropolitan Police. However, the responsibility lay chiefly with the prisons for recording the descriptions of and photographing their inmates. Penal institutions had kept registers since 1836,[145] and examples in the watch committee minutes confirm their key role in record keeping. When the Home Secretary wrote to the Liverpool Watch Committee in 1888 requiring the governor of

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[142] Chris Williams, "Labeling and Tracking the Criminal in Mid-Nineteenth Century England and Wales: The Relationship between Governmental Structures and Creating Official Numbers," in *The Mutual Construction of Statistics and Society*, eds. Ann Rudinow Sætnan, Heidi Mork Lomell and Svein Hammer (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 165-166.

[143] TNA, MEPO 3/88, Habitual Criminals Act, 1870 and Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871: Correspondence, 1869-1877, Home Office letter, 15 March 1877.

[144] TNA, HO 144/184/A5507, *A Report on the History of the Department of the Metropolitan Police, known as the Convict Supervision Office: Detailing System, and Showing Results and Effects Generally on the Habitual Criminal Population* (hereafter *Report on Convict Supervision Office*) (London: HMSO, 1886), 5-6.

[145] Barry S. Godfrey, Paul Lawrence and Chris A. Williams. *History & Crime: Key Approaches to Criminology* (London: SAGE Publications, 2008), 39.

Walton Prison to record and submit additional information about individual prisoners, the head constable stated that the existing information was sufficient for policing purposes. The watch committee noted that 'clerical duty in the main bridewell is already excessive'.[146] It is important to note that, until nationalisation in 1877,[147] prisons were under local control and there were regular and often complex interactions between the prison and police authorities in response to government initiatives, as well as in their main duties within the penal system. Furthermore, police officers were sometimes deployed as bridewell keepers (see Section 3.3.1). Thus, the distinction between the prisons and the police in relation to record keeping is not clearly delineated as, although the government required prison governors to record information about offenders, the police also had a key role in collating information. As noted by Shpayer-Makov, the ongoing requirements to keep more detailed records of convicts, including photographs, increased the responsibilities of detective officers,[148] who had to manage their own records, as well as interacting with the local prison governors and the centralised Habitual Criminals Register.

When regional head constables were questioned about record keeping in 1877, HC Bond confirmed that the Birmingham Police kept a criminal register, but that it was unique to the force:

> Ours is a very peculiar register, and I think the only one of its kind in the kingdom. It is a register of the different parts of the person. We ignore names altogether; we find that it is quite a fallacy altogether, and that it is of no use whatever relying on any alphabetical register.

Bond explained that this was due to the use of aliases and false names by offenders. He further described how the registers, which included a photograph, were based on physical descriptions, such as if an individual had one leg or arm, and any distinguishing marks or

[146] LRO, 352 POL/2/11, Head Constable, 19 May 1888.
[147] The Prison Act 1877 (40 & 41 Vict c.21).
[148] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 37.

scars. The police then attributed a number to each description, which was cross-referenced to a register of given names. Bond concluded that this system was used 'with the greatest of ease' and was 'an immense advantage', with 80 per cent of suspects being identified through the register.[149] Manchester Police also kept a criminal register, but no details were given as to its nature.[150] HC Peacock's assessment in 1901 concluded: 'I cannot say that it has been a success'.[151]

In contrast to the other two city forces, the Liverpool Police did not keep a formal criminal register at the time of the 1877 Commission. HC Greig explained that he published general information about criminals in his annual report and that he relied on detectives to monitor potential offenders through personal visits to their known residences: 'We know the streets in which to seek information as to a returned convict or thief.' His rationale for this approach was that although offenders 'shift purposely', they are 'always' known to detective officers, who kept information of individual cases in their notebooks (see Section 3.3.2). Greig conceded that the Liverpool force held photographs and descriptions of those released on licence, which he dismissed as 'not particularly' of use.[152]

In addition, the commission examined the potential usefulness of a fully-centralised criminal register, to which information would be submitted by regional police forces and then disseminated throughout the country, thus creating a more dynamic and interactive form of the existing system which would further increase control of the criminal population. The respondents from all three police forces under study supported this initiative. HC Greig commented that: 'I think that that would be a good thing to do, and it could quite easily be carried out with system.'[153]

After the creation of the CID of the Metropolitan Police in 1878, further modifications were made, which resulted in greater centralisation of national criminal records. The Convict

[149] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 114.
[150] Ibid., 180.
[151] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 32.
[152] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124-125.
[153] Ibid., 125.

Supervision Office was established in 1880, followed by the transfer of the Habitual Criminals Register to the Home Office, to be maintained by a government-appointed registrar. Together with the Register of Distinctive Marks, this was compiled annually and included information on licensed criminals who had been released during the previous year. Copies of the registers were distributed to all police forces.[154] In 1886, it was reported that borough and county forces were in 'continued communication' with the Convict Supervision Office, which had led to previous offenders being recognised 'frequently'.[155] This had resulted in a decrease in those sentenced to penal servitude and it was concluded that: 'great assistance has been rendered to the borough and county forces, by supplying immediately the antecedents of known criminals, and in many cases identifying persons in custody in the country as old London offenders'.[156]

When the use of the central register was reviewed by the 1894 Committee, once again regional head constables shared their experiences. DI Robertson, who oversaw the Liverpool Convict Branch, stated that the register was 'invaluable' for the purposes of identification as well as for knowledge about previous convictions: 'It is helpful to us not only for travelling thieves but many of our local thieves.' He suggested that it could be improved by being issued more promptly after compilation.[157] DCI Van Helden of the Birmingham Police also found the registers 'often useful' and explained that the average length of a record search was three-quarters of an hour. If a search failed, then they would send a route form (see Section 4.1.4). In response to a wider questionnaire on the subject, both the Birmingham and Liverpool Police forces replied positively, stating that they used the register frequently and effectively, whereas Manchester was less enthusiastic: 'A few cases have been traced by means of it.'[158] In 1901, HC Peacock stated that searches took a maximum of three days.[159]

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[154] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 6-7; Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 49.
[155] TNA, HO 144/184/A5507, *Report on Convict Supervision Office*, 14.
[156] Ibid., 18.
[157] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 47-48.
[158] Ibid., 68.
[159] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 33.

The 1894 Committee concluded that the registers were not used extensively and ‘even those police forces who frequently consult them do not by this means make a large number of identifications’. Liverpool Police was cited as the only force to have used them effectively to identify suspects. The committee highlighted the specific disadvantages of the registers as the reliance on distinctive bodily marks, which was insufficient to identify most individuals, and the limited annual publication and its delayed issue to police forces. However, they did not recommend any changes in relation to the development of technical aids.[160]

In the early decades of the twentieth century, there were further government requirements for keeping records which influenced local police record keeping. For example, following the Licensing Act 1902, the Home Secretary circulated new regulations in relation to ‘habitual drunkards’ to regional forces. The act stipulated that individuals convicted of drunkenness or of a crime committed under the influence of alcohol three times within a year, or those defined under the Habitual Drunkards Act 1879, were banned from buying alcohol on licensed premises and registered clubs. Anyone breaking the regulations would be liable to prosecution, as would the license holder who had supplied them. A ‘black list’ was created for those prohibited from purchasing alcohol. The Home Office circulated the Metropolitan Police regulations to regional police forces which included a pro forma for recording the details and descriptions of those bound under the act, as presented in Figure 4.2.

[160] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 7-8.

Figure 4.2. Proforma for recording information about habitual drunkards, 1903.

11

PORTRAIT AND DESCRIPTION OF HABITUAL DRUNKARDS.

No. 1.

Name and *alias* ....

Residence ....

....

Place of business or where employed ....

....

Age..........................

Height.........ft.........ins.

Build ....

Complexion ....

Hair ....

Eyes ....

Whiskers ....

Moustache ....

Shape of nose ....

Shape of face ....

PORTRAIT.

Peculiarities or marks ....

....

Profession or occupation ....

Date and nature of conviction..

....

Court at which convicted ....

No. 2.

(Particulars of second case, as above.)

N.B.—Should any known Habitual Drunkard attempt to purchase or obtain any intoxicating liquor at any premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor by retail or at the premises of any registered Club it is requested that the licensed person or the person refusing to supply the liquor will, as soon as practicable, give information of such attempt to the Police of the District, in order that the law may be enforced.

To the Licensee of the } ....

To the Secretary of the Registered Club } ....

Whose special attention is called to No. .

Source: LRO, 352 POL/2/18, Licensing Act, 1902: Regulations as to Habitual Drunkards, Report of the Head Constable, Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee, 1903, 11. Courtesy of Liverpool Central Library and Archives.

Regional police forces were required to pass on information about convictions to license holders in their area, as well as receiving and sharing the descriptions of those individuals who either moved from or into their jurisdiction, so that potential offenders could be identified. Moreover, on seeing any blacklisted individuals entering licensed premises, police constables had to warn the manager.[161] In response to these requirements Birmingham Police published the details of the new regulations for licence holders and circulated them to all police stations within their district.[162]

In Liverpool, HC Dunning reported that, in his opinion, information about habitual drunkards should be updated and circulated every quarter. He agreed to disseminate details of individuals to other police authorities, when appropriate, and stated his hope that they would reciprocate. Dunning further stated that his police officers were already working with the managers of licensed premises to deny alcohol to those with drink-related convictions.[163] Data compiled by the assistant head constable for two six-month periods from January to June in 1902 and 1903 was reported to the watch committee.

Table 4.4. Comparative return of convictions for drunkenness for the six months to 30 June 1902, and the six months to 30 June 1903.

Year	No. of licensed houses	No. of those charged with drunkenness	No. of those charged with related offences	No. of proceedings against licensees
1902	2155	2359	421	26
1903	2117	3490	512	47

Source: LRO, 352 POL/2/18, Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee, 27 July 1903.

161 LRO, 352 POL/2/18, Licensing Act, 1902: Regulations as to Habitual Drunkards, Report of the Head Constable, Head Constable, 1903.
162 BRO, BCC/1/AC/1/1/22, Watch Committee, 14 January 1903. For a published example see Jon Bauckman, “Habitual Drunkards Register, 1903-1906,” *Who Do You Think You Are?* 183, October 2021, 50-51, accessed 31 January 2022, https://www.pressreader.com/uk/who-do-you-think-you-are-magazine/20210913/283867281356940.
163 LRO, 352 POL/2/18, Head Constable, 27 July 1903.

As noted in Table 4.4, the total number of individuals defined by the Licensing Act as 'habitual drunkards' in Liverpool was 2,780 in 1902 and 4,002 in 1903, which shows a substantial increase between the two periods, although the number of licensed premises remained relatively constant. The proceedings against licensees also rose but the number remained very low. Although there was no centralised register specifically for habitual drunkards, this was a complex set of regulations with multiple responsibilities to be undertaken by the watch committees and their respective police forces. The regional police not only would have been involved in the original convictions for drunkenness, but they were also required to process and circulate details of those convicted three times within the year, collate information from other authorities and monitor licensed premises for those attempting to buy, or for selling, alcohol illicitly and then prepare for further prosecutions. There is no reference in the archival data to the role of the detective officers in these procedures, but it was likely that the records were compiled and held in the detective office, as they were the key point of liaison with the courts, and they were customarily responsible for enforcing the law particularly in relation to licensing and public houses (see Section 4.2), as well as keeping the criminal registers. Although this represents only one aspect of crime detection, it reveals the scale of the challenge of monitoring those who were likely or liable to be classified as 'habitual drunkards', for whom records would have to be created and maintained by the borough detective department, in addition to their other administrative and practical duties. This was due to a national attempt to control persistent offenders, who were legislated into existence because they were considered to be the most likely to commit offences. This supports the work of Barry Godfrey, David Cox and Stephen Farrell, who found in their study of habitual offenders in Crewe during the late nineteenth century that the majority of public order offences prosecuted by the police were linked to drunkenness.[164]

[164] Barry S. Godfrey, David J. Cox and Stephen D. Farrell, *Criminal Lives: Family Life, Employment, and Offending* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 21.

However, as they point out, the perception of regular offenders as a ’criminal class’ was greater than the reality.[165]

4.2.2. Interforce collaboration and local initiatives

It is evident that, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, offender identification was one of the greatest challenges faced by police in their investigative work. Key issues included the use of aliases, the movement of individuals between police districts and the reliance on the personal knowledge of individual police officers. As examined in Section 4.2.1., the response of borough police forces to government requirements and recommendations regarding record keeping was variable in its implementation and perceived effectiveness for the purposes of crime detection. Despite this variability there is evidence in the archival data of watch committees and prison authorities interacting with each other and collaborating with other police forces to share information on individual offenders as they progressed through the penal system. Moreover, some borough detective departments initiated their own unique criminal registers.

In 1864, the Liverpool head constable was notified by Portland and Chatham Prisons of two convicts to be released on license into the borough, who were required to report to the detective office within seven days of discharge. In response, the head constable initiated a special book at the detective office, in which prisoners’ names, descriptions and addresses were to be recorded. This also included discharged prisoners, whose term of imprisonment had expired. He further stated that he would report any ‘bad characters’ to the Home Office.[166] This evidence confirms that, in Liverpool, detective police officers were responsible for monitoring licensed convicts and that records were kept of all discharged prisoners prior to the introduction of the centralised Habitual Criminals Register in 1869.

[165] Ibid., 165.
[166] LRO, 352 POL/2/3, Head Constable, 11 April 1864.

An example from Kirkdale Prison in Liverpool offers further insight into local criminal records and the collaboration between police forces in relation to the discharge of prisoners. When William Dollar was released in 1870, after serving a six-month sentence in Liverpool, his intended place of residence was London. His personal information, which had been compiled by the prison governor at Kirkdale, was sent to the Metropolitan Police, as required. It included details of his conviction, age, marital status, occupation and standard physical measurements, such as height and any distinguishing marks.[167] Interestingly, when Dollar was facing trial again in London for theft a year later, the Metropolitan Police requested further information and assistance from the Liverpool head constable who referred the matter back to the prison governor, and a prison officer was sent to London to testify at Dollar's trial, the outcome of which was a further 12-month sentence.[168] Although it is not clear whether the decision taken by the head constable to pass on the request for information about Dollar to the prison governor was customary or unusual, it demonstrates their close collaboration and the complexity of the relationship between the police and the prison authorities in relation to discharged prisoners and habitual criminals.

Whilst regional criminal records were kept statutorily by prisons, rather than the police, there is also evidence of regional police forces keeping their own unique registers for the purposes of crime detection. Liverpool Detective Department kept a special register of the birth names of the wives and mothers of male convicts to aid identification particularly in relation to the use of aliases: 'as it is found that in a large proportion of cases an offender, when he changes his name, takes either his wife's or his mother's'.[169] Three 'description clerks' were employed for collating the details of prisoners held in the main bridewell; one for felons, another for 'disorderly' males and a third for females. They recorded the description of all individuals who appeared before the city magistrates on a daily basis. The collated information included the father's first name and occupation, their mother's birth name, and

[167] TNA, MEPO 3/88, Kirkdale Prison record, 10 September 1870.
[168] Ibid., Letter from the Liverpool Constabulary to the Metropolitan Police, 22 April 1871.
[169] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 11.

(for married male prisoners) his wife's birth name. Prisoners were indexed under all these names, which was 'of considerable assistance' in offender identification. Following the completion of the records, senior detectives visited the prisons to identify any recidivists, calling in officers from other forces when necessary. This provides additional evidence of prison visits as discussed in Section 4.1.3. Each register covered three years, with individual records sometimes running across several volumes, for which entries were cross-referenced in indexes. These registers, which had been maintained since 1856,[170] demonstrate that the Liverpool Police worked closely with their prison colleagues to identify offenders. Moreover, it reveals their initiative in creating specialised records based on their knowledge and experience of criminal investigation.

Birmingham Police not only held their own criminal records based on physical features (see Section 3.2.1), but they also established their own register of tattoos. According to Zoe Alker and Robert Shoemaker, the cultural and social use of tattoos was widespread in Victorian society and not limited to the criminal fraternity.[171] Composed of coloured drawings, this was a special feature of the detective department's records, which afforded some success in offender identification: 'some very remarkable though isolated instances have occurred of recognition by this means'.[172] One such identification was achieved through the circulation of a copy of the tattoo mark on a prisoner's arm after his photograph had not yielded a positive result. The tattoo was recognised by a Liverpool police officer who had held the individual in custody more than a decade earlier.[173] There is no further detail given of this case, but it serves as evidence of the register. Although tattoos were noted as distinguishing marks in criminal records, as concluded by forensic scientist Charles Ainsworth Mitchell in the 1930s, they were 'not sufficiently distinctive' to be an

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[170] Ibid., 47.

[171] Zoe Alker and Robert Shoemaker, "Convicts and the Cultural Significance of Tattooing in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Journal of British Studies* 61, no. 4 (2022): 861.

[172] Ibid., 11.

[173] Ibid., 42

effective method of offender identification and could be removed.[174] This suggests that the successful resolution of the case in Birmingham is likely to have been an isolated incident.

Although outside the geographical scope of this thesis, it is important to note that other police forces throughout the country also developed their own strategies for record keeping and offender identification. One salient example is that of the West Riding Constabulary. In 1913, Chief Constable Atcherley instigated a system of identification in collaboration with other county and borough forces to mitigate the perceived failures of existing methods, which he stated were limited interforce communication and collaboration, reliance on memory and the arbitrary nature of recording offender information.[175] Solely for use in the investigation of property theft, Atcherley devised his own series of records, which included 'crime enquiry' forms (see Figure 4.3), which were a series of questions to elicit details about the nature of the alleged offence, and the known methods of individual suspects.

[174] C. Ainsworth Mitchell, *The Scientific Detective and the Expert Witness* (Cambridge: W Heffer & Sons, 1931), 47-48.
[175] R. B. Fosdick, "Modus Operandi System in the Detection of Criminals," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 6, no. 4 (1916): 566-567; Sir William Llewelyn Atcherley, *M.O. Modus Operandi in Criminal Investigation and Detection* (1913, n.p.), 3-4.

Figure 4.3. Example page of crime enquiry form, M.O. 2.

In order to establish the "points" enumerated above, the following "Crime Enquiry Forms" are suggested for the purposes of covering the Enquiry :—

(1) With Violence, viz. :—By breaking.

(2) Without Violence, viz. :—Without breaking.

M.O. 2.

CRIME ENQUIRY FORM.

With Violence, i.e., By "BREAKING."

NATURE OF CRIME :—

TIME DATE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY VALUE RECOVERED

WHERE SITUATE AND PROPERTY OF :—

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION.

1. How was the house (or premises) approached?
2. Any trace of same?
3. Was entry effected by breaking?
4. Any marks? *
5. If so, where? †
6. How did the thief reach the point of breaking in?
7. What articles were used to reach the point?
8. If none, was it reached by climbing or removal of grate to get down?
9. Any evidence of marks of reaching point of entry?
10. How was the entry effected at this point, and by what means?
11. Property left behind by thief?

INTERNAL EXAMINATION.

1. Did room entered contain stolen property, and when last seen?
2. If not, describe by diagram on separate sheet:
3. Any marks? *
4. How did the thief get to the property and if force used?
5. What tools or means used for this purpose?
6. Any other article disturbed?
7. Any trace of thief having been concealed inside the premises?
8. Any property left by thief?
9. Anything to denote search for special articles?

* Carefully define, such as (*a*) Finger, (*b*) Boots, (c) Knees, etc.

† Window, Wall, Door, Light, etc.

13

Source: *M.O. Modus Operandi in Criminal Investigation and Detection* (1913, n.p.), 13.

A 'clearing house' was established in Wakefield to collate entries and disseminate information. Records detailing offences committed by 'travelling' criminals were sent to the clearing house, where methods and personal descriptions were compared. This enabled police to connect previously unsolved crimes to individuals who had committed offences across several jurisdictions. The Inspector of Constabulary concluded: 'It is, I think,

undoubtedly a step in the right direction; it encourages friendly co-operation between the several neighbouring police forces, goes far to educate the individual constable, and leads to more successful detective work'.[176]

In 1916, Raymond Fosdick further observed that, although the system was confined to the northern English constabularies, it was 'daily growing in usefulness'. He added that: 'Even Scotland Yard, despite its conservative traditions and tendencies, is beginning to look upon it with favor'.[177] By 1928, there were 84 police forces in the north of England contributing to the Wakefield clearing house, which held some 70,000 criminal records. A further 90,000 records were registered with Scotland Yard's Fingerprint Bureau.[178] However, there is no evidence that the Manchester or Liverpool Police were included, which may be explained by financial constraints, due to it being a voluntary service.[179] The West Riding clearing house remained separate from the Habitual Criminals Register and the 1939 committee on detective work and procedure described it as an independent system, which served 'most of the forces in the North'.[180] But Chief Constable Atcherley's *Modus Operandi* System was never adopted nationally.

4.2.3. The use of photography by regional police in offender identification

As already discussed, photography was used as a key technical aid to identify criminals from the mid-nineteenth century. Route forms increasingly included photographs of suspects when circulated to other police forces (see Section 4.1.4) and from 1869, photographs of offenders were a main component of criminal registers (see Section 4.1.2). It is evident from the archival data that all three police forces under study had photographic equipment from the mid-1800s. Cameras were used in the Liverpool force from 1857, although there is no

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[176] *Reports of IOC,* 1914, 669-670.
[177] Fosdick, "Modus Operandi," 570.
[178] *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 21 November 1928, 5.
[179] TNA, HO 45/25052, *Report of the Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure* (hereafter *Report on Detective Work*) Volume III Chapter V (London: HMSO, 1939), 47.
[180] TNA, HO 45/25052, *Report on Detective Work*, Volume I Chapter III, 18.

detail as to the nature of their use at that time.[181] When the photography room was enlarged in 1864, it was obvious that it was being used to photograph prisoners.[182] Moreover, a request from a Captain Gibbs in 1870 for 15 photographs of prisoners to be taken weekly at Kirkdale Prison confirmed that a police officer was responsible for this task, although it is not clear whether this was a uniformed or a detective officer.[183] HC Greig stated to the 1877 Commission that photographs were limited to ticket-of-leave convicts 'under a serious charge'. He further explained that 'the photographs of travelling thieves are sent from town to town to see whether they are known'. The Liverpool Police kept an album of photographs of those admitted to prison, but when Greig was asked if they were of use, he replied, 'Not particularly.'[184]

DI Robertson testified to the 1894 Committee that if a prisoner was in court whom neither the description clerks (see Section 4.2.1) nor the detectives had been able to identify, the police applied for a period of remand, during which they took the individual's photograph for further inquiries. However, if a prisoner objected to having their photograph taken, the force had a special room where it could be obtained without the person's knowledge. In cases where they were unable to acquire a photograph at all, the police applied to the main prison for a copy of the individual's photographic record, as 'persons who refuse to be photographed by the police will submit in prison', where it was a statutory requirement. Robertson added that the prison authorities were 'always ready to help', and that the police applied for some 20 to 30 photographs a year. By this time, the Liverpool Police had albums containing approximately 2,300 individual photographs.[185] This confirms that in Liverpool photographs were taken of prisoners by both the police and the prison authorities, for the purposes of identification, with the former being used specifically for court. The evidence indicates a good level of cooperation between the two.

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[181] LRO, 352 POL/1/7, Watch Committee, 16 May 1865.
[182] LRO, 352 POL/2/3, Head Constable, 28 June 1864.
[183] The reason for the request was not recorded and it was declined. LRO, 352 POL/1/10, Watch Committee, 14 June 1870.
[184] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.
[185] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 47.

In 1856, the Manchester Watch Committee granted the head constable permission to take photographs of ‘known thieves or bad characters’ taken into custody.[186] Two decades later, DSI Henderson claimed that photographs were not routinely submitted to the Habitual Criminals Register in London.[187] In 1901, HC Peacock confirmed that the Manchester Police took photographs of prisoners but that many of them ‘were very much alike’.[188]

According to Simon Coles, photographs were used in Birmingham prison records from the 1850s.[189] Following the passing of the Prevention of Crimes Act 1871 (see Section 4.2.1), Birmingham Watch Committee sanctioned the photographing of offenders by the police, with copies to be sent to the Habitual Criminals Register. Interestingly, this instruction was given initially to the Finance and Stores Sub Committee, presumably for funding.[190] In 1878, the prison governor wrote to the watch committee inquiring as to whether the police still required them to continue taking prisoner photographs.[191] This suggests that the responsibility for photographing convicts lay with the watch committee, rather than the police. HC Bond confirmed that all photographs taken in the prisons were collated into one book by the police and classified according to their own system (see Section 4.2.2). He stated that: ‘I do not think we rely sufficiently upon photography’, but he conceded that a more centralised system of collating offenders’ photographs would be valuable:

> …even if you were to commence say from Manchester, or Liverpool or Birmingham or London, the system of having all the criminals photographed, and very many duplicate copies of each man sent round to our principal towns such as Leeds, Sheffield, and so on, it would be a great assistance to us.

[186] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/4, Watch Committee, 26 June 1856.
[187] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 139.
[188] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 32.
[189] Simon A. Coles, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 20.
[190] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/13, Watch Committee, 9 April 1872.
[191] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/15, Watch Committee, 9 April 1878.

Bond also highlighted the financial implications and added that there were no funds within the Birmingham Police for the purchase of photographs of suspects from other collections for the purpose of crime investigation.[192] The use of photography for offender identification in Birmingham was further complicated by difficulties in working with the prison authorities, as described by DCI Van Helden. In contrast to Liverpool, when prisoners refused to have their photographs taken by the police, the Birmingham detectives were unable to acquire photographs from the prisons, as the requisite granting of permission for the photograph by the prison commissioners was usually longer than the length of the remand sanctioned by the magistrates: ‘We do not get so much help from the prisons as we should have.’ Despite the challenges, Van Helden opined that photographs were the most important factor in criminal identification, and he recommended greater facilities for the practice.[193]

The issue of financing photography for crime investigation was reviewed by the Metropolitan Police in 1901 and an experiment was undertaken to compare the costs of carrying out the process in-house with outsourcing it to an external photographer. The Home Office sanctioned the funding of the CID to photograph fugitives and items of stolen property for six months, with the costs being met from the Police Fund.[194] When the period expired, the situation was reviewed, and the Metropolitan Police reported that the cost had been a quarter of that which would have been incurred by engaging a professional. Moreover, it was found to have saved time, increased the confidentiality of records and, most importantly, it had been valuable in crime investigation, notably in the recent case of Liverpool bank robberies.[195] Although not cited in detail, this refers to the arrest of bank clerk Thomas Peterson Goudie in Liverpool in 1901 for deception, forgery and fraud, after a witness had recognised his photograph.[196] The in-house system was adopted permanently.[197] A further

[192] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 114-115.
[193] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 42.
[194] TNA, MEPO 2/575, Crime: Photography in Criminal Investigation Department, 1902-1905, Letter from the Home Office, 5 November 1901.
[195] Ibid., Report from Metropolitan Police, CID, 9 May 1902.
[196] OBP, trial of Thomas Peterson Goudie, ref. t19020210-197.
[197] MEPO 2/575, Memo on photography in CID, 20 May 1902.

review cited considerable cost savings due to the designated police officer's 'knowledge and economy in the use of the various chemicals and generally to his efficiency as a photographic operator'.[198] Following the experiment, there is no evidence of guidance on funding or outsourcing photographic services disseminated from the Metropolitan Police to other forces, and technical aids such as photography remained under the direction and financing of the borough watch committees.

The 1894 Committee concluded that photography aided police knowledge and the recognition of offenders and extended the scope for identifying prisoners in criminal courts.[199] They acknowledged that although the Convict Supervision Office (see Section 4.1.4) circulated photographs of individuals wanted by the Metropolitan Police to other forces two or three times a year: 'In the North, however, few of the forces subscribe to it', as it was considered that suspects were not generally 'extending their operations' into their districts. Despite this, the committee concluded that most borough and county forces kept photographs of offenders and that special registers were kept in 'larger and better organised forces'.[200] At the end of the report, it was recommended that police forces take two photographs, one full-frontal and the other in profile, as practised in France, which would make the nose and ear clearer, being 'the most important features for purposes of identification'. The committee accepted that this would incur greater costs.[201] Analysis of the Birmingham City criminal photograph books reveals the change from single to dual-aspect photographs took place in 1904.[202]

Following the 1894 inquiry, there were further modifications and guidance from central government. For example, in 1905 the Home Secretary wrote to regional police forces highlighting cases of mistaken identity in the use of photographs by the police, which

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[198] MEPO 2/575, Metropolitan Police, CID, Central officer's special report on photography, 22 October 1902.
[199] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 4-5.
[200] Ibid., 10-11.
[201] Ibid., 31.
[202] West Midlands Police Museum (hereafter WMPM), Criminal Registers, Photo Books and Circulars. Birmingham, West Midlands, Male Photo Book 3, accessed at www.ancestry.co.uk as West Midlands, England, Criminal Registers, 1850-1933.

were liable to lead to a miscarriage of justice. In two unspecified cases, when witnesses were shown a photo of a suspect, there was some evidence that it had prejudiced their later identification of the individual in custody, suggesting that sometimes the image was recollected rather than the actual person. One of these cases was likely to have been that of Adolf Beck, who was convicted twice for fraud in 1896 and 1904.[203] His convictions were both later overturned, and the governmental inquiry included recommendations for the Metropolitan Police on the identification of suspects.[204] The following year, the Home Secretary advised the watch committees to issue instructions to officers to prevent them from showing photographs to witnesses solely for the purpose of identification. In circumstances where this practice was deemed necessary, officers should show witnesses a series of photographs of individuals with similar features, as is still the practice today, and the witness should not be given any assistance in the identification. Furthermore, photographs of suspects with previous convictions should be presented in such a manner that the witness would not be made aware of their criminal history. This guidance applied only to the use of photographs for identification and not for purposes of information gathering.[205] The archival data does not indicate whether the advice was followed. A further communication from the Home Secretary advised that regional forces implement the specific regulations adopted by the Metropolitan Police in relation to this issue.[206]

Notwithstanding the obvious value to regional detective departments of photographing convicts, there does not appear to have been a truly centralised and coordinated system. The primary sources reveal that the central criminal register, which included mugshots maintained by the Metropolitan Police, was not fully utilised by their colleagues in the borough forces, photographs of convicts taken in prison were not always shared with police despite both authorities being under local control and, even when

[203] *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Case of Adolf Beck* (London: HMSO, 1904), iv.
[204] Ibid., 338; Graham Davies and Laurence Griffiths, "Eyewitness Identification and the English Courts: A Century of Trial and Error," *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 15, no. 3 (2008): 436.
[205] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/35, 6 April 1905.
[206] Ibid.,12 July 1905.

photographs were used, there were still difficulties in offender identification. However, photography remained a key technical aid in investigative practice throughout the period under study, as it does today. Photography used in crime scene examination will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.2.4. Bertillonage and fingerprinting: new scientific aids to crime detection

As highlighted by Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, the introduction of Bertillon's anthropometric system and then fingerprinting enhanced the use of photographs in offender identification and crime detection.[207] However, to date there has been minimal research into the adoption and effectiveness of these groundbreaking investigative aids in regional detective departments. Rawlings describes the former as 'not particularly successful', but he does not offer any further detail and advocates fingerprinting as the breakthrough in offender identification.[208] In general, police historians consider this scientific advance to be effective for the purposes of crime detection, not least of all as it solved the problem of habitual offenders using aliases.[209] However, Emsley describes the use of fingerprinting for record keeping, along with photographs, as 'not things that could be established overnight', suggesting that progress was slow.[210] In his assessment of criminal recording systems in 1916, Fosdick concluded that both methods were effective but limited in scope.[211]

Two of the key objectives of the 1894 Commission were to assess Bertillonage and fingerprinting. Following a visit to the Préfecture de Police in Paris, the commissioners described the French system of biometrical measurements, introduced by Bertillon in 1882, as 'perfect', as all 11 measurements were invariable and accurate,[212] although they admitted that two individuals may have the same measurements, adding that this unlikely yet possible

[207] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, "Detective," 9.
[208] Rawlings, *Policing*, 178.
[209] Godfrey et al., *History*, 39.
[210] Emsley, *British Bobby*, 167.
[211] Fosdick, "Modus Operandi," 560.
[212] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 22.

problem would be eradicated by fingerprinting.[213] In contrast, Coles highlights the fallibility of Bertillonage and cites the case of two men in the US in 1903, who not only shared the same name, but also had very similar bodily measurements.[214]

In discussing the challenges of using Galton's fingerprinting system, the 1894 Commission acknowledged that 'finger-prints are too complicated and difficult to be understood and used by warders and policemen'. Moreover, an expert would be needed to classify and compare any imprints taken, preferably at a central headquarters. Another practical difficulty might be in using fingerprints for identification purposes in court, but this could be mitigated by photographing and enlarging them. The inquiry concluded that the two methods were 'on the whole fairly effective',[215] and they recommended employing them both in criminal record keeping.[216] They concluded that the effectiveness of the system was dependent on 'the voluntary co-operation of the independent county and police forces.'[217]

In the light of this report, the Home Secretary wrote to watch committees regarding regulations under the Penal Servitude Act 1891,[218] which concerned photographing and measuring prisoners to improve the identification of habitual criminals. Like the photographing of offenders, this was to be carried out by the prisons, and statutory powers were not accorded to the police.[219] The guidance stipulated that any police force could apply to a prison governor for the photograph and measurements of inmates, which should then be forwarded to the Habitual Criminals Register, where the registrar would check the records and relay any previous convictions or information about the individual back to the original police force.[220] Although there is evidence of the use of anthropometric measurements in

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[213] Ibid., 25-26.
[214] Coles, *Identities*, 140-141. This was the case of the two William Wests, who were later differentiated by their fingerprints.
[215] *Report on Identification of Habitual Criminals*, 28.
[216] Ibid., 30.
[217] Ibid., 38
[218] Penal Servitude Act 1891, 54 & 55 Vict c.69, s. 8.
[219] TNA, MEPO 4/270, Working of the finger print system of identification: memorandum (hereafter 1904 memo), 1904, 5.
[220] BAC, BCC/1/AC/1/1/20, Watch Committee, 15 March 1897.

Metropolitan Police records,[221] there are no such measurements included in the late-nineteenth or early twentieth-century Birmingham criminal record cards.[222] It is likely therefore that before the regional detective departments had the time and resources to add measurements to their record collections, especially as it was not a statutory requirement, the method was replaced by the use of fingerprints, especially after the establishment of the central Fingerprint Department at Scotland Yard in 1901.[223]

The changes wrought by the 1894 Commission were assessed in 1900 by a government committee appointed to inquire into the method of identification of criminals by measurements and fingerprints. The report opened by reinforcing that personal recognition was still 'the primary method in all cases', despite the advent of scientific methods, with the caveat that the effectiveness of the combined system of measuring and fingerprinting remained unproven due to its limited use in the capital and throughout the country.[224] HC Peacock testified that the prison authorities in Manchester had been using the combined system since 1895, which he described as 'very perfect'. It had been used effectively for identification in more than 50 per cent of cases and 'not a single case sent down has turned out to be the wrong man'. He recommended the instigation of a central system, as many police forces, such as in the neighbouring city of Salford, had not adopted the system and had to bring prisoners to Manchester for identification. Peacock further stated that, as with photographs, measurements were not taken of prisoners held in police cells as the police were not empowered to carry out the procedure. Offenders had to be remanded to prison to have their measurements taken, for which the police were required to apply to the magistrates. He further stated that the magistrates tended to remand prisoners in police custody for eight days, rather than sending them to prison, to reduce costs. Despite this he claimed that it was more efficient for prison warders to take measurements than the police.

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[221] Jackie Keily and Julia Hoffbrand, *The Crime Museum Uncovered: Inside Scotland Yard's Special Collection* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 2015), 44-45.
[222] WMPM, Criminal Registers, Photo Books and Circulars. Birmingham, West Midlands. Accessed at www.ancestry.co.uk as West Midlands, England, Criminal Registers, 1850-1933.
[223] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 50.
[224] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 6-7.

Moreover, he highlighted the key role of the detective officers in this process, as applications for measurements relied on their personal judgement: ‘We have an experienced detective who is told off (deployed) for this work in Manchester. If he has reasonable ground for thinking that any man charged with an indictable offence has been in custody before he immediately applies for a remand.’ This resulted in approximately 34 applications per year. HC Peacock concluded that his force still relied on personal knowledge and the Habitual Criminals Register for identifying offenders. However, he added that applying to Scotland Yard for information about a possible convict made regional forces open to ridicule by the Metropolitan Police ‘for not knowing your own thieves’.[225] This perceived failure is a key point, which could provide some explanation as to why applications to the central register from borough police forces was so variable and slow to develop.

The 1901 Committee concluded that, although fingerprinting was more cost-effective, easier to use and more accurate, the combined system should be maintained.[226] A pro forma was later circulated for use. Data relating to the success of the Fingerprinting Department was collated by the Metropolitan Police for 1902 and 1904.

Table 4.5. Number of searches and success rate of identifications using fingerprinting by the Metropolitan and provincial police, 1902-1904.

Year	Number of searches by Metropolitan Police	Success rate of identifications by Metropolitan Police %	Number of searches by provincial police	Success rate of identifications by provincial police %
1902	**5,032**	**20.5**	**1,794**	**38.5**
1903	**8,079**	**25.5**	**3,840**	**41.2**
1904	**8,700**	**30.1**	**6,400**	**40.2**

[225] Ibid., 32-35.
[226] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, *Report on Identification of Criminals*, 9-11.

Sources: TNA, MEPO 4/270, Memorandum on the working of the finger print system of identification, 1904, 8-9; TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, Letter from Edward Henry to the Under-Secretary of State, 16 December 1904.

The evidence reveals that, whilst the number of searches made by provincial police forces were fewer and more gradual than those of the Metropolitan Police, the success rate was consistently higher. There was no explanation offered for this in the primary sources, but it may be due to provincial detectives only applying to the Fingerprint Department for information in targeted cases and perhaps as a last resort, as suggested by HC Peacock. It is also notable that there was a plateau in the Metropolitan Police searches, which hardly increased during the latter two years. Despite this, Sir Edward Henry concluded that this was 'a striking illustration of the increasing value attached to the system' and the results justified its continuance.[227]

Furthermore, in 1903 the Metropolitan Police conducted an experiment in which the fingerprints were taken of all those arrested at two race meetings in Ascot and Epsom, which were compared with the records in the Habitual Criminals Register. This led to 27 offenders identified out of 60 at Epsom and nine out of 24 in Derby. Henry concluded that: 'The results were so satisfactory, and beyond expectation, that the practice will be continued.'[228] Although the regional police forces were not involved in this experiment, it nevertheless confirms the practical application and effectiveness of fingerprinting in the evolution of crime detection.

The regional archival evidence confirms that the Scotland Yard Fingerprint Department was instrumental in the development of crime detection techniques as well as offender identification and, according to the Home Secretary in 1905, superseded photographs in information-gathering activities.[229] In 1907, the Inspector of Constabulary

[227] TNA, HO 144/566/A62042, Letter from Edward Henry to the Under-Secretary of State, 16 December 1904.
[228] 1904 memo, 10.
[229] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/35, 6 April 1905.

reported that: ‘The system of “fingerprints” is now more or less in general use in police forces in this (Northern) District, and good results have been obtained.’[230]

The first successful prosecution in Birmingham using fingerprints took place in 1905, after two known criminals were arrested breaking into a public house. George Eccles admitted the charge and implicated his companion, Dennis Kennedy, who denied it. Detectives took fingerprints from the glass of a window that the alleged felons had smashed and sent enlarged photographs of the evidence together with Kennedy’s prints to Scotland Yard for comparative analysis, which resulted in his conviction.[231] Reilly claims that the detectives had attended a class on fingerprinting the previous day, but he does not offer any supporting evidence.

Moreover, pioneering work in the taking and photographing of fingerprints was not confined to Scotland Yard. In 1907, Bradford detective Oliver Cromwell published his method of fingerprint photography, based on several years’ experience.[232] He refers to Bradford Police’s first successful prosecution using fingerprints in a burglary case in 1905, in which the offender’s prints were found on a glass tumbler.[233]

These cases confirm that fingerprinting was beginning to be used in criminal investigations and prosecutions in borough forces in the early 1900s and that regional detectives engaged with the central register at Scotland Yard in order to identify offenders. Cyril Polson highlights the police forces of Bradford, Birmingham and Wakefield as early adopters of the practice.[234] However, Coles concludes that fingerprinting, within a global context, remained ‘haphazard’, with localised systems and limited interaction until after the First World War.[235] Incidentally, there is no evidence of fingerprints on the Birmingham

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[230] *Reports of IOC,* 1908, 68.
[231] John Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Policing Birmingham* (Birmingham: West Midlands Police, 1989), 49-50; *Birmingham Gazette and Express*, 21 October 1905, 5.
[232] Oliver Cromwell, *Finger-Prints* (London: Elliott Stock, 1907), 8.
[233] Ibid., 24.
[234] Cyril John Polson, “Finger Prints and Finger Printing: An Historical Study,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 41, no. 5 (1951): 699.
[235] Coles, *Identities*, 219.

criminal registers before 1933.[236] A report from the Metropolitan Police in 1913 revealed that only 58 of the capital's police stations had fingerprinting apparatus.[237] The equipment was not supplied to the remaining stations, along with formal training, until the following year.[238] It was thus likely that fingerprinting was not established in the regional detective departments until after this time, which confirms Coles' observation.

The 1939 Commission stated that in the larger detective departments throughout England and Wales, the majority of officers were by then engaged exclusively in investigative work, whereas there were some officers who were 'specialists in crime records, fingerprints, photography etc.'.[239] This reflects the earlier picture, with officers like Detective Cromwell developing his specialisation in fingerprint photography in Bradford and it infers that progress in the use of technical aids for crime detection remained dependent on such individuals until later in the early 1930s.[240]

4.3. Conclusion

It is evident from the archival sources that Victorian and Edwardian police detectives tackled a wide range of crimes in their daily work. Although much of their focus was on theft, due to the high rates of this offence in all three cities, they also investigated more serious crimes, such as fraud, forgery, violent assault, manslaughter and murder, with individual detectives being selected for specific cases. However, there appears to be some limited distinction between the role of detective officers and their uniformed colleagues, mostly due to the inadequacy of available data. This theme will be examined further in Chapter 5 in relation to the investigation of homicide.

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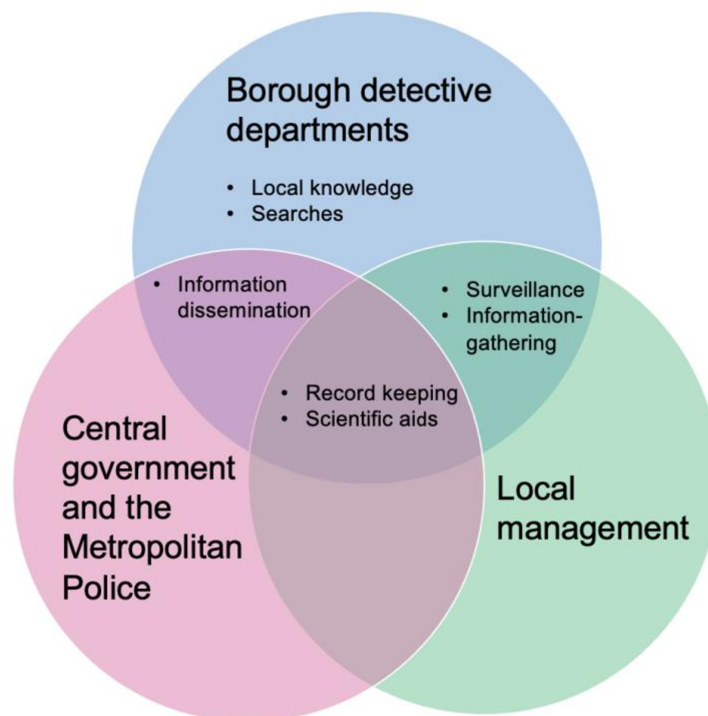
[236] WMPM, Criminal Registers, Photo Books and Circulars. Birmingham, West Midlands, Male Photo Book 4, accessed at www.ancestry.co.uk as West Midlands, England, Criminal Registers, 1850-1933.
[237] TNA, MEPO 2/1569, Crime: Fingerprinting of prisoners, 1913-1915, Memorandum from New Scotland Yard on fingerprinting, 1913.
[238] TNA, MEPO 4/270, *Report from Fingerprint Department*, New Scotland Yard, 25 August 1914.
[239] TNA, HO 45/25052, *Report on Detective Work*, Volume I, 16.
[240] Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton, *Murder and the Making of English CSI* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 118.

Moreover, the primary data demonstrates that regional detectives in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries developed a range of effective investigative techniques, which were influenced by multiple factors, such as central government and local management, changes in legislation in relation to the penal system, and regional and national crime, as represented in Figure 4.4. The impact of these on detective practice in the borough forces was variable and inconsistent, especially in relation to the adoption of new technologies such as the measuring and fingerprinting of offenders.

Figure 4.4. Factors influencing the evolution of regional detective practice.



Following the traditions of the eighteenth-century thief-takers, and despite the technological advances, police detectives relied mainly on their personal knowledge of actual and likely offenders, their powers of observation and memory, and their surveillance and information-gathering skills to track suspects, collect evidence and construct cases for prosecution in court. These basic investigative practices remained constant throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the primary evidence reveals that crime detection was

modified by the borough watch committees and individual head constables, and there was innovation in regional detective departments, such as the creation of unique criminal registers. Discussions on investigative technique took place at local management level, often with watch committees issuing guidance and head constables expressing strong opinions on specific aspects of crime detection. Furthermore, there is evidence of the sharing of good practice between different police forces, as well as regular and extensive collaboration in important crime cases, such as national security threats, when regional detective departments worked with Scotland Yard officers as equal partners. These joint initiatives further reinforced the importance of detective knowledge as a key investigative strategy, as a response to both local and national crimes. Offender identification was improved throughout the period under study through the police working with prisons and the increasing sophistication and centralisation of record keeping. It is important to note however that the development of investigative practice was often limited by financial constraints, with monetary decisions being taken by individual borough watch committees, which would also have had an impact on borough conviction rates, especially due to the dual role of detective officers as prosecutors. This renders the overall picture of regional crime detection even more complex.

The role of central government in borough detective practices was mostly limited to the creation and development of criminal records, and the use of scientific aids such as Bertillonage and fingerprinting in offender identification. As stated by Emsley, the centralised systems were unwieldy and slow to adapt to the increasing amount of information and the difficult and time-consuming nature of data collation, storage and retrieval. In addition, the primary evidence shows that borough detective departments did not engage fully with early databases such as the Habitual Criminals Register, and they were even sceptical of their effectiveness. On the other hand, regional police forces established their own unique criminal records, based on their experience and knowledge of local offenders, and they collaborated with the local prison authorities to identify perpetrators in their criminal investigations, albeit not always efficiently.

The dissemination of information was further hampered by inconsistent communication. This lack of commitment to national initiatives by regional forces might be due to the generalised and unspecific nature of relevant legislation in relation to the responsibilities and requirements of the police, as well as to government circulars being advisory rather than statutory. The initiatives of the Metropolitan Police were regularly circulated as examples of good practice, but they were clearly not accepted by their counterparts in the borough forces as a model for their own activities. The only specific guidance relating to basic investigative skills and practices was published in the *Police Code* which, as previously stated, was not required reading for the borough police. Thus, the evolution of investigative strategies mostly depended on the practice of individual forces and their detective department, and the will of their head constable.

Despite the variation in practice, it can be concluded that to describe the development of crime detection techniques in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as by 'trial and error' is insufficient, as the process was far more complex and complicated. Although there was some experimentation in crime detection techniques, it was more a case of selecting appropriate methods to tackle individual cases from a range of personal skills, acquired knowledge, regular practice and innovative scientific methods, although the latter was limited by availability and expertise. Moreover, the primary evidence, especially from the regional archival material, reveals that the strategies undertaken by borough detectives in investigating crime in their districts were pragmatic and adaptive. Some approaches were formalised through discussion with senior management, and other methods were passed more informally from experienced detectives to new entrants within the framework of formal training programmes. Although traditional detective activities, such as surveillance and information gathering, persisted throughout the period under study, practitioners modified their behaviour to respond more effectively to localised and national crime. Regional detective departments developed processes and procedures (see Section 3.3.2) to collate information, even formulating their own initiatives in offender identification. But this was not linear, and by the end of the period investigative practice was a combination of more basic

techniques and refined practices as well as the beginning of the adoption of new scientific advances.

The findings presented for the first time in this chapter provide a strong basis for further study in related areas, such as communication, organised crime, the role of prison authorities in crime detection, the use of disguise, and forensic science. The study of investigative practice is examined in more depth in Chapter 5, which assesses the development of detective strategies in relation to the solving of homicide cases.

In conclusion, although Victorian and Edwardian detectives were not always the wily and sharp operators portrayed by Dickens, there is clear evidence that the development of their modus operandi was not as 'plodding' as has been suggested by police historians.[241] They were flexible, innovative and practical, and were able to adapt and change in response to specific situations within their sphere of work. As demonstrated in this study, the regional detective police were professional practitioners from the beginning of their existence, and they continued to evolve throughout the period. Their practices provided the foundation for further changes throughout the rest of the twentieth century and for detective policing today.

[241] Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, "Detectives," 9.

Chapter 5

Investigating Murder: The Application of Scientific Policing in Homicide Cases

Warning: this chapter contains a graphic image, which may cause distress.

> The application of science to the investigation of crime is a branch of police work to which, until recently, much less attention had been paid than to the other branches of work…Experts are called in by the police or by coroners in cases of homicide; and by the police in some other classes of serious crime; but there are very few forces where the work has been systematically developed as part of their normal procedure.[1]

The Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure reported that, by the mid-1930s, systematic use of scientific policing had only been undertaken in a small number of regional police forces, particularly in relation to the investigation of murder. This chapter focuses on how the detective officers of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham police forces investigated homicide and assesses to what extent they employed new forensic techniques to examine a crime scene, identify a perpetrator and collect evidence to build a case in court. A detailed study of court depositions demonstrates how borough detectives employed multiple techniques when investigating murder cases based on perceived need and the availability of new technologies.

The consensus among police historians is that although crime was under-reported in the past, homicide is one of the most frequently reported crimes. Clive Emsley concludes that the statistics for homicide cases 'are therefore probably closer to the real level of the offence', even though the rate of murders remained low throughout the nineteenth century

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[1] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), HO 45/25052, Report of the Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure, Volume V Chapter VII (London: HMSO, 1939), 1.

compared to other offences.[2] He further opines that in most homicide cases the perpetrator and victim were known to each other and often related.[3] Bob Morris adds that although ‘not all homicides were then, as now, invariably discovered or acknowledged’,[4] they are still a valuable reflection of the actions and decisions of those involved in the criminal justice process,[5] which includes police detectives. Moreover, Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton base their examination of the history of crime scene investigation in England on homicide cases, stating that they are ‘the best documented of all forensic interventions’.[6]

However, despite the agreement on the value of homicide statistics by researchers, there has been minimal attention paid to historic murder cases in police history, with many academic publications referring solely to London cases and in particular to the Whitechapel murders in 1888, in the context of Scotland Yard’s failure to apprehend ‘Jack the Ripper’.[7] The preoccupation with the Metropolitan Police extends to the study of police specialisms in relation to homicide investigation, and historians such as Morris cite Scotland Yard as having developed relevant skills, such as crime scene preservation, which were later made available to other forces. However, he also argues that specialisation was more pertinent to developing methods of crime control and suspect identification than for the purposes of investigation. Morris further states that the expertise of Scotland Yard detectives was not regularly utilised by regional forces, as this would indicate a failure on their part.[8] This supports the evidence relating to the use of central criminal records presented in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.2.4).

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[2] Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750-1900,* 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 41.
[3] Ibid., 44.
[4] Robert M. Morris, “‘Lies, Damned Lies and Criminal Statistics’: Reinterpreting the Criminal Statistics in England and Wales,” *Crime, History & Societies* 5, no. 1 (2001): 118.
[5] Ibid., 125.
[6] Ian Burney and Neil Pemberton, *Murder and the Making of English CSI* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 2.
[7] Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009), 153; Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 49.
[8] Robert M. Morris, “What the Met brought to the party - Reinforcement, Colonization, Specialization and Fusion,” in *Leading the Police: A History of Chief Constables 1835-2017*, eds. Kim Stevenson, David J. Cox and Iain Channing (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 164.

Despite the absence of regional detectives in the historiography, Alison Adam states that the use of scientific techniques in policing and crime detection are significant factors in the development of forensic science.[9] Although she does not study the investigative work of nineteenth-century detectives in detail, she suggests that the professionalisation of police detectives contributed to a greater focus on crime detection and crime scene management in the twentieth century.[10] Adam points out that, despite the detectives' central role, the history of forensic science is mostly absent from police histories.[11] Burney and Pemberton also emphasise the lack of research into this specialised area, suggesting that previous research focused on the development of specific techniques, such as fingerprinting, without examining the deployment of forensic science as an integrated system, which has led to a fragmented knowledge of the history of twentieth-century practices. In the light of this, they highlight the caricaturing of past methods as unreliable and primitive, and stress the importance of understanding historical practices, particularly in relation to forensic science, to counterbalance today's reliance on DNA profiling.[12]

In her examination of the interface between forensic science and detective policing, Haia Shpayer-Makov asserts that for most of the nineteenth century there was minimal interaction between police detectives, medical experts and forensic scientists. However, in the late 1800s, forensic science began to have an impact on crime detection and contributed to the professionalisation of the detective police. By this time there was evidence of partial collaboration.[13] Katherine Watson states that the use of forensic methods in detective policing was variable and that it was not a priority for many regional police forces before the 1930s. Prior to that, the practices of the larger borough police forces and the Metropolitan Police differed from those of the town and county constabularies. Watson further identifies a

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[9] Alison Adam, *A History of Forensic Science: British Beginnings in the Twentieth Century (*Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 6.
[10] Ibid., 65.
[11] Ibid.,124.
[12] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 2-4.
[13] Haia Shpayer-Makov, "Detectives and Forensic Science: The Professionalization of Police Detection," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice*, eds. Paul Knepper and Anja Johansen (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 475.

gap in the history of forensic science and its relationship with the police even though officers worked closely with medical experts.[14] She concludes that homicide investigation was transformed throughout the nineteenth century through the collaborative efforts of medical experts, coroners and the police, leading to the professionalisation of the field.[15]

As presented in Chapter 4, the findings from the archival and court records demonstrate that, in relation to all types of crime, detective police officers employed a range of effective, albeit variable, investigative strategies comprising traditional skills and innovative methods. This chapter builds on the previous one by assessing the development of detective practice specifically in relation to the investigation of homicide. Through an examination of the processes by which murder suspects were identified, arrested and initiated into the criminal justice system, it identifies the investigative processes such as the collection and preservation of evidence, which were employed in the regional detective departments during the period under study. As homicide investigations were complex operations involving multiple individuals, the impact of the role of the uniformed police and of external experts is considered. Finally, this chapter examines the extent to which Victorian and Edwardian borough detectives adapted to scientific advances and employed new techniques, such as chemical analysis and crime scene photography, which has been largely overlooked by police historians to date.

Based on detective police testimonies from murder trials in the Northern and Midland Circuits, this chapter identifies and analyses detective practice in homicide cases. This is supported by evidence from watch committee minutes, Home Office and Metropolitan Police documents and contemporary newspapers. As defined in the *Police Code*, 'Homicide is the killing of a human being, by a human act, but for which, the person killed, would not have died when he did, and which is directly, and immediately, connected with his death.'[16] Within

[14] Katherine D. Watson, *Medicine and Justice: Medico-legal Practice in England and Wales, 1700-1914* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 199-200.
[15] Ibid., 233.
[16] C. E. Howard Vincent, *A Police Code and Manual of the Criminal Law* (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co.,1881), 180.

this context, this study includes the offences of murder, manslaughter and infanticide. It comprises criminal depositions and case papers from the assize courts of Lancashire and Warwickshire from 1836 to 1914. Documents were selected for analysis on the basis of the existence of at least one testimony from a self-identifying detective police officer from the borough police forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.

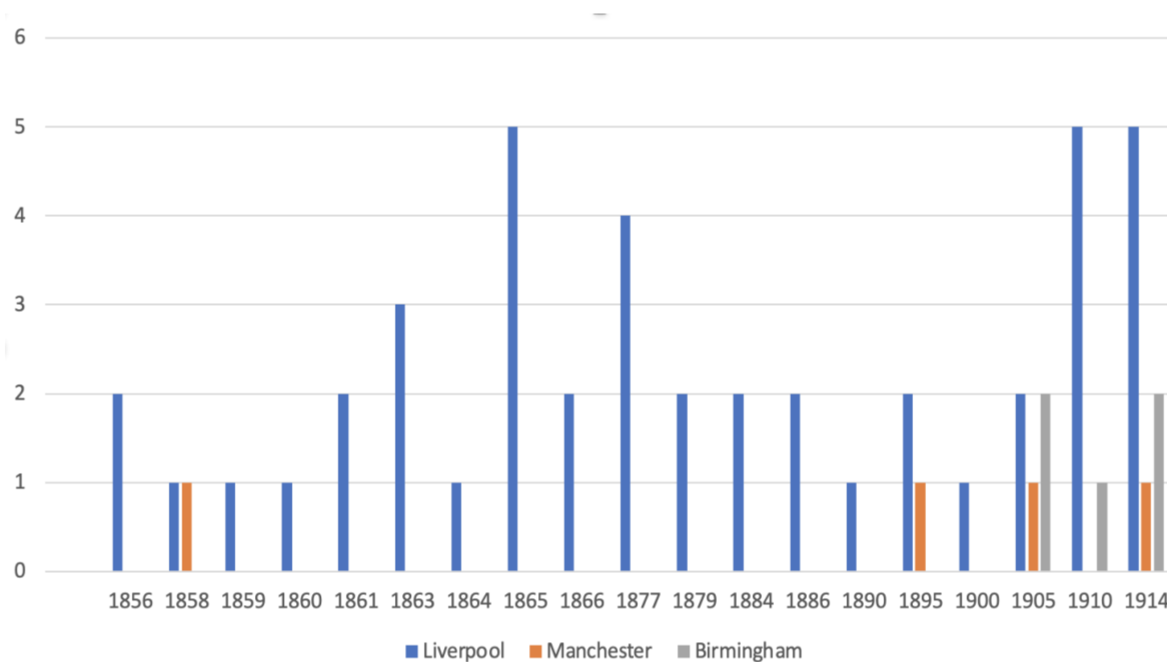
The crown court depositions from the Palatinate of Lancaster, series PL 27, cover thirty years from 1836 to 1866. All cases were read. Out of a total of 155 cases, there are 17 from Liverpool in which witnesses self-identify as police detectives, and one from Manchester. From 1867 the records transfer to the Northern Circuit, series ASSI 52. However, as the Northern Circuit documents do not begin until 1877, there is a gap of 11 years, for which there are no records available.[17] The depositions from the Northern Circuit Assizes between 1877 and 1914 are held in three different formats and were studied accordingly. The existing documents from 1877 until 1880 are held in boxes covering a range of two years. All records preserved in this format were examined for evidence of detective police testimonies. From 1881, the boxes hold the assize records for one year only, with individual cases being kept in separate files from 1895. Due to the high number of documents in the ASSI 52 series, the records were examined based on sampling every five years, from 1881 until 1914, in so far as this was practicable and to ensure maximum coverage of the five-year intervals. In total, 79 cases relating to Liverpool and Manchester were studied, of which 28 contain detective testimonies.

Surviving depositions from the Midland Circuit Assizes, series ASSI 13, begin in 1862 with the first ten years of documents being held in uncatalogued boxes covering a two-year range. All of these were examined. From 1875, the records were held in boxes of one year, which were subjected to the same sampling method as for the Northern Circuit of every five years. The total number of cases from Birmingham was 23, of which five included detective

[17] Contemporary newspapers were searched for a sample of 12 murder cases from 1872, as identified in the criminal registers. However, there was insufficient detail in the newspaper reports for this study. I thank Louise Roy for sharing her data on this.

police statements. The number of depositions containing detective testimonies are summarised in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Number of Lancashire and Warwickshire assize court depositions relating to homicide which include a detective police testimony, 1836-1914.

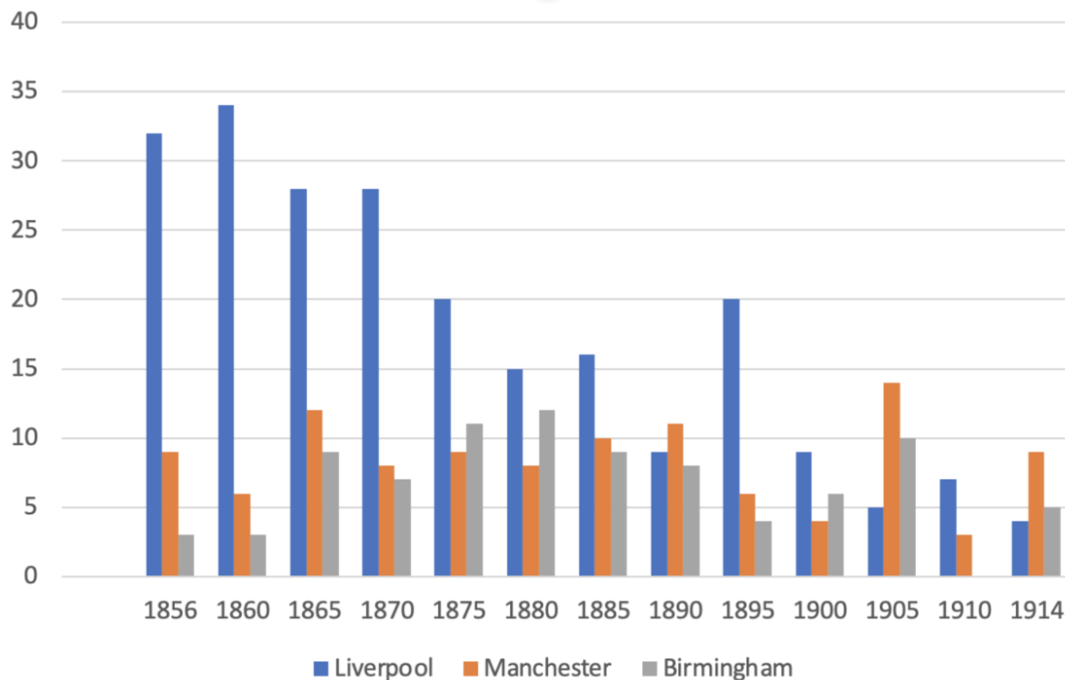


Sources: TNA, PL 27, Palatinate of Lancaster: Crown Court: Depositions,1836-1866; ASSI 52, Assizes: Northern Circuit: Criminal Depositions and Case Papers, 1871-1914; ASSI 13, Assizes: Midland Circuit: Criminal Depositions and Case Papers, 1877-1914.

There was no evidence of testimonies from self-identifying detective police before 1856 in the samples from the Northern Circuit depositions or before 1905 in the Midland Circuit. In some of the earlier cases, there were no police reports included. In others, either the testimonies were given exclusively by uniformed officers, or individual officers who did not self-identify as detectives. As there were no records including detective testimonies in the sampled year of 1885, cases were studied from 1884 and 1886. In total, 257 depositions relating to murder were examined of which 51 contained detective officer testimonies, which amounts to 20 per cent of the sample. Forty-three of these were from Liverpool. The difference in the number of depositions of the three cities may be partly accounted for by the

higher number of inquests in Liverpool in which a verdict of homicide was returned, as presented in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2. Number of inquests which returned verdicts of murder and manslaughter, 1856-1914.



Sources: *Reports of IOC*, 1857-1914, Table 11: Number of inquests touching the cause of death of any person held in the Year 1856, and the total amount of the costs, including fees, allowances and expenses, 1857-1890; Table 30: Coroners - Verdicts of Juries, 1895-1905; Table 31: Coroners - Verdicts of Juries, 1910-1914.

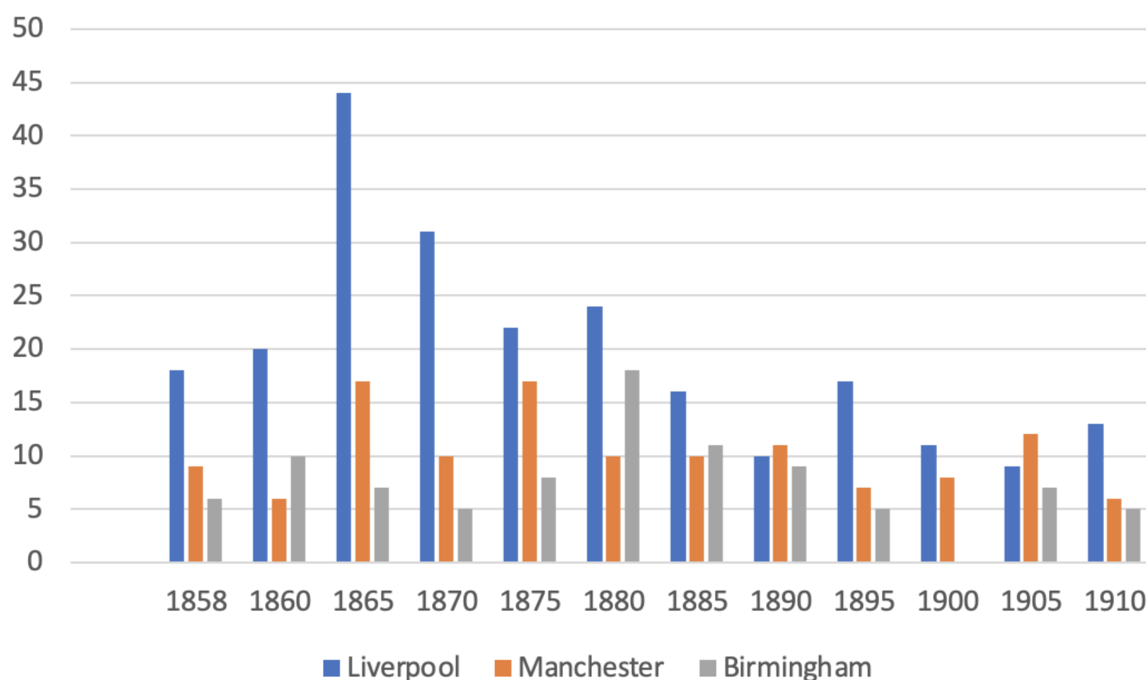
The data demonstrates that there were more inquests held in Liverpool than in Manchester and Birmingham citing murder or manslaughter as the cause of death throughout the nineteenth century. The total number of inquests for the years sampled was 227 in Liverpool, 109 in Manchester and 87 in Birmingham. This may be due to a lower rate of murder and manslaughter cases in the latter two cities, or it could be due to financial restrictions in that fewer inquests into suspicious deaths were sanctioned by the local authorities.[18] During most of the period under study, three coroners held the role in Liverpool. Solicitor Philip Finch

[18] Watson, *Medicine*, 200-201.

Curry assumed the position on the establishment of the municipal corporation in 1836. He died in office in 1867 after a long period of illness, during which time he deputised his coronial duties to his colleagues. Following Finch Curry's death, the council held a meeting to prevent 'the holding of unnecessary inquests'. One of the measures they proposed was to pay the coroner a fixed salary rather than on the basis of a fee per inquest.[19] Clarke Aspinall, a lawyer, was then elected to the post, in which he remained until his sudden death in 1891.[20] The next incumbent was Thomas Edward Sampson, also a solicitor, his election being motivated by politics rather than relevant experience and skills.[21] G. H. H. Glasgow concludes that, despite a sustained campaign to elect a coroner with medical training, the post continued to be subject to political influence.[22] From the statistics presented in Figure 5.3, it is notable that the number of inquests that returned a verdict of murder or manslaughter declined after Finch Curry's tenure, with the exception of 1895. This disproportionate number of inquests in Liverpool is further supported by the homicide data for the three cities.

[19] *The Liverpool Daily Post,* 27 August 1867, 7.
[20] Ibid., 2 September 1867, 9; *The Liverpool Mercury*, 18 December 1891, 6.
[21] G. H. H. Glasgow, "Three Liverpool Doctors and their Coronial Ambitions: A Historical Perspective to the Medico-Legal Conflicts surrounding the Elections of 1836, 1867 and 1891," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 154 (2005): 84-85.
[22] Ibid., 88-90.

Figure 5.3. Number of cases of murder and manslaughter committed in each police district, 1858-1914.



Sources: *Reports of IOC*, 1857-1914, Table 4 - Indictable Offences. Nature of crimes committed in each police district, 1858-1891; Police Returns - Table 23 - Returns from the several police districts - Indictable Offences - Nature of Crimes in each District, 1895-1910.[23]

This data confirms the inquest statistics, as it follows a similar trend. In total, there were 235 homicides reported to the Liverpool Police during the stated period, compared to 123 in Manchester and 91 in Birmingham. Despite the inequality in the number of relevant depositions relating to the three borough police forces under study, a qualitative analysis of the detective testimonies, with a focus on Liverpool and supplemented by evidence from Manchester and Birmingham, provides valuable evidence which offers an original insight into regional detective practice in relation to homicide cases. This creates 'a provisional map of a hitherto unknown forensic terrain', as stipulated in Burney and Pemberton's work.[24]

[23] This data was omitted from the return for the year ending 1914.
[24] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 3.

This chapter follows a chronological sequence beginning with an examination of the role of the detective office and the deployment of detective officers in relation to homicide investigation. The second part focuses on crime scene investigation, which includes an analysis of the use of forensic science. The final part of the chapter assesses the methods by which detective police officers tracked perpetrators of murder, collected evidence and prepared aids for the prosecution of homicide cases in court. This contributes to the study of the interplay between the 'practices, personnel, and institutional locations' which, according to Burney and Pemberton, underpin the history of CSI.[25]

5.1. Homicide management and detective deployment

The history of the detective office as central to crime detection operations and related activities was firmly established in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.3). As previously outlined, formal procedures for managing, undertaking and recording criminal investigations were instigated in the borough detective departments (see Section 3.3.2). Although the focus of such administrative processes were mostly offences such as theft and robbery, the investigation of homicide cases would have been included in the required daily record keeping by detective officers.

Moreover, as examined in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.1.1), it is generally accepted by police historians that detective officers investigated more serious offences, including homicide. Further evidence presented in this thesis revealed that all kinds of crime were investigated by both uniformed and detective officers, and that the demarcation between their duties was not always clear. This is also the case in relation to the investigation of homicide. However, despite the minimal research into the deployment and practice of detective officers in murder cases outside London, particularly in the borough forces, police

[25] Ibid., 7.

detectives played a central role in the process, from the discovery of a possible crime to the prosecution of the alleged perpetrator.

Shpayer-Makov states that detective officers assumed responsibility for crime investigation after preliminary inquiries had been made by uniformed officers: 'Patrolling beat officers, upon discovering a dead body, would sometimes immediately set out to locate the trail of the suspect. Only after preliminary work had been done by the uniformed men would detectives take charge of the case.'[26] Although she does not examine this in detail, Shpayer-Makov acknowledges that the duties of uniformed and detective officers were not clearly defined. Watson argues that police investigation of homicide cases differed little from their eighteenth-century predecessors in that they relied mostly on information gathering, communication methods and evidence preservation techniques which had been instigated during the previous century, notably by the Bow Street magistrates, unlike coroners for whom more systematic processes were established in the 1700s.[27] This observation correlates with the evidence presented in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.1), in relation to the wider range of offences.

In their examination of the pioneering work of Austrian jurist and criminologist Hans Gross, Burney and Pemberton position the investigating officer as the 'gatekeeper' of the different experts required to work together in homicide investigation,[28] thus placing the police detective at the centre of murder cases as the key coordinator in preparing evidence for the judicial process. This point is examined in more detail by Watson who sets police officers firmly within the sphere of pre-trial homicide investigations alongside coroners and magistrates, all of whom operated in tandem with doctors, and through whom the role of medico-legal work evolved as the forerunner to forensic science.[29] She further observes that police officers gradually replaced coroners and magistrates as investigators of homicide,[30]

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[26] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent*, 105.
[27] Watson, *Medicine*, 8-9.
[28] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 28.
[29] Watson, *Medicine*, 4.
[30] Ibid., 133.

later becoming the main coordinators between other involved parties, such as coroners, magistrates and medical experts.[31]

5.1.1. The detective office as the operational centre in homicide investigations

According to the depositions studied, 20 per cent of homicide cases were investigated by detective officers, despite the relatively low numbers of borough force detectives throughout the period under study. In Liverpool, 33 per cent of cases were managed from the detective office even though, in 1877 for example, detectives only accounted for 2.3 per cent of the force.[32] This would indicate that the detectives were responsible for a disproportionate number of murder cases and that the operations of the detective office and its staff were integral to homicide investigations.

Individuals suspected of having committed a homicide were processed in this central location before being transferred to a local prison to await the first court hearing. During their time at the detective office, they were searched, charged and questioned, after which they usually made their first formal statement. Evidence was stored in the detective office prior to being sent for analysis or presented in court. Although there are minimal references to formalised procedures in official police documents, such as the borough watch committee minutes, the detective testimonies in the murder depositions reveal a relatively standardised process, with the detective office as a key space for undertaking the different stages required to initiate the suspect into the criminal justice system and to prepare the case against them.

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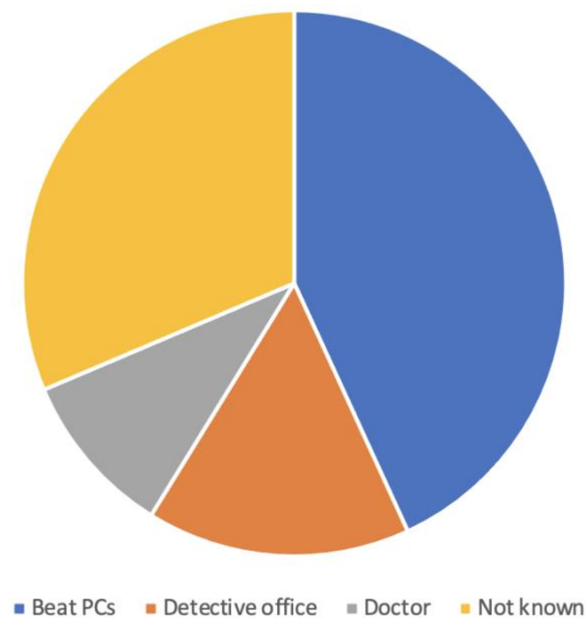
[31] Ibid., 201.
[32] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report of the Departmental Commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the State, Discipline, and Organisation of the Detective Force of the Metropolitan Police* (hereafter *Report on Detective Force*) (London: HMSO,1878),121.

Figure 5.4. The nature of homicide case referrals to the detective office, 1856-1914.



Sources: As for Figure 5.1.

The details of the referral of homicide cases to the detective office were not recorded in a third of the depositions. Of the remaining two thirds, in 63 per cent of cases the initial responders were uniformed police officers, who were called to the scene whilst on their beat. This supports Watson's contention that witnesses in homicide cases, on the discovery of a dead body, invariably called for a doctor or a police officer.[33] In most cases, the police constables assessed the victim and arranged for transportation to the hospital or morgue. On some occasions, they undertook an initial search of the premises and arrested the suspect if they were present (see Section 5.1.2). They then referred the case to the detective office. In five cases, a doctor was the first to arrive on the scene. This was due to the deceased's family or neighbours calling for medical assistance in the first instance. In one poisoning case, a doctor was monitoring the victim as her health deteriorated (see Section 5.2.2) and alerted the police to a possible crime before her death. In eight cases,

[33] Watson, *Medicine,* 200.

investigations were initiated from actions taken at the detective office, resulting either from a member of the public coming into the office with evidence, a suspect handing themselves in or being already in custody charged with a different offence when new information came to light. In one case, in 1884, the suspect had been arrested in the Isle of Man and transferred to Liverpool where he was wanted on suspicion of murder.[34]

Although such detailed evidence is not recorded in all depositions, in most cases the suspect was taken to the detective office. On other occasions, they were transported to an unnamed police station or straight to the local prison. Once admitted to the detective office, the formal charges were read to the prisoner by a detective. The detective officer questioned the suspect formally and received their statement. This process is apparent in the depositions throughout the period under study. A typical example is that of Michael Lavelle in Liverpool in 1886, who was arrested for the murder of Maxwell Kirkpatrick. DC Macdonald stated that he arrested the suspect, questioned him informally at the crime scene and then accompanied him to the detective office, where he charged him with murder, to which Lavelle confessed. Following this, a more senior detective took responsibility for the case. DI Hale questioned the suspect again and took his statement, from which he gained information about the location of the murder weapon. Hale then proceeded to the suspect's lodgings, where he recovered the stick used in the offence, which was then identified by the prisoner.[35]

In addition to being questioned at the detective office, suspects were searched. In 1881, the first edition of the *Police Code* stipulated that an individual arrested for homicide, or any other serious offence, must be searched as soon as possible after they were charged. Any weapons, valuable items, documents or books should be labelled and preserved as evidence. The prisoner's accommodation was to be searched preferably by two police officers. Any clothes removed from the prisoner, or their home, should be wrapped in clean

[34] TNA, ASSI 52/6, Regina v. Jordan, Liverpool, 1884.
[35] TNA, ASSI 52/8, Regina v. Lavelle, Liverpool, 1886.

paper and sealed before being sent for analysis.[36] In the archival data there is evidence of the discussion of practices relating to prisoner searches from the earliest years of the borough police. In 1854, the Manchester head constable informed the watch committee that he had conferred with the town clerk about searching prisoners, who had agreed with him that it was unnecessary to require persons who were charged with minor offences, and who were immediately admitted to bail after being brought to the police office, to be searched or to be required to show the police the property in their possession. The watch committee sanctioned the discontinuance of these practices.[37] Although this modification did not relate to homicide cases, it offers evidence of detective office practices being discussed at senior management level.

Furthermore, the depositions reveal that detective offices were the central storage point for the preservation of evidence in murder cases. The role of detective storekeepers was established in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.3.1). In general, detective stores were used for unclaimed property and for the keeping of prisoners' possessions during assize sessions.[38] The first reference to the preservation of evidence in the sampled depositions dates from a poisoning case in Liverpool in 1860. DI Horne collected evidence from the crime scene, which included medicine bottles, cups of sago and bottles of wine, which he then gave to the police storekeeper who locked them in a cupboard. Horne later retrieved the evidence and conveyed it to the analyst (see Section 5.2.2).[39]

5.1.2. Detective role and deployment

At the 1878 commission into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police, HC Greig of the Liverpool Police testified that he entrusted specific murder cases directly to individual

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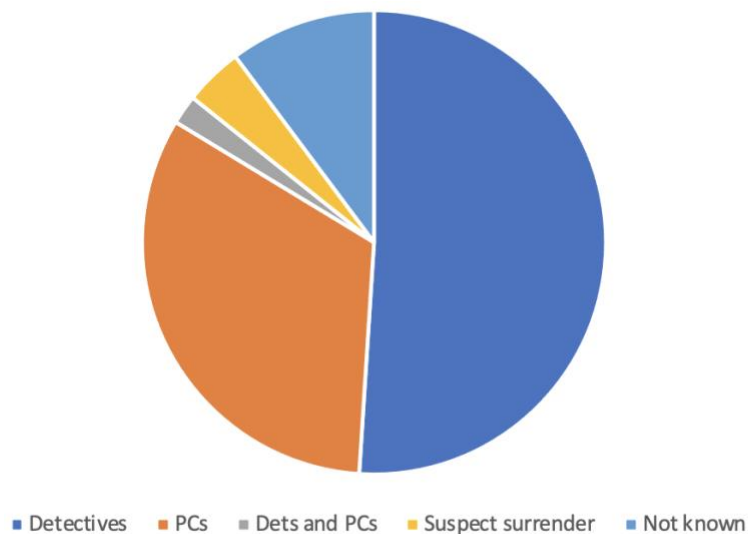
[36] Vincent, *Police Code*, 1881 ed., 331-332.
[37] Manchester Archives and Local History (hereafter MALH), GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/7 (hereafter Watch Committee), Minute Book No. 7, 12 October 1854.
[38] Liverpool Record Office (hereafter LRO), 352 POL/2/4, Reports of the Head Constable to the Watch Committee (hereafter Head Constable), 27 December 1866.
[39] TNA, PL 27/15, Regina v. Winslow, Liverpool, 1860 (hereafter R. v. Winslow).

detectives without senior officers, such as the detective superintendent, making any preliminary inquiries.[40] He further confirmed that murder, attempted murder and manslaughter were all investigated by detective officers.[41] Reflecting on his experiences in the Manchester Police and at Scotland Yard, HC Coathupe also stated that homicide was investigated by detectives and he inferred that such cases required the specialist skills of 'sifting evidence and putting evidence together'.[42] However, in reality, both uniformed and detective officers investigated homicide cases as noted in Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5. The number of arrests effected by uniformed and detective police officers, 1856-1914.



Sources: As for Figure 5.1.

According to the depositions, in 51 per cent of cases detective officers apprehended the suspect, compared to 33 per cent in which uniformed officers undertook the arrest. This reflects the complexity of the deployment and role of both ranks in homicide investigations. Despite the apparent collaboration between the two, the testimonies provide further

[40] TNA, HO 45/9442/66692, *Report on Detective Force*, 124.
[41] Ibid., 127.
[42] Ibid., 179.

evidence of how their roles differed and evolved throughout the period under study as practices became more standardised. There is also evidence of difficulties in the working relationship between uniformed and detective officers, which were potential obstacles to successful investigations.

An early example of uniformed and detective officers collaborating on murder cases is the investigation into the murder of Sarah Drummond in Liverpool in 1856. A uniformed constable arrested the suspect John Ferguson, from a description received from an informant: 'I had such a description as to enable me at once to know him when I saw him.' He also questioned the suspect initially, but the exchange was informal as it took place on the way to the bridewell. Detective officers followed up the case by making further inquiries after the arrest. They searched the crime scene and collected evidence. This is the typical process stated in many of the depositions. However, in this case there appears to be a lack of coordination between the two, as revealed by DI Povey who testified that he had been watching the suspect's house in the company of other detective officers three days before Ferguson was arrested by the uniformed officer, who did not appear to confer with his colleagues. The lack of communication is further supported by the uniformed officer using a witness description to arrest the suspect although the latter was already under surveillance by his plain-clothes colleagues.[43]

In 1913 in Birmingham, during the investigation into the death of Helen Drake following an illegal abortion, PC Smith made inquiries after finding letters and addresses in the victim's hotel bedroom. He also searched the crime scene for evidence. His colleague PC Clarke, after receiving information about the suspect, went to her address and questioned her. After the uniformed officers had undertaken the initial investigation, a detective was instructed to arrest the suspect. DC Clowes interviewed the suspect a second time and conducted a search of her lodgings, about which he stated: 'I did not know of Clarke's notes', again suggesting a lack of communication between the two officers. Clowes

[43] TNA, PL 27/14, Regina v. Ferguson, Liverpool, 1856 (hereafter R. v. Ferguson).

also implied that key evidence had been missed in the first search: 'If anyone had moved the chair, he (PC Clarke) could have seen the kettle.'[44] This would further indicate an underlying rivalry or a lack of effective collaboration between the uniformed and detective officer.

This disparity between crime scene practices appears in other depositions, in which detective officers found evidence that their uniformed colleagues overlooked. For example, in Birmingham in 1905 PC Rolleston received information about a man having been shot. After arresting the suspect, he searched the crime scene but found no evidence. However, DC Sparkes later discovered a spent cartridge concealed under the fire grate. This is evidence of detectives performing secondary searches, which was regular practice throughout the depositions and indicates that they were more meticulous.[45] The case of Rex v. McGarity in 1910 in Liverpool also offers insight into the management of homicide investigations in relation to the role of uniformed officers and detectives. Elizabeth McGarity was set alight in her bed after her husband had allegedly thrown an oil lamp at her. Initially two police constables, who were the first responders, made inquiries as to the nature of the incident but they were unable to elicit any information: 'I endeavoured to find out how the deceased got on fire, but I failed to do so.' They were also unable to locate Elizabeth's husband. DS Kelly was then instructed to investigate the case and arrested the suspect later that evening.[46] These cases demonstrate that, although uniformed officers undertook preliminary investigations into homicide cases, such as examining the crime scene and questioning any obvious suspects, detective officers often assumed responsibility for the case afterwards, mostly as a matter of course, but sometimes due to the failure of the former to locate evidence or the suspect.

Furthermore, there is evidence in the depositions of two practices relating to homicide investigations which were undertaken exclusively by detective officers. Firstly, in cases where the suspect had fled the city where the crime was committed, detectives were

[44] TNA, ASSI 13/44, Rex v. Hulme, Birmingham, 1914.
[45] TNA, ASSI 13/35, Rex v. Lacey, Birmingham, 1905.
[46] TNA, ASSI 52/159, Rex v. McGarity, Liverpool, 1910.

deployed to travel to other places to arrest them, including overseas. In 1866, DI Marsden of the Liverpool Police was sent to New York to arrest Robert Reed, who was wanted on suspicion of murdering his wife three years earlier. Marsden completed his assignment successfully and Reed was convicted.[47] Detective officers were clearly selected for this task due to their knowledge of the suspect. In 1863, the Liverpool Watch Committee instructed DI Carlisle to travel to New York to extradite a seaman suspected of murdering his girlfriend in his home city. Despite the suspect having disguised his identity by changing his appearance, the New York Police had arrested him after recognising his distinctive tattoo. Carlisle, who knew the suspect, travelled on to Boston where he participated in further inquiries with local officers. The Liverpool detective concluded that it was a case of mistaken identity.[48] Further examples of the deployment of detectives on complex homicide investigations outside their jurisdiction were recorded in borough watch committee minutes, usually in relation to the funding of such operations.

Finally, in the early decades of the twentieth century, there is evidence in the depositions of detective officers being engaged in preparations for court by providing background information about individuals charged with murder. In a case of murder and attempted suicide in Birmingham in 1905, Mary Ann Tees jumped into a canal with her two children, one of whom drowned. After recovering the woman and her children from the water, a police constable arrested Tees and charged her. DI Davies was then instructed to lead inquiries into the suspect's personal history to provide contextual information about her alleged act. Based on witness statements, the detailed report included her marital status and relationship, her character and habits, events from her past such as the death of her mother and her financial situation at the time of the incident.[49] It was presented as additional evidence against her and likely contributed to her conviction.

[47] LRO, 352 POL/1/8, Orders of the Watch Committee to the Head Constable (hereafter Watch Committee), 31 July 1866; TNA, PL 27/17, 1866; *The Liverpool Daily Post*, 4 August 1866, 3.
[48] LRO, 352 POL/2/2, Head Constable, 8 August 1863; *The Liverpool Daily Post*, 8 August 1863, 5; *The Burnley Gazette*, 25 July 1863, 7.
[49] TNA, ASSI 13/35, Rex v. Tees, Birmingham, 1905.

In summary, although the role and deployment of detective and uniformed officers in homicide investigations was not always clearly delineated, the archival data indicates that in some more complex cases detective officers, usually those bearing the rank of inspector, assumed responsibility for the investigation, following preliminary inquiries carried out by their uniformed colleagues. This process became more standardised throughout the period of study, with procedures for managing homicide investigations and initiating murder suspects into the criminal justice system being developed at the detective office. In addition, there is some evidence of detectives having superior skills in specialised areas, such as crime scene examination, tracking suspects outside their jurisdiction and in providing detailed background information for the prosecution. This is further confirmation of the professionalisation of Victorian and Edwardian police detective practice.

5.2. Crime scene investigation: collection, preservation and analysis of evidence

Hans Gross published the first significant handbook on crime scene investigation in 1893: *Handbuch für untersuchungsrichter als system der kriminalistik* was translated into English as *Criminal Investigation: A Practical Handbook* in 1906. This pioneering manual presented new tools, processes and behaviours for investigators, and created the 'crime scene'.[50] As observed by Burney and Pemberton, the focus of Gross's work was on the location of the victim, rather than on the body itself.[51] According to Adam, Gross offered a criminalistic, rather than a scientific approach to crime detection, bridging scientific criminology and forensic science, which led to his developing a system of management and preservation of crime scene evidence.[52] This was particularly significant as scientific criminology, in her opinion, had not assisted police detectives in the practical challenges of analysing trace evidence and managing crime scenes.[53] Adam agrees that Gross's contribution was in

[50] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder,* 10-11.
[51] Ibid., 46.
[52] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 52.
[53] Ibid., 64.

mapping out 'a series of operations for the investigating officer to undertake when called to the scene of a crime', but she claims that his methods did not become established in Britain until after the 1934 edition, which contained more relevant examples.[54]

Adam further suggests that detectives were ambivalent about introducing scientific methods into policing, for which she offers lack of trust and the fear of displacing traditional methods as possible reasons for their equivocation.[55] Morris supports this contention stating that there was 'little evidence of scientific sophistication' in the 'early period' of policing, and that forensic science was mostly undertaken by medical experts such as Alfred Swaine Taylor. He adds that 'for a good deal of the first hundred years, the forensic applications of the natural and physical sciences remained in their exploratory stages'. However, Morris argues that there was variability in the impact and success of forensic science: 'it has to be borne in mind that the best detectives, although rarely highly educated men, could and clearly did develop effective investigative practices, often showing considerable psychological insight', although his references are limited to the Metropolitan Police. He concludes that, in relation to forensic resources, 'the status of the investigative function was slow to rise' and the growth of organisational specialisation did not translate into an accompanying or commensurate growth in professional expertise.[56]

In her study of the role of medical experts in crime scene examination, Watson states that in the mid-nineteenth century basic crime scene analysis was undertaken by medical witnesses and that, later in the century and in the first decades of the next, the application of forensic science was further developed by the professionalisation of policing. She adds that the use of forensic methods in detective policing was variable and that it was not a priority for many regional police forces before the 1930s. Prior to that, there were major differences in the practices of the borough detectives and those in London.[57] Watson concludes that

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[54] Ibid., 72-74.
[55] Ibid., 121.
[56] Bob Morris, "History of Criminal Investigation," in *Handbook of Criminal Investigation*, eds. Tim Newburn, Tom Williamson and Alan Wright (Cullompton: Willan, 2007), 21-24.
[57] Watson, *Medicine*, 199.

homicide investigation was transformed throughout the nineteenth century through the collaborative efforts of medical experts, coroners and the police, leading to the professionalisation of the field.[58]

5.2.1. Crime scene examination

As noted by Burney and Pemberton, there were no crime investigation manuals comparable with Gross's handbook available to police officers in England and Wales in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The closest equivalent was Howard Vincent's *Police Code* which they note had a greater emphasis on detective behaviour than on investigative technique, with significant omissions in relation to forensic science. As they point out, the only relevant inclusions were those pertaining to '"Dead bodies" and '"Murder"',[59] affording a greater attention to the victim in contrast to Gross's work, which was more focused on the location.[60]

Prior to the publication of the *Police Code*, the only instruction manuals available were aimed at medical practitioners rather than police,[61] such as William Augustus Guy's *Principles of Forensic Medicine*, first published in 1844, and *The Principles and Practice of Medical Jurisprudence* by Alfred Swaine Taylor, the first edition of which was published in 1865. According to Burney and Pemberton, the latter was the most widely read although it focused more on medical instructions, rather than on investigative procedures and did not refer specifically to police detectives.[62] Despite the publication of medico-legal instruction books and Gross's crime investigation manual, they conclude that English detectives preferred to rely on traditional investigative strategies, such as informants, rather than adopting new scientific methods.[63] As is typical of the historiography, Burney and Pemberton

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[58] Ibid., 233.
[59] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 39-40.
[60] Ibid., 46.
[61] Ibid., 41.
[62] Ibid., 43-45.
[63] Ibid., 48-49.

cite the Whitechapel murders of 1888 as the principal historical murder case to support their point.

The first edition of the *Police Code* gave instructions for initial crime scene investigation. Inspectors were the lowest rank authorised to examine a crime scene. Together with the police surgeon, they were required to make note of any footmarks, the position of the body, any obvious wounds and the condition of the clothing. In addition, they were to check for evidence of the victim's identity, such as papers found in their pockets, for any weapons and for clues to the perpetrator's identity. Before the victim's body was removed, the most senior police officer had to note its exact position.[64] However, throughout the period under study, the behaviour and practices of borough police officers at a crime scene varied, even after the publication of the *Police Code*.

An early example dates from 1839, when an elderly rag man named Peter Coffey was found murdered in Birmingham, his body placed in a sack in a ditch. Detectives Stephens and Hall (see Section 2.2.5) began their investigation by examining the body and clothing of the victim, noting that his pockets contained a few buttons but no money. Their next step was to search the premises where Coffey had lived with his niece and nephew. The detectives discovered traces of blood by the fireplace and coins hidden in a shirt, indicating that the pair may have killed their uncle for money. They arrested five people for Coffey's murder, including his relatives, four of whom were found guilty.[65]

Despite the absence of crime scene examination in this case, it demonstrates the basic nature of homicide investigation in the early nineteenth century and serves as a starting point for the further study of practices in this chapter. As noted in Figure 5.6, of the 51 depositions studied, crime scene examination was undertaken in 23.

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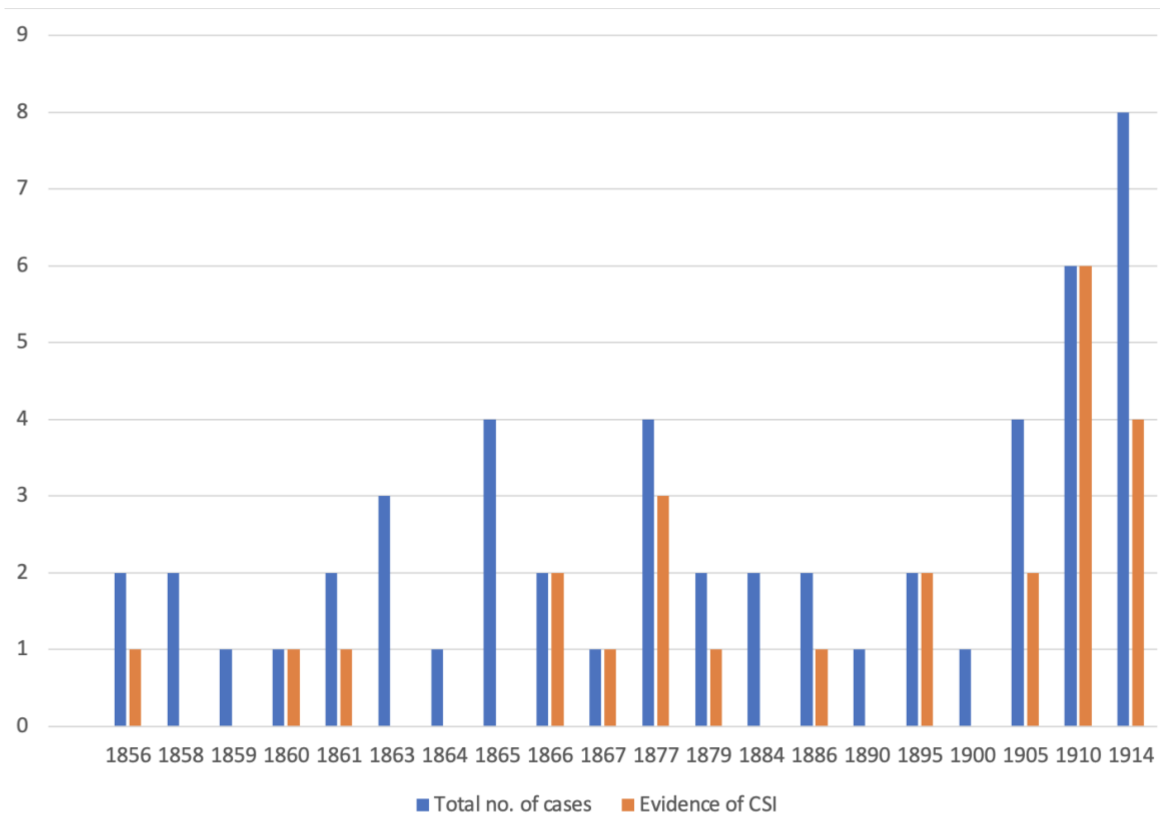
[64] Vincent, *Police Code*, 1881 ed., 248-249.
[65] Michael Weaver, "The New Science of Policing: Crime and the Birmingham Police Force, 1839-1842", *Albion* 26, no. 2 (1994): 304-305; *The Birmingham Journal*, 21 December 1839, 7.

Figure 5.6. Number of cases in which detectives undertook crime scene examination, 1856-1914.



Sources: As for Figure 5.1.

Apart from earlier isolated cases, there is more evidence of police officers formally examining the crime scene from the mid-1860s onwards. Although the incidence of crime scene analysis is higher in the early twentieth century, it was still not a standard feature of all investigations during this period. For example, in 1905 only two cases out of the four studied involved crime scene investigation. The ratio was the same in the 1914 depositions. Thus, even by the end of the study, police detectives were still relying on inquiries, witness information and suspect searches in homicide investigations. This inconsistent use of more advanced investigative methods might be explained by the lack of necessity: as most murders were committed by individuals known to the victim and suspects were more often than not arrested at the crime scene (see Section 5.3.1), there may not have been a

perceived need for the deployment of more sophisticated practices. Moreover, there may also have been financial constraints, as emphasised by Watson.[66] She states that, prior to 1914, the employment of forensic science in homicide cases was determined by key factors such as the gravity of the case, the costs and the availability of other types of evidence. Watson concludes that as the police played a more dominant role in the management of murder investigations, they engaged professionals to undertake medical examinations and chemical analysis, with a preference for public analysts.[67]

The first recorded use of crime scene investigation techniques in the depositions was rudimentary. In 1866, DC Fitzsimmons attended the location of the murder of Catherine McCormick in Liverpool, who had allegedly been killed by her husband. He noted bloodstains on the floor where the victim was found, and on the walls downstairs. He gave no further details of any crime scene examination nor was there any evidence of clothing or other items being analysed.[68] In another domestic case in the same year, Fitzsimmons investigated the murder of Ann Reed. Once again, he noted the blood at the crime scene and there is no record of his having collected any evidence. He located the murder weapon in a sewer based on a witness testimony rather than on a thorough search.[69]

However, by the late 1870s there are clearer indications of more thorough crime scene investigation and evidence gathering. By this time, it had also seemingly become standard practice for detectives to revisit the crime scene for further searches. In 1877, after Barbara Quinn died from a gunshot wound in Liverpool, DC Baker examined the yard, from where the weapon was discharged, several times. He discovered fragments of lead embedded in the steps and in the ground and a bullet mark on the hinge of the door into the property. He also found grazing from a bullet on the wall of the hall where the victim was killed. This helped to create a timeline of events for a complex set of circumstances in which

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[66] Watson, *Medicine*, 200-201.
[67] Ibid., 221.
[68] TNA, PL 27/17, Regina v. McCormick, Liverpool, 1866; there was no further information in the newspaper accounts.
[69] TNA, PL 27/17, Regina v. Reed, Liverpool, 1866.

the woman was fatally wounded during a fight between three men.[70] It is also noteworthy that crime scene examination was used in this case, as it was unclear who had killed the victim. Also in Liverpool in 1877, uniformed police visited the crime scene where a child was stabbed during a fight between his parents, but they could not locate the murder weapon. However, when DC Pritchard examined the location on a later occasion, he found three knives in a cupboard and a chisel on the table and, although there is no reference to these items being analysed, they became key pieces of evidence in the case.[71] This is an example of detective officers providing secondary crime scene investigation following a preliminary examination by their uniformed colleagues. In this case, the detective exhibited greater skills in searching a crime scene for evidence. This was a common feature throughout the depositions.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, although the borough police had by this time developed some more rigorous crime scene examination techniques, their practice still varied. In Liverpool in 1895, when bookstall keeper Edward Moyse was found murdered in his bed, the crime scene was initially examined by a uniformed officer. On entering the room, he found a poker and a hatchet, either or both of which were the likely weapons as the victim had sustained substantial head wounds. PC Davies removed them as evidence and gave them to a detective at the central office for safekeeping (see Section 5.1.1). He also noted bloodstains on the bed linen and around the room. On the same day, DC Duckworth re-examined the scene, first focusing on the loft which was entered by an opening in the neighbouring property. He discovered that the dust had been disturbed, suggesting that the assailant had gained entry through this route. He found a hand mark on one of the beams, but there is no evidence that he took any fingerprints. Duckworth continued to search the premises and found a bloodstained towel and water in the kitchen. Detectives also collected soiled bed linen and clothing from the crime scene for analysis.[72] In contrast, when the police

[70] TNA, ASSI 52/1, Regina v. Price, Liverpool, 1877.
[71] TNA, ASSI 52/1, Regina v. Dennison, Liverpool, 1877.
[72] TNA, ASSI 52/26, Regina v. Miller, Liverpool, 1895 (hereafter R. v. Miller).

were called to a domestic abuse case, in which Sarah Jenkinson died after her throat was cut, the first uniformed officer to arrive at the scene located and removed the weapon. As before, a detective officer searched the scene again after the suspect's arrest. Detective Morrison found blood in the kitchen and the yard, but there is no evidence of items being removed from the scene for analysis.[73]

In the Moyse case, four detective officers gave evidence at the city police court, whereas only one detective testified in the Jenkinson case. The former was a high-profile investigation, which was reported widely in the press due to the brutality of the act and the lack of an obvious suspect, and which might account for the greater number of investigating officers deployed. The latter was a domestic case, in which the perpetrator confessed. These factors likely contributed to the difference in practice. Moreover, it would seem that the nature of crime scene examination was partly determined by the experience and expertise of individual officers, which would indicate that there were no formal procedures in place at this time.

By the early decades of the twentieth century, crime scene investigation mostly remained quite basic, as in the case of the murder of Sarah Leonard in Manchester in 1905. The initial crime scene examination was undertaken by a uniformed officer who was the first to arrive. After finding the victim, he searched the room and located bloodstained clothing and bedding, later stating, 'there were several pools of blood in the room', with no evidence of further analysis. Another uniformed officer searched the rest of the house and found some clotted blood and human hair, 'apparently a woman's', in the kitchen under the slop stone. He also discovered a penknife and an axe, which were likely to be the murder weapons. DS Ashton arrested the suspect but there is no evidence of further examinations of the crime scene, although sketches were made.[74] In 1910 in Birmingham, in a case of murder and attempted suicide, detectives re-examined the crime scene after their uniformed colleagues had already completed the task. DI Evans described the bloodstains and vomit found in the

[73] TNA, ASSI 52/27, Regina v. O'Brien, Liverpool, 1895 (hereafter R. v. O'Brien).
[74] TNA, ASSI 52/108, Rex v. Leonard, Manchester, 1905 (hereafter R. v. Leonard).

bedroom in which the victim and suspect were found, but there was no evidence of any chemical analysis. Nor were there any plans made of the crime scene,[75] which demonstrates that crime scene sketches were not standard practice at the time despite Gross' reiteration of the necessity of drawing the location of a homicide before commencing a written description.[76]

These latter two cases confirm that the crime scene examination practice of Manchester and Birmingham detectives was similar to that of the Liverpool Police, in that it was varied, often superficial and rather haphazard. However, there were some significant changes in practice recorded in depositions between 1905 and 1914. Firstly, there is a distinct change in the quality of crime scene descriptions given by detective officers, with greater and more precise detail, including the position and measurements of furniture, such as in the investigation into the murder of Mary Ann Nicholas in Liverpool in 1905. DS Whitley first described the house and then the victim's room:

> ... (the house) consists of three storeys over two cellar kitchens. There are two rooms on each floor, and I examined the back room off the first landing in which the deceased had lived. I found the door off the hinges. A bedstead 6 feet 6 inches in length was opposite the doorway, and the distance between the foot of the bed and the doorway was 5 feet 4 inches.[77]

He described the condition and position of all the furniture and the location of bloodstains. This detailed description was accompanied by sketches and photographs of the crime scene, although they were not present in the surviving case papers.

Secondly, there is evidence of more meticulous analysis of external locations. The examination of outdoor crime scenes dates from the early decades of detective policing and

[75] TNA, ASSI 13/40, Rex v. Taylor, Birmingham, 1910.
[76] John Adam and J. Collyer Adam, *Criminal Investigation: A Practical Textbook for Magistrates, Police Officers and Lawyers, Adapted from the System Der Kriminalistik of Dr Hans Gross*, 4th ed. (London: Sweet and Maxwell Ltd., 1950), 137-138.
[77] TNA, ASSI 52/109, Rex v. Nicholas, Liverpool, 1905 (hereafter R. v. Nicholas).

the practices differed. The first case recorded in the sampled depositions is that of the investigation into the drowning of a young boy in the Liverpool canal in 1859. DC Wilson returned to the crime scene after the arrest of the family's maid, Mary Ann Gibbons, to corroborate her statement. Gibbons alleged that she had been searching for the child when she had seen him with a woman called Esther Latham. She recounted a complicated tale of walking around the city with the woman and child before arriving at the canal where Latham pushed him into the water. Wilson measured the distances between the places mentioned by the suspect but offered no comment on whether his measurements confirmed or contradicted her account.[78] Fifty years later in 1910, also in Liverpool, during the investigation into the death of Patrick Tracey, who was stabbed during a street brawl, DS Kelly conducted an external crime scene examination. After receiving a tip-off that the murder weapon had been dropped into a street drain, Kelly undertook a systematic search of all the drains in the specific location.[79] Finally, in the investigation into the murder of Christina Bradfield whose body was found by a canal lock in Liverpool in 1914, DI Leach examined the outdoor crime scene, where he found marks on the ground where the body might have been dragged, signs of the stones having been displaced and wheel tracks. Leach measured all the marks and described them in his testimony. He removed bloodstained wood from the scene and measured a handcart. Comprehensive plans of the crime scene were drawn, but there is no evidence of any photographs being taken. The workplace where the victim and the suspects worked together was also examined, and blood and stained clothing was found there.[80] This was a much more sophisticated operation with evidence preservation and analysis, and measurement and recording of the crime scene, all in the more complex environment of an outdoor location. However, despite the evidence of more methodical examinations, such as in the Bradfield case, there are no examples of the preservation of the integrity of a crime scene in any of the depositions sampled.

[78] TNA, PL 27/15, Regina v. Gibbons Liverpool, 1859.
[79] TNA, ASSI 52/162, Rex v. Power, Liverpool, 1910.
[80] TNA, ASSI 52/213, Rex v. Ball and Eltoft, Liverpool, 1914 (hereafter R. v. Ball and Eltoft).

5.2.2. Evidence collection and preservation

Burney and Pemberton describe Gross's 'chain of custody', which begins with crime scene examination and progresses through the steps of collecting and preserving evidence, including precise labelling and recording of items, as 'transformative'.[81] However, they conclude that protocols for managing and storing crime scene evidence were not established until the 1930s.[82] In the depositions sampled, there is clear evidence from the earliest detective testimonies of items being removed from crime scenes and preserved by the police for the judicial process. For example, in Manchester in 1858, DI Maybury collected and produced the key evidence in the investigation into the murder of Martha Bilborough, who had died following an abortion. Maybury found the instruments allegedly used in the operation at the house of one of the suspects, Auguste Wilhelm. He then ascertained that they belonged to Wilhelm's accomplice, which contributed to his conviction.[83] In many cases, as already referenced, bloodstained clothing, bedding and other household linens were frequently removed from crime scenes and used as evidence in court.

Prior to the publication of Gross's handbook, the *Police Code* stipulated the actions to be taken to collect and preserve evidence specifically in relation to 'poisons and poisoning'. In suspected poisoning cases, the police were required to collect all bottles and boxes containing medicinal substances and all evacuations from the deceased, such as vomit, for medical analysis. The samples were to be preserved in a locked room, under the watch of a police officer. The vessels for preserving the evidence were to be washed thoroughly with clean water and were only to be removed from the locked room under medical supervision. Furthermore, suspects in poisoning cases were to be searched for labels or evidence of recent purchases.[84]

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[81] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 22-23.
[82] Ibid., 76.
[83] TNA, PL 27/14, Regina v. Wilhelm and Stadmuller, Manchester, 1858.
[84] Vincent, *Police Code*, 1881 ed., 281.

A case from 1860 in Liverpool offers new insight into how borough detectives collected evidence in cases in which the victim was poisoned. In an investigation into a suspected murder by antimony poisoning, DI Horne undertook a thorough examination of the crime scene and preserved evidence methodically. When lodging house owner Ann James fell ill, her doctor had become suspicious and contacted the police. DI Horne made several visits to the victim's home to collect evidence for chemical analysis: 'I took possession of every vessel of every sort that was in the room.' The evidence included medicine bottles, cups of sago and bottles of wine (see Section 5.1.1). Horne was later responsible for conveying the evidence to the analyst, John Baker Edwards, who found traces of antimony in some of the samples. After the victim's death, her lodger Thomas Winslow was arrested on suspicion of her murder. Detective Horne then conducted a search of his room, where he found paper for making a will, and Mrs James' bank books and shares, as well as prescriptions for drugs, all of which he labelled and later produced in court. Horne also collected the victim's body samples from the city analyst, which he personally transported by train to London for further analysis by Professor Alfred Swaine Taylor.[85] The transportation of the evidence supports Watson's contention that the development of the railway system facilitated the transfer of samples between locations, and that this became standard practice in poisoning cases.[86]

Although this may have been an exceptional case, it demonstrates that some individual borough detectives were skilled in evidence collection and preservation especially in relation to suspected poisonings. William Horne was an experienced and effective Liverpool detective who was often deployed to investigate serious crimes (see Section 4.1.3). Nevertheless, it is compelling evidence of processes being in place in Liverpool to record and secure items during the earlier years of borough detective policing, which predates Gross's translated guidance by almost five decades. The analyst's testimony also

[85] R. v. Winslow.
[86] Watson, *Medicine,* 98.

reveals that the evidence retrieved from the crime scene in this case was labelled numerically:

> I received also from him (Horne) on 24th July six bottles, one containing medicine marked No 1. It contained no antimony. Another containing medicine marked No 2, and another containing medicine marked No 3, and another containing wine marked No 5, another containing medicine marked No 7 and another containing medicine marked No 8. I analysed each of these and found no antimony.[87]

Although Baker Edwards found traces of antimony in other bottles of medicine and in the victim's vomit and urine, the suspect was acquitted.

Fifty years later, the depositions from Liverpool show that a more formalised process of labelling and recording evidence was in place by this time. In a case of infanticide in 1910, DC Jones testified: 'I produce the counterpane and a cloth in which the body was found. They are marked BCR1'. The letters refer to the initials of the defendant, Bridget Cecilia Riley.[88] The same system was used in another case in the same year against Henry Thompson, who was tried for murdering his wife. The exhibits list contains five items, all labelled 'HT' and a sequential number. This would indicate that it was standard practice in Liverpool to label evidence in this way.

It is clear from the evidence that, from the mid-nineteenth century, procedures to collect, label and preserve evidence in murder investigations were in place. However, this practice was only undertaken in isolated cases, such as in suspected poisonings which would suggest that whilst detectives used a wide range of investigative techniques, they selected and deployed the strategies relevant to specific homicide cases depending on necessity. Experienced officers, like William Horne of Liverpool, worked individually and adapted their methods to the needs of each investigation as they saw fit, rather than following any formal departmental protocol.

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[87] R. v. Winslow.
[88] TNA, ASSI 52/164, Rex v. Riley, Liverpool, 1910.

5.2.3. The scientific analysis of blood and other substances

Adam highlights the significance of the role of the public analyst in forensic science and crime detection, which she asserts has been under researched.[89] She further states that chemists were the main practitioners of forensic science.[90] Watson asserts that the use of chemical tests was not restricted to poisoning cases, arguing that forensic science was used primarily for testing blood and semen samples, rather than trace evidence such as dust. Watson notes that the use of forensic science in policing was not systematic and relied on police forces engaging local analysts with the requisite qualifications, experience and equipment. Based on her empirical research, she concludes that the use of 'chemical and microscopic examinations' in the investigation of murder cases was relatively rare and involved professional analysts from the 1860s.[91]

The borough watch committee minutes confirm that public and private analysts were used for chemical examinations for a range of offences throughout the period under study. Entries were usually recorded in relation to finances. In 1868, the Liverpool head constable reported that the intestines of a sailor who died onboard a ship 'in suspicious circumstances' were sent to a local chemist for analysis. Edward Davies of the Royal Institution Laboratory analysed viscera, vomit and the contents of three bottles, for which the considerable cost of seven shillings and seven pence was defrayed to the watch committee. No trace of poison was found, and the suspect was discharged.[92]

Also in the late 1860s, the Liverpool Watch Committee authorised detective officers to use chemical analysis for the testing of flammable or explosive materials, the reason for which was not recorded. The external provider, Messrs Huson and Arrott, committed to assessing whether a substance was flammable or explosive at a specific temperature and in

[89] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 2.
[90] Ibid., 24.
[91] Watson, *Medicine*, 215-216.
[92] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 6 April 1868; *The Ulverston Mirror and Furness Reflector*, 4 April 1868, 6.

certain conditions for a flat fee, with a more detailed analysis available at additional cost, depending on the complexity of the material.[93] This could have been linked to a fire investigation or the discovery of suspected explosives onboard a ship in the port, for which the detective police would have been responsible. It could also have been linked to the detection of possible Fenian activities in the city (see Section 4.1.3). Although this was clearly not a homicide case, it supports the contention that borough watch committees engaged the services of public and private analysts. Further examples from the Liverpool Watch Committee minutes include payments to Davies for the analysis of 16 medicine bottles in the case against William Hale, an alleged quack doctor, for conspiracy to defraud,[94] and for the examination of clothing in indecent assault cases.[95]

In 1901, a return of police expenditure on 'analytical work' submitted to the Manchester Watch Committee reveals that between April 1898 and November 1900, the police outsourced chemical analysis on five occasions, four of which were for paint and oil, conducted by the city analyst, and one for vomit, which was undertaken by pharmacists J. Woolley Sons and Company. The total cost was £7 9s 10d. No additional information was recorded.[96] The following year, a special committee inquired into the conducting of analytical, biological and bacteriological examinations by the City Analysts Department. They deemed the current arrangements for bacteriological examinations with the Municipal School of Technology and Owens College to be satisfactory.[97] This would indicate that not all analytical examinations were outsourced to private analysts at this time and that decisions were based on cost and expertise depending on the nature of the case. The results of chemical examinations undertaken by analysts were then used as evidence in the judicial process, in which the police acted as prosecutors. The sampled depositions demonstrate the value of the analysts' contribution in building the case against defendants. For example, in

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[93] LRO, 352 POL/2/5, Head Constable, 20 April 1868.
[94] LRO, 352 POL/2/13, Head Constable, 2 January 1893; *The Liverpool Mercury*, 9 December 1892, 7.
[95] LRO, 352 POL/2/13, Head Constable, 11 June 1894.
[96] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/29, Watch Committee, 10 January 1901.
[97] MALH, GB127.Council Minutes/Watch Committee/31, 21 August 1902.

1884 in Liverpool, Professor of Chemistry James Campbell Brown analysed the remains of two victims, one of whom was exhumed, in a suspected poisoning case. Using the Reinsch test, he detected enough arsenic to have caused unnatural death.[98] This was key evidence in the conviction of Catherine Flanagan and Margaret Higgins.[99]

However, despite the availability of external practitioners to provide analytical services, they were not always engaged, as shown in a murder case in Liverpool in 1914, in which DI Addis undertook his own rudimentary test for flammable material. The victim was set on fire in his bed after his wife allegedly threw a lamp at him. Addis found some clothing belonging to the suspect, which had signs of burn holes. He described his actions: 'I endeavoured to burn the trousers with a lighted taper but failed.' Presumably, this was to check for any signs of paraffin, which he only found on a singlet. There is no evidence of any items being submitted for chemical testing and the defendant was later acquitted.[100] This suggests that the detective chose to rely on witness statements and circumstantial evidence, such as matches by the bed and burnt bedclothes, rather than having items analysed for the existence of paraffin for the prosecution of the case, as the latter may not have provided sufficient proof of murder.

Chemical testing on clothing, shoes and household items in homicide investigations was mostly related to the presence of blood. In this, the police detectives played a key role in the chain of evidence, as they collected the items from the crime scene and transported them to the analysts for testing. Watson concluded from her extensive research that blood analysis was a more common feature of homicide cases than were other substances such as semen. Prior to the creation of the first test for blood in 1853, chemists undertook a 'process of elimination'. The first 'screening' test was developed ten years later, but it was not possible to differentiate human from animal blood until 1901. Watson suggests that the

[98] TNA, ASSI 52/6, Regina v. Flanagan and Higgins, Liverpool, 1884 (hereafter R. v. Flanagan and Higgins).
[99] Katherine Watson, *Poisoned Lives: English Poisoners and their Victims* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2004), 51.
[100] TNA, ASSI 52/217, Rex v. Dwyer, Liverpool, 1914.

slow adoption of blood analysis evidence, even after the advent of the precipitin test, was due to a lack of perceived need for such tests on the part of the police, who relied more on circumstantial evidence and traditional policing methods. Often a perpetrator was arrested at the scene and bloodied clothing provided sufficient evidence. Otherwise, they confessed or their act was confirmed by witnesses. Thus, convictions were achieved without the need for chemical testing. Watson further comments that fingerprinting was not used for the same reasons.[101] Adam cites forensic scientist Charles Ainsworth Mitchell as suggesting that the presence of blood on a suspect's clothing was incriminatory despite the absence of a scientific test to distinguish human from animal blood.[102]

There were no references to the removal and preservation of blood as evidence in the *Police Code*. Gross however advised investigators to remove evidence of bloodstains in its entirety where possible, rather than in part and thus preserving the whole item. If it was necessary to cut out a section, the whole item should be photographed beforehand to show the blood in situ.[103]

There are six depositions in which blood was examined. The earliest was a baby farming case in 1877 in Liverpool, in which chemical tests were conducted on the child's mummified body and its bloodstained clothing. John Claud Cormack, the house surgeon at the Northern Dispensary concluded that the quantity of blood signified that the infant's death had not been from natural causes. Although he referred to chemical analysis, he gave no details of its nature or the results.[104] Despite the lack of scientific evidence, the defendant was convicted.

In 1886, also in Liverpool, during the investigation into an infanticide case, DC Allison removed bedding and clothing from the crime scene and took them for analysis to Dr Frank Paul, lecturer in medical jurisprudence. In his testimony Paul described the size and

[101] Watson, *Medicine*, 219-220.
[102] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 32; C. Ainsworth Mitchell, *Science and the Criminal* (London: Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1911), 14.
[103] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder*, 24; Adam and Collyer Adam, *Criminal Investigation*, 81.
[104] TNA, ASSI 52/1, Regina v. Todd, Liverpool, 1877 (hereafter R. v. Todd).

appearance of the bloodstains and stated that they were the result of childbirth. He made no reference to having used chemical analysis and, although he concluded that the infant had been strangled, the defendant was acquitted.[105] In 1895, the clothing and bed linen belonging to murder victim Edward Moyse (see Section 5.2.1), and the clothes worn by the suspect were also submitted to Dr Paul for chemical analysis. He confirmed that the stains were blood but acknowledged that he was unable to distinguish between human and animal blood: 'I cannot say whether it was human blood or that of any of the domestic mammals.' The case resulted in a conviction.[106]

By 1914, evidence from the depositions confirms the practical application of tests to differentiate human from animal blood in homicide investigations. In the case against George Ball and Samuel Eltoft for the murder of their colleague Christina Bradfield in Liverpool, several items of the suspects' clothing and other evidence from the crime scene, including pieces of wood, were sent for chemical analysis by Owen Williams, assistant surgeon at the Royal Southern Hospital, who had also examined the victim's body. Williams made 'a chemical examination' of the bloodstained items and concluded that the marks on Ball's clothing were blood but those on Eltoft's clothes were not. Interestingly, DS Burgess took the same items to Professor David Moore Alexander of the University of Liverpool for further analysis. He described the process: 'The various articles were examined carefully with the naked eye, and with a lens for suspicious looking stains.' Seventeen samples were selected and submitted for testing, which was in two parts; firstly, to ascertain whether a substance was blood and then, in positive cases, whether it was human. The initial identification of blood was undertaken by using a chemical test to determine the presence of haemin crystals, a spectroscopic test and a microscopic examination for blood corpuscles in a soda solution. Ten items tested positive for blood. These were then submitted to a test based on rabbit serum, which formed a precipitate when mixed with human blood serum. A control of a different rabbit serum was used to check the results. Professor Moore concluded that some

[105] TNA, ASSI 52/8, Regina v. McDonald, Liverpool, 1886.
[106] R. v. Miller.

of the suspects' clothing, wooden floorboards taken from the premises, a tarpaulin, a bludgeon and the sack in which the victim's body was found all contained human blood. Moreover, he confirmed Williams' findings that only the stains on Ball's clothes were blood and not on those of Eltoft. Consequently, Ball was convicted of murder and Eltoft of being an accessory after the fact.[107] Thus, the chemical analysis was used to indicate which of the two suspects was more likely to have committed the act, which reveals a more sophisticated application of scientific testing than employed in previous homicide cases.

In the same year, blood analysis was undertaken in a case of child murder also in Liverpool. This time, detectives sent bloodstained clothing to the city analyst for testing, who confirmed the presence of human blood on some of the items. The details of the process were not included in the analyst's statement, but he pointed out that the blood smears 'could have been caused by anyone with bloodstained fingers'. He surmised that the blood spots 'most probably' came from the suspect. Despite it having been impossible to ascertain the provenance of the blood, the defendant was convicted.[108] Finally, also in 1914, DC Pointon of the Manchester Police sent clothing and a razor, all with bloodstains, to be analysed during the investigation into the murder of Nellie Galloway, whose throat was cut. They were examined by the resident surgeon at the Royal Infirmary, who simply stated: 'I have examined microscopically the razor and the coat produced and find that the stains on both consist of blood'.[109] This case also resulted in a conviction.

These cases demonstrate that chemical analysis was used in the investigation of serious offences, including murder, by borough police forces from the 1870s. The procedures were not systematic during the period under study, but detective police officers were empowered to select items for expert analysis depending on the requirements of specific murder cases. However, despite the availability of scientific testing, in some cases detectives still depended on witness statements and circumstantial evidence. Scientific

[107] R. v. Ball and Eltoft.
[108] TNA, 52/223, Rex v. Spooner, Liverpool, 1914.
[109] TNA, 52/215, Rex v Brown, 1914.

examinations were undertaken by public and private analysts based on cost and experience, the decision for which was sanctioned by the watch committee whose main concern was financial.

Although four out of the six cases in which blood analysis was used resulted in a conviction, the outcome in the earliest case was more likely due to circumstantial evidence and the suspect's known history as a baby farmer. In the later cases the testing of bloodstains, despite the variability of the scientific process and the engagement of both medical and scientific experts, contributed to a guilty verdict, even though it was not possible at this time to determine to whom the blood belonged. This indicates that the chemical analysis was supportive of the prosecutorial process rather than being probative. Although scientific analysis was not widely used in the depositions sampled, they offer valuable insight into its use in the earlier decades of detective policing and reveal the application of increasingly advanced methods by the end of the period under study, thus providing an important starting point for further research into this key area.

5.2.4. Further CSI aids

As shown in Section 5.2.3, despite the variation in practice, the scientific analysis of evidence gradually became a key component in homicide investigation throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Later depositions introduce several new techniques, including more methodical crime scene examination skills, evidence collection and preservation. There is also the increasing use of prosecutorial aids, such as crime scene sketches, plans and photography, which will be examined in Section 5.3.4. Although absent from the depositions sampled, there is evidence in the primary sources of the discussion of and experimentation with other detective tools used in murder cases, notably fingerprinting, footprinting and the deployment of police dogs, which offers further valuable insights into the development of detective policing.

Jennifer Ward makes the key point that forensic science was initially used in policing for suspect identification, rather than crime detection and that the latter evolved later.[110] She describes how after the creation of the Fingerprint Bureau at New Scotland Yard in 1901, the need for fingerprint evidence in trials led to the further development of the use of photography in policing. This in turn resulted in regional initiatives, such as the establishment of the fingerprinting department in Bradford in 1906.[111] According to Ward's research, the official start to the use of fingerprinting and photography at crime scenes dates from 1903, when a register of 'visits with camera to photo fingerprints' was established at the Fingerprint Office of the Metropolitan Police. At the same time, the first regional police laboratories were created, such as in Cardiff in 1902, the focus of which was also photography and fingerprinting. In 1907, a similar initiative was established in the Bradford Police, as examined in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.2.4).[112] Ward concludes that, throughout the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the government failed to provide adequate funding for the development of forensic science,[113] which may explain the absence of references to fingerprinting in the depositions sampled.

As posited by Ward, although fingerprinting was used primarily for criminal records, the advice in the 1912 edition of the *Police Code* highlights its use in crime detection: 'the fingerprint system occasionally provides valuable evidence as to the commission of crime'. It added that in serious crimes, such as murder, 'it is of great importance that a very thorough examination of the scene of the crime should be made for this purpose, and all articles having a smooth surface scrutinised without being handled'. Articles bearing fingerprints were to be photographed and then carefully removed from the scene to be sent to New Scotland Yard for analysis. This service was expressly mentioned as being available for

[110] Jennifer Ward, "Origins and Development of Forensic Medicine in England, 1823-1946" (PhD diss., The Open University, 1993), 194.
[111] Ibid., 196.
[112] Ibid., 225-227.
[113] Ibid., 253.

other forces.[114] But there are no references to fingerprints being used in homicide cases in the three boroughs during the period under study. This is likely due to the use of fingerprinting being still in its infancy in detective policing at this time. As established in Section 4.2.4, although fingerprint technology was available in the early 1900s, it was not used routinely for suspect identification or crime investigation until later in the twentieth century.

By contrast, the first advice on how to take and compare footmark impressions directly for police officers was in Vincent's *Police Code*.[115] Later editions, such as the one published in 1912, offered more detailed advice but the casting method remained the same. However, there is evidence of the discussion of footprinting methods by the Metropolitan Police, which was disseminated to the borough forces. In 1892, following experimentation with a new method of taking footprints, using a composition which had been adopted by the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Home Office communicated with Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Sir Robert Anderson to ask whether the provincial forces should be informed of this innovation, to which he replied that the issuing of a Home Office circular on the subject 'would get into the newspapers, and thus operate to warn the criminals'. He suggested inserting a notice in the *Police Gazette* instead.[116] Despite Anderson's concerns, the Home Office distributed a circular to all forces with details of the new experimental form of footprint casting, asking them to conduct further tests.[117] However, there is no evidence to indicate whether the borough forces carried out experiments on this new method, which was eventually dismissed in preference for continuing with plaster of Paris. It is obvious from this example that decisions on the use of scientific aids in crime detection were taken at the Home Office in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police and although guidance was issued,

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[114] Howard C. E. Vincent, *The Police Code and General Manual of Criminal Law, Revised by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis*, 15th ed. (London: Butterworth & Co., 1912), 100.
[115] Vincent, *Police Code,* 1881 ed., 158-159.
[116] TNA, MEPO 2/5025, Use of plaster, resin, wax etc for identification by means of footprints. 1891-1935, Home Office memo, 7 January 1892.
[117] Ibid., Home Office memo, 9 July 1892.

there was no statutory requirement for borough forces to adopt innovations, or even to trial them.

Even though there are no examples of the three borough forces using footprint analysis in the sampled depositions, there were murder cases outside London in which footprinting was used, such as that of young Alice Barnes in Blackburn in 1892, the investigation of which involved 'a large force of detectives' from the Lancashire Constabulary and the Blackburn Borough Police, who took casts of footprints using plaster of Paris. The footmark, together with a handkerchief placed into the child's mouth were the only two pieces of 'direct evidence' used in the prosecution of suspect Cross Duckworth. During the trial, this evidence was abandoned by the prosecution, due to their inability to prove a link between the items and the defendant. However, witnesses placed him at the scene of the crime, and he was convicted.[118] This case further demonstrates that, although borough police forces used footprinting techniques in homicide investigations, the evidence was not always sufficiently reliable to use in court. Nevertheless, there are examples of footprinting used by the borough forces in investigations into other offences. For example, in 1878 the Manchester Police took a plaster cast of a footmark in a case of attempting to destroy life and property, in which three brickmakers threw a glass bottle containing 'blasting powder' through a rival's window. The impressions, which were taken from footprints found in the field leading to the victim's house, were used as the key evidence against the trio. One footprint corresponded with a suspect's boot which had been 'repaired in an extremely odd way'.[119] Despite this evidence, all three defendants were acquitted.

In 1927, Charles Rafter, who had been head constable of Birmingham Police since 1899, reflected on his experience of using footprinting. Although outside the chronological scope of this thesis, it offers some insight into the employment of this scientific aid in crime detection in cities such as his. Rafter asserted that 'this question of taking footprints is likely

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[118] *The Manchester Evening News*, 9 November 1892, 2; Ibid., 12 November 1892, 20; *The Preston Herald*, 16 November 1892, 3; *The Lancashire Evening Post*, 14 December 1892, 2.
[119] *The Manchester Times*, 9 February 1878, 3.

to arise more often in the country than in our District', inferring that this method was more useful in a rural environment. However, he describes their experience of using plaster of Paris for taking footprints as 'quite satisfactory' and 'quite efficient if properly used'. He then referred to Gross's guidance to reinforce his personal endorsement of plaster of Paris as the 'simplest and most suitable' method. Rafter concluded that 'police forces should still be left discretion as to what they are to use' adding that, in the Birmingham force, they offered demonstrations on taking footprints with plaster of Paris to detective officers. Although there is no obvious evidence of this method being used in the Birmingham Police before 1914, this reveals that by the late 1920s it was in use and detective officers were receiving formal instruction. Moreover, it supports the contention that the deployment of such scientific aids as footprinting were decided and adopted on a local level with no requirement from central government to do so.[120] In response to HC Rafter's letter, Chief Inspector Charles Collins, head of the Metropolitan Police Fingerprinting Bureau,[121] stated that New Scotland Yard offered courses for 'provincial officers' on taking footprints. Such courses may have been offered as early as 1907, when the Metropolitan Police training school was established.[122]

Finally, there is also evidence of some early experimentation with using dogs in crime detection in the borough police, including in homicide cases. Pemberton highlights the intended use of bloodhounds during the Whitechapel murders in 1888 as a key point in the use of dogs by the police for investigative and forensic purposes although, as he indicates, dogs were not trained specifically for police work until the 1950s.[123] Dog breeder Edward Brough, self-acknowledged 'custodian' of the bloodhound, considered the spate of killings in the East End of London as an opportunity to showcase the breed's superior olfactory skills

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[120] TNA, MEPO 2/5025, Letter from Chief Constable of Birmingham to the Home Office regarding method of taking casts of foot prints, 22 October 1927.
[121] Frederick R. Cherrill, *The Finger Print System at Scotland Yard* (London: HMSO, 1954), 7-8.
[122] TNA, MEPO 2/5025, Report from Chief Inspector Collins, New Scotland Yard to the Home Office regarding method of taking casts of foot prints, 29 October 1927.
[123] Neil Pemberton, "'Bloodhounds as Detectives': Dogs, Slum Stench and Late-Victorian Murder Investigation," *Cultural and Social History* 10 no. 1 (2013): 70-71.

and thus deploy them in detective work.[124] Pemberton concludes that attitudes towards the use of canines in homicide investigation in the 1880s was ambivalent.[125]

In 1895, Arthur Croxton Smith advocated the use of dogs, specifically bloodhounds, in detective work: 'In plenty of cases, I am convinced, bloodhounds would prove invaluable auxiliaries to the police in tracking criminals.' He criticised the police for being slow to adopt such innovations, although he conceded that the use of dogs would be more difficult in urban environments.[126] In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Inspectors of Constabulary reported on regional initiatives to introduce dogs into borough and county forces. In 1908, Captain Terry described 'an interesting experiment' in the Southern District, initiated by Major Edwin Richardson, who trained dogs for war, whereby he would supply bloodhounds when required by any police authority in an emergency. The inspector observed:

> There can be no doubt cases are rare where they should be of use, but there will now be an opportunity of testing their value in suitable cases. The difficulty will be to procure the hounds while the trail is still fresh, as the local police could not wait to visit the scene of the crime until the arrival of the hounds; but they might be exceedingly useful in tracking a murderer or burglar, if put on the trail in good time.[127]

This experiment was based initially on an agreement with the chief constable of Kent Constabulary and was primarily for the purpose of tracking fugitives.[128] The following year, the Inspectors of Constabulary noted that the experiments had been unsuccessful: 'In one notable case, that of a prisoner escaping from Winchester Prison, the hounds, though working under every favourable circumstance, were unable to follow the trail. Their failure in this instance was most significant.'[129] In 1910, it was reported that: 'bloodhounds and police

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[124] Ibid., 74.
[125] Ibid., 88.
[126] A. Croxton Smith, "The Bloodhound as Detective," *Windsor Magazine* (January 1895): 433-434.
[127] *Reports of IOC,* 1909, 829.
[128] *The Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 28 October 1908, 4.
[129] *Reports of IOC,* 1910, 593.

dogs have been made use of to a limited degree in the counties of Berks and Wilts, and with some considerable success'. The inspector further observed that it was becoming customary for beat constables to be accompanied by dogs, 'which are very useful for detecting offences such as sleeping out, and for giving timely notice of persons loitering or hiding in premises for an unlawful object'.[130]

In 1911, the Liverpool Watch Committee sanctioned the deployment of dogs 'for police purposes'. It was agreed to purchase six Airedale terriers from Major Richardson, one for each division.[131] According to the press, the first three dogs arrived in April and were intended for 'night duty as assistants to the constables engaged on the lonely suburban beats'.[132] By 1913, the Liverpool Police had acquired an additional five Airedales, bringing the total to 11.[133] An article in the *Lichfield Mercury* suggested that the Airedale terrier was 'quite as efficient as the bloodhound in tracking criminals and not so costly'. This might explain the choice of breed by the Liverpool Police. The newspaper reporter further argued that the reputation of bloodhounds had been damaged by using untrained animals: 'A police officer might just as well catch the first village cur he meets, put a leash on it, and give it to the task, for failure is a certainty if untrained hounds are used.'[134]

A more detailed report on the use of police dogs was published by the Inspectors of Constabulary in 1914. Citing an experiment by the North Riding Police, the inspector stated that Airedale terriers were mostly used in police work, rather than bloodhounds. The dogs were generally deployed for the purposes of crime prevention and detection, but mainly as a deterrent, as well as for the protection and companionship of beat constables. More specifically, the animals were used to augment a police officer's senses 'by increasing those of sight and hearing and by that of scent'. A brief reference to Liverpool described the police's use of dogs as successful, although no further information was given.[135]

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[130] *Reports of IOC,* 1911, 181.
[131] LRO, 352 POL/2/35, Watch Committee, 23 January 1911.
[132] *The Lichfield Mercury*, 14 April 1911, 2.
[133] LRO, 352 POL/2/35, Watch committee, 3 February 1913.
[134] *The Lichfield Mercury,* 29 May 1914, 3.
[135] *Reports of IOC,* 1914, 721-722.

Although there were no specific references to the use of police dogs in homicide investigations in the Inspectors of Constabulary reports, nor in the borough watch committee minutes for the three forces under study, there are press accounts of dogs being used in murder cases outside the capital. In 1892, during the investigation into the murder of Alice Barnes, the Blackburn Police deployed two bloodhounds to track the child's killer. The *Lancashire Evening Post* reported on the initiative:

> They ranged about the park for a good while, but without avail. Too much time has been allowed to lapse, and the scent has grown cold. Any chance there might have been of picking up the scent was also spoiled by the crowds who have visited the spot since the murder.[136]

The use of dogs in this case was, according to the press, inspired by the successful deployment of bloodhounds in the case of the murder of another child in Blackburn in 1876. A private individual brought the hounds to the crime scene, where they caught a scent from the chimney. When their owner checked, he found the charred skull of a child, which was used as evidence against the perpetrator, who was convicted.[137] Although not used directly by the police, this event predates the Whitechapel murders by more than a decade. This confirms that by the 1890s there were isolated cases of borough police using dogs in homicide investigations, albeit not always successfully. These examples add to the 'historical insight into the use of dogs as tools of detection' as examined by Pemberton.[138] However, police dogs were not introduced into the Birmingham and Manchester forces until the 1950s.[139]

The use of crime scene examination aids, such as foot printing and police dogs, support the contention that decisions on the deployment of specific investigative strategies in

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[136] *The Lancashire Evening News*, 10 November 1892, 2.
[137] *The Manchester Evening News*, 28 July 1876, 2-3.
[138] Pemberton, "Bloodhounds,*"* 87.
[139] John Reilly, *Policing Birmingham: An Account of 150 Years of Policing Birmingham* (Birmingham: West Midlands Police, 1989), 139; Eric J. Hewitt, *A History of Policing in Manchester* (Manchester: E. J. Mortem, 1979), 142.

homicide cases were taken at a local level by borough detective departments and watch committees, rather than being dictated by central government. It also reveals that some borough police forces, such as Liverpool, were particularly innovative and keen to experiment with new techniques.

5.3. Suspect identification and prosecution

Emsley and Shpayer-Makov state that the principal tasks of police detectives were to 'obtain information and evidence about offences committed against the law, to detect and apprehend the offenders and to present evidence against them in court'.[140] In her later work, Shpayer-Makov highlights the detective officer's role in collating evidence to secure a conviction.[141] Described by Cowley as 'peculiarly British', police officers acted as prosecutors as well as investigators in crime cases. Even after the appointment of the first Director of Public Prosecutions in 1880, the police continued in their prosecutorial role, albeit for minor offences, until the establishment of the Crown Prosecution Service in 1986.[142] Thus, as noted by Shpayer-Makov, police detectives were 'often an integral component of the courtroom scene'.[143] Adam emphasises that the identification of a crime and the linking of a suspect to it are necessary before a case progresses to court.[144] Although her focus is on forensic science, she confirms that police detectives were fundamental to all stages of the judicial process, from examining the crime scene, identifying the alleged perpetrator, collecting evidence against them and presenting it in court.

As presented in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.2.1), detective officers undertook a wide range of administrative roles linked to the court. In addition, in their role as prosecutors they

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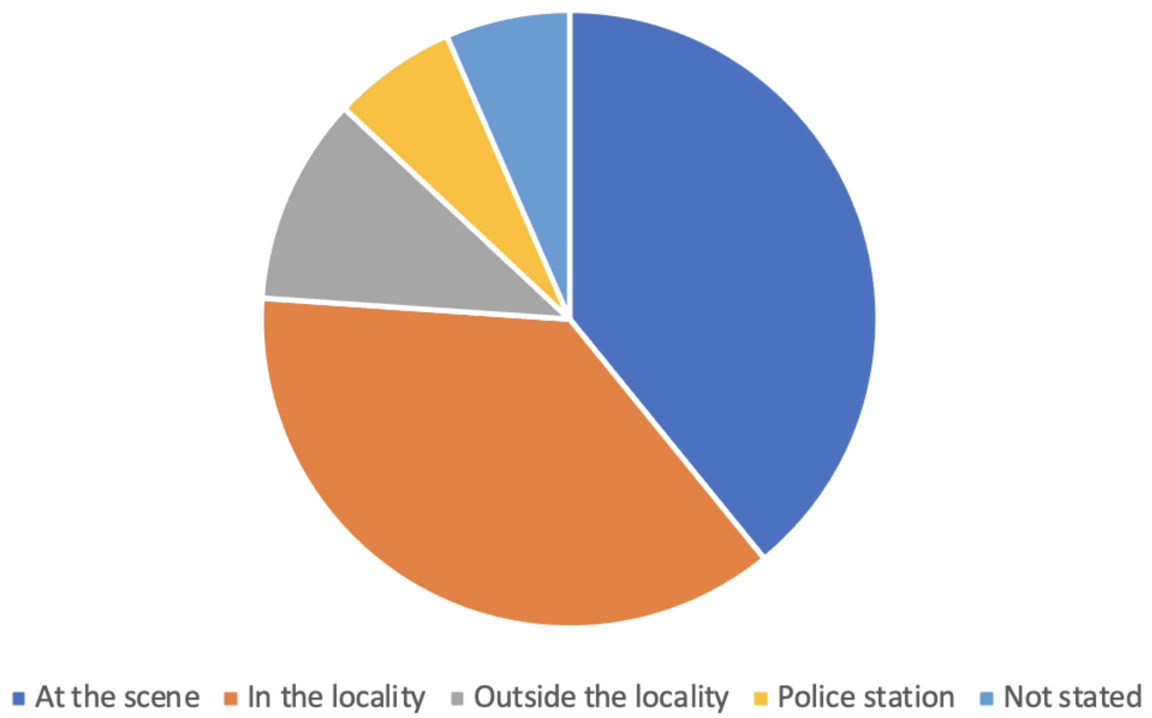
[140] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, "The Police Detective and Police History," in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950,* eds. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 3.
[141] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 1.
[142] Richard Cowley, *A History of the British Police: From its Beginnings to the Present Day* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011), 32.
[143] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 170.
[144] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 51.

were central to the preparation of evidence against the defendant and the presentation of it to the jury and, as already stated, they were the key coordinators of the expert witnesses required to testify in trials (see Section 4.1). Material evidence collected and preserved by uniformed officers or detectives in homicide investigations included clothing and footwear, household items, possible murder weapons and witness statements, all of which were used by the police prosecutor to secure a conviction in court. As demonstrated by the depositions, this remained the mainstay of prosecutorial evidence, along with witness statements, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the occasional use of the analysis of trace evidence, such as poisons or blood. Furthermore, towards the end of the period under study, the police used external experts to create sketches and plans and to take photographs of the crime scene as additional evidence in court.

5.3.1. Suspect tracking and identification

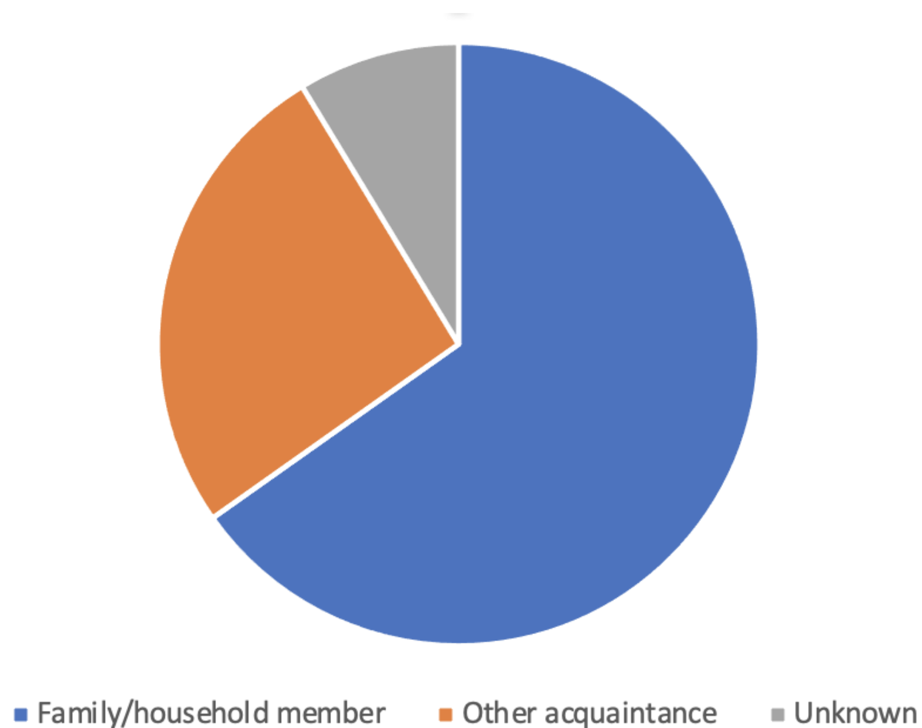
As discussed in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.2), habitual offenders were monitored through the compilation of criminal records. However, the potential perpetrator had to be identified as a suspect first, before the police could conduct further inquiries to verify their identity and establish their background and history, including any previous convictions. Following a murder, detectives were required to work as quickly as possible to identify the possible killer. In the sampled depositions most suspects were detained at the crime scene or nearby and were family members or close associates of the victim, as presented in Figures 5.7 and 5.8.

Figure 5.7. The location of arrests in homicide cases, 1856-1914.



Sources: As for Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.8. The relationship of suspect to victim in homicide cases, 1856-1914.



Sources: As for Figure 5.1.

As seen in Figure 5.7, in 39 per cent of murder investigations the prime suspect was arrested at the scene of the crime. This included homicides which had taken place onboard ships, and cases of women who had given birth at home and then been accused of having murdered their child. In 38 per cent, the alleged perpetrator was apprehended in the locality, mostly at their own accommodation which differed from that of the victim, or at the house of a close family member. In one case, the suspect was found hiding in a railway siding shed and in another, the alleged perpetrator had been admitted to the workhouse hospital after being injured in the fight during which the murder took place. In three instances, the suspect was already in custody, either due to be charged with another offence or having surrendered to the police following their act.

Figure 5.8 shows that in 65 per cent of cases, the suspect was a member of the victim's family. Most often this was a married or cohabiting couple who experienced

domestic violence, usually with the man as the aggressor. This category also includes members of the household who were not biologically related to the victim, such as shipmates, domestic servants and other live-in employees. In a further 26 per cent of incidents, the suspect was known to the victim outside the home, including work colleagues and a rival gang member. In two cases, the victims were sex workers who were attacked by known clients. There were five depositions in which the murder suspect was apparently unknown to the victim. One was a baby farming case and two were the result of street brawls. There were only two cases in which a murder was committed by a complete stranger. However, as the depositions relate to 'known' crime, it is likely that there were more unreported or unsolved murders which had been committed by individuals who were unknown to victims, and which are not included in the court papers. It would have been difficult for detectives to achieve a successful outcome in these cases. The judicial statistics report for 1899 observed that as many as a quarter of homicides were not 'cleared up'.[145] Moreover, Howard Taylor asserts that the majority of homicides were not investigated and that coroners returned verdicts of accidental death or natural causes for a significant number of unsolved murders.[146]

As demonstrated by the data, in many murder investigations the suspect was apprehended immediately or soon after the offence had taken place, as their identity and relationship to the victim were known. Thus, the main task for detective officers was to collect evidence to present in court (see Section 5.3.2), for which they mostly relied on their local knowledge and innate investigative skills as already discussed in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.1.3). The evidence from the depositions further supports this contention. A typical example is that of Sarah Drummond who was murdered in Liverpool in 1856. Although the suspect was arrested by a uniformed officer, the detective police identified him by finding the murder weapon which they recognised as belonging to him.[147] Detectives were still relying

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[145] *Judicial Statistics*, *England and Wales*, 1901, 34.
[146] Howard Taylor, "Rationing Crime: The Political Economy of Criminal Statistics since the 1850s," *Economic History Review* 51, no. 3 (1998): 586.
[147] R. v. Ferguson.

on making inquiries and acting on information received at the end of the period of study, such as in the investigation into the death of Edward Cummings after being struck on the head in a public house in Birmingham in 1914. Local detectives collected witness statements which were used by DI Macauley to identify the suspect, whom he arrested at his lodgings.[148]

As already established in more complex cases in which the alleged offender was unknown to the victim or had fled the scene, detective officers applied more focused investigative techniques. In 1877 in Liverpool, during the investigation into a child's body found in a box, DC Stretell found two letters in the box, which he preserved as evidence. As this was a case of suspected baby farming, Stretell located an advertisement in the local press offering to foster a child and engaged in correspondence with the suspect, whom he later identified as Sophia Martha Todd (see Section 5.2.3).[149] In another infanticide case, when the body of an infant was found in an alleyway in Liverpool in 1910, detectives examined the newspapers in which the child was wrapped, after drying them out. They then followed up an address written on one of the sheets, where they located the victim's mother. A search of her room revealed bloodstained bed linen and letters referring to her unplanned pregnancy, which were used as evidence in the case against her.[150]

As also examined in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.1.3), regional detective police used informants to gain information on potential suspects in all types of crime, including homicide. A typical example is that of the murder of Joseph Monks in Manchester in 1899. Monks received a fatal head injury from his neighbour Thomas Read following a quarrel about noise. By the time the police arrived, the suspect had fled. Two detective officers later arrested Read in Salford based on a description received from witnesses to the incident.[151]

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[148] TNA, ASSI 13/44, Rex v. Broadhead, Birmingham, 1914 (hereafter R. v. Broadhead).
[149] R. v. Todd.
[150] TNA, ASSI 52/160, Rex v. Moore, Liverpool Assizes, 1910.
[151] Greater Manchester Police Archives (hereafter GMPA), Watch Committee Minutes Vol 7, Special report of meritorious conduct, E Division, 29 June 1899, 112; *The Manchester Times*, 28 April 1899, 3.

In addition, watch committees circulated handbills to elicit information in homicide cases. In 1875, the Liverpool Watch Committee paid rewards amounting to £100 to three witnesses whose information had led to the arrest of a murder suspect the previous year. In 1874, witnesses had seen Peter Campbell kicking Richard Morgan, who died of his injuries. Campbell subsequently disappeared. Believing that he might be hiding in a colliery district, detectives searched local pits but no trace of him could be found, which led to the offer of a reward. Detectives received information that Campbell's sister was planning to accompany him back to Liverpool so that he could escape on a ship. The detectives trailed the sister as she travelled by train to retrieve the suspect, who evaded capture again. Later, two more informants provided information about Campbell's whereabouts in Liverpool, where he was finally arrested.[152]

Handbills were also issued during searches for unknown assailants, such as in the case of Edward Moyse in Liverpool in 1895 (see Section 5.2.1). Details of the suspect based on a witness statement was published in the press: 'He is apparently a sailor of about 28 or 30 years of age, about 5 ft. 5 in. in height, with thick brown moustache, pale face, and thin. He looked respectable and clean, and…he spoke like a Liverpool man'.[153] DI Fisher later arrested Thomas Miller on information received,[154] although it is unclear whether this was a result of the published description.

Finally, handbills were used to acquire information and evidence after the identification and arrest of suspects, as in the investigation into the death of Thomas Higgins in Liverpool in 1883 (see Section 5.2.3), during which the Liverpool head constable issued a handbill with a £100 reward for information 'as shall lead to the conviction of the murderer or murderers' of Thomas Higgins, who died of arsenic poisoning.[155] Although it appears that the alleged murderer or murderers were unknown, the handbill was published after the arrest of

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[152] LRO, 352 POL/2/7, Head Constable, 8 March 1875; *The Liverpool Mail,* 19 September 1874, 11.
[153] *The Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1895, 2.
[154] R. v. Miller.
[155] LRO, 352 POL/2/9, Head Constable, 6 November 1883.

Thomas' wife and her sister.[156] Thus, it can be inferred that the purpose was to locate witnesses for further information, especially as the alleged crime had taken place in a closed domestic setting and there was the possibility of more victims which, according to Angela Brabin, could have totalled ten.[157]

5.3.2. Collection of further evidence and identity parades

Once the suspect had been arrested and was in custody, the detective police initiated further inquiries and collected evidence in preparation for court, beginning with searching the prisoner (see Section 5.1.1). The sampled depositions demonstrate that clothing and footwear belonging to both the suspect and the victim were key forms of evidence used in homicide investigations throughout the period under study. For example, in 1856 sailor James House was found dead in an alleyway in Liverpool. He had a cotton 'muffler' round his neck, which was likely to have been the cause of his death according to Inspector Duggan: 'I do not think the deceased could have had power to tie the second one (knot) himself'. Also, it was noted that he was without shoes, coat or a waistcoat. Detective Grisenthwaite arrested two suspects based on one of them having been seen with the muffler prior to the murder. When the detective searched their lodgings, he discovered that the second suspect had the victim's boots in his possession. Another detective located some pawn tickets, which incriminated the suspects further.[158] In this case, the victim's clothing provided the chain of evidence to the suspects, who were known for stealing goods and selling them. They were both convicted and transported for life. In his research into the identification of unknown bodies, Fraser Joyce argues that 'clothing was undoubtedly one of the most valuable identifiers available to investigators', particularly when individuals

[156] R. v. Flanagan and Higgins; *The Manchester Times*, 16 February 1884, 5.
[157] Angela Brabin, *The Black Widows of Liverpool* (Lancaster: Carnegie Publishing, 2003), 15.
[158] TNA, PL 27/14, Regina v. Wall and Carr, Liverpool, 1856.

possessed fewer items of clothing.[159] These observations are also applicable to perpetrators of crime and their victims.

As illustrated in Section 5.2.3, blood on the suspect's clothing also provided important evidence in the sampled murder depositions. Prior to the early decades of the twentieth century, there was little evidence of bloodstained items being preserved in the manner prescribed by the *Police Code*, nor being sent away for analysis, and the presence of blood was often sufficient evidence to gain a conviction, such as in the murder of Sarah Jenkinson in 1895. When detectives examined the suspect's clothing, they found that his shirt sleeve was covered in wet blood, as were his hands, which contributed to his conviction.[160] In Manchester, after Edward Leonard was arrested on suspicion of his wife's murder in 1905, DS Ashton searched him at the detective office: 'I searched him and took from him a coat, vest and shirt which were blood-stained. The coat and vest were damp and appeared to have been sponged.'[161] Even though he denied the charge, Leonard was found guilty of manslaughter.

As already noted, the suspect's accommodation was usually searched for evidence. A typical case is that of Eliza Patton, a sex worker who died from a neck wound in Liverpool in 1879. Following the arrest of Thomas Johnson, who was known to the victim, DC Macdonald searched his bedroom: '(I) cut from the bed…the piece of bed tick produced. It has 2 spots of blood on it.'[162] He also found a candlestick, which was believed to be the murder weapon.

As indicated in the sampled depositions, although there were no standardised procedures for identifying suspects and collecting evidence for the case against them, there is substantial evidence of patterns of detective behaviour, such as using witness information to identify and locate suspects, who were in many cases known to the victim. Once in

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[159] Fraser Joyce, "Naming the Dead: The Identification of the Unknown Body in England and Wales, 1800-1934" (PhD diss., Oxford Brookes University, 2012), 210.
[160] R. v. O'Brien.
[161] R. v. Leonard.
[162] TNA, ASSI 52/3, Regina v. Johnson, Liverpool, 1879.

custody, detective officers searched the prisoner and undertook further investigative actions, such as examining their accommodation. In many cases, the evidence procured in this manner was sufficient to secure a conviction.

In three cases the suspects were placed in an identification parade. The earliest example of this procedure is from Liverpool in 1895, in the case of Edward Moyse (see Section 5.2.1). During the fatal attack on the bookstall keeper at his home, his young assistant, John Needham, was also injured but survived. Liverpool detectives took the suspect William Miller to the hospital where Needham was being treated. They arranged for four individuals to attend at the same time, and hastily organised an identification parade in the hospital corridor. The other members of the line-up were known to the deceased rather than sharing any characteristics with the suspect. Miller was instructed to place himself anywhere in the group, so he took the middle position. Then all five men entered the victim's hospital room where they walked past him in single file. Needham identified the suspect as the attacker.[163]

In 1900, during the investigation into the murder of Margaret Morrison, witnesses attended an identification parade at the main bridewell, comprising 'several' persons. No further details were recorded, except that they failed to identify the suspect who was the victim's former fiancé. However, this did not impede the investigation and James Bergin was found guilty.[164] The investigation into the murder of Christina Bradfield, whose body was discovered in the Liverpool Canal in 1913 (see Section 5.2.1), also involved an identity parade. The two suspects were each placed in a group of five and six men respectively at Walton Prison. They then walked around the prison exercise ground in the presence of a witness, who failed to identity them and stated: 'Owing to the lapse of time, my impression of them is slight'. However, he later identified one of the defendants in court by his clothing, which was produced in court.[165] It is obvious from these examples that there were no formal

[163] R. v. Miller.
[164] TNA, ASSI 52/50, Regina v. Bergin, Liverpool, 1900.
[165] R. v. Ball and Eltoft.

procedures for conducting identity parades. Nevertheless, in the latter case there is evidence of some conformance with guidance on grouping published in the *Police Code,* which stipulated that suspects should be placed with a minimum of five or six other individuals. The two parades which took place in prison, rather than at a police station, are consistent with the warning in the *Police Code* that showing a suspect to a witness in a police cell was 'not a fair mode of identification, and likely to lead to difficulties and mistakes'.[166] Despite the fact that identity parades resulted in a positive identification in only one out of the three cases, the failure in the other two did not have a negative impact on the outcome, which shows that this method of suspect identification formed only part of the evidence to identify the perpetrator and construct the case for the prosecution.

5.3.3. Crime scene plans and photographs as prosecutorial aids

According to Watson, scale plans, sketches and models of crime scenes came into use from the 1840s and were presented as evidence routinely in Old Bailey trials by the 1870s. By 1900, they were a regular component of prosecutions. Often drawn by professional surveyors, they focused on the locality of a homicide case to strengthen witness testimonies but, as Watson observes, towards the end of the nineteenth century they assumed a 'more overtly forensic quality', which combined investigative and medical elements.[167] The first detailed crime scene sketch which included the victim in Watson's study was from Cheshire in 1887.[168] However, in later plans the practice of omitting the body appears to have been resumed, as they were created with the express purpose of supporting the 'prosecution narrative'.[169]

In the first edition of the *Police Code*, the only reference to 'plans' is in relation to their prosecutorial purpose, rather than as an investigative tool: 'In all complicated cases, a

[166] Vincent, *Police Code*, 1881 ed., 185.
[167] Watson, *Medicine*, 205.
[168] Ibid., 212.
[169] Ibid., 214.

plan of the place in question is most useful, both antecedent to, or at a trial or inquiry'. Plans should be 'as clear as possible, and not too elaborate'. The guidance advised using a sufficiently skilled police officer or the police surveyor to draw the plan.[170] As noted by Burney and Pemberton, Gross offered advice to investigating officers on how to describe and record crime scenes using sketches and plans, including re-plotting the physical space in which a murder was committed onto squared paper. They conclude that Gross's meticulous methods, which resulted in more rigorous crime scene examination, preserved the location for later analysis.[171]

In the studied depositions there are seven cases with references to crime scene sketches and plans, six of which include surviving copies. One of the depositions also refers to a model. The earliest crime scene sketches date from the mid-1880s in Manchester and, although these two cases do not contain a detective testimony and are therefore not included in the sample, they offer valuable insights for this study. Five sets of plans are of an internal crime scene and two depict an outdoor location. Where identified, all drawings were created by a city surveyor.

In two cases, the crime scene sketches are basic drawings and floor plans of the premises in which a murder took place, with no supplementary detail. In the investigation into the murder of Sarah Leonard in 1905 in Liverpool, there were two such plans made. The first was a sketch of the row of houses, with the relevant unit marked in colour. This was accompanied by a drawing of the premises with all rooms marked. There are some features noted, such as fireplaces, a gas stove, sink and WC, but there are no references to the alleged crime nor to where the victim was found.[172] Similarly, in the case against George Broadhead in Birmingham in 1914 (see Section 5.2.1), plans were drawn of the crime scene by architect and surveyor, John Emery Burnett. The plans consist of a simple diagram locating the public house on the street, and of the ground floor where the attack took place.

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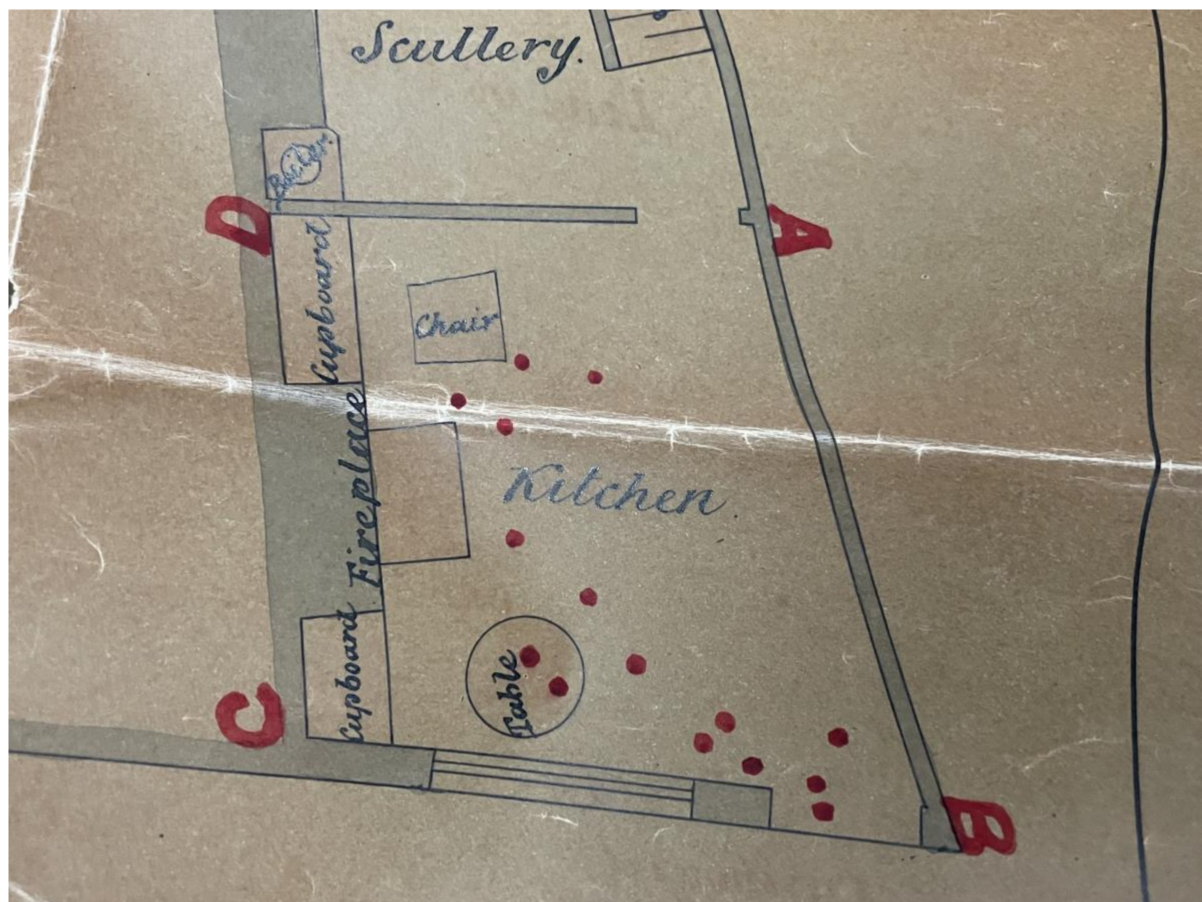
[170] Vincent, *Police Code*, 1881 ed., 279.
[171] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder,* 20-22.
[172] R. v. Leonard.

The scene of the crime is shaded but there is no reference to it in the key.[173] As these sketches merely record the location of the rooms and the objects within them, it could be inferred that their use was as aide-mémoires for the witnesses and jury in court.

The remaining five crime scene plans and sketches all contain additional features which offer detailed information about the alleged offence. Bloodstains are indicated on two of the plans, for example in the trial of Arthur Shaw for the murder of his wife in Manchester in 1884, as seen in Figure 5.9. The plan was drawn by a draughtsman in the City Surveyors Office who stated that 'the red marks are those alleged to be spots of blood'.[174] These occurred in the kitchen of the premises and are marked with a red dot.

Figure 5.9. Plan of the crime scene at 61 Dalton Street, Manchester, 1884.



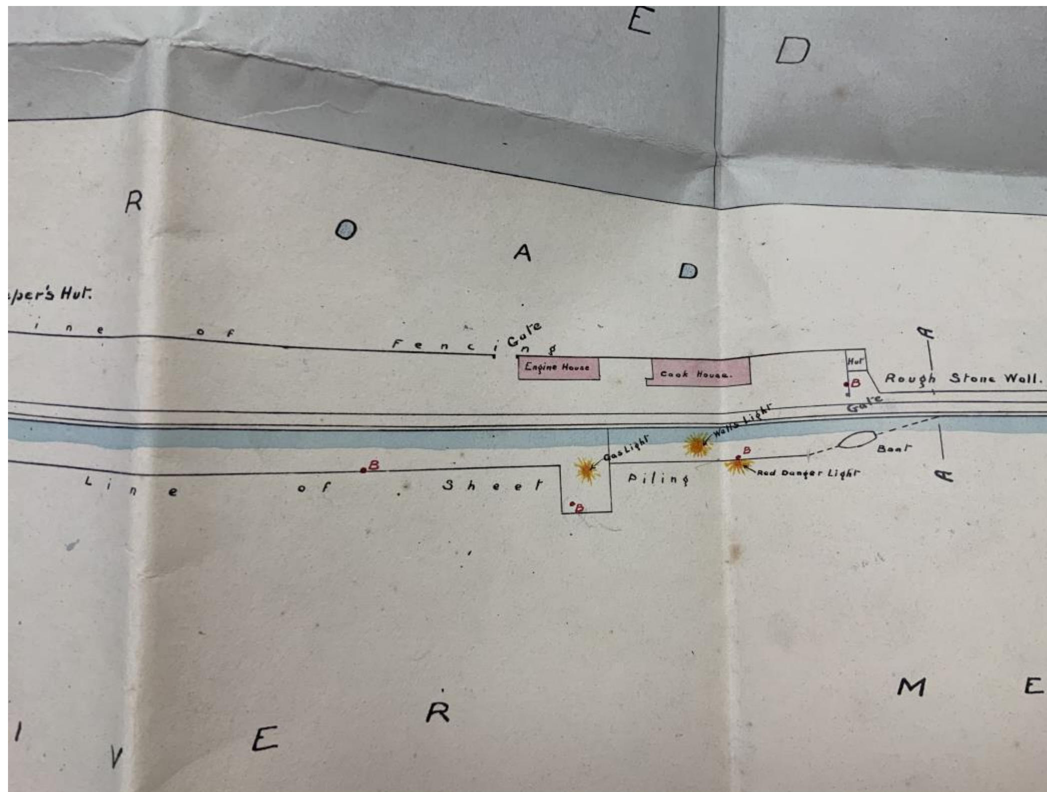
[173] R. v. Broadhead.
[174] TNA, ASSI 52/6, Regina v. Shaw, Manchester, 1884.

Source: TNA, ASSI 52/6, Regina v. Shaw, Manchester, 1884. © Crown copyright, 1884. With permission from the National Archives.

Additional information such as measurements, the route of the alleged perpetrator or witnesses, and a timeline of events leading to the offence were recorded on three sets of plans. In the case against William Hitchen, who was tried for the murder of Thomas Williams in 1905, the case papers included a scaled drawing of the Mersey Docks, where the victim was found dead in the water. The plan is marked with the spot where Williams was thrown into the river. Measurements include the depth of the water, the height of the walls and the distance between the entry point and the life buoys (marked A and B on Figure 5.10), as the victim could not swim.[175] The deposition does not include a testimony by the creator of the drawing, nor is there any reference to it in the police statements. However, there are notes on the plan explaining the key.

[175] TNA, ASSI 52/107, Regina v. Hitchen, Liverpool, 1905.

Figure 5.10. Plan of the crime scene at Mersey Docks, 1905.



Source: TNA, ASSI 52/107, Regina v. Hitchen, Liverpool, 1905. © Crown copyright, 1905. With permission from the National Archives.

Crime scene plans and a model were referred to in the deposition relating to the murder of Edward Moyse in Liverpool in 1895 (see Section 5.2.1). The sketches were drawn by Frederick Hamilton Holford, chief assistant surveyor of the Corporation Surveyors Office. Two days after the murder, he made a ‘complete’ plan and a model of all three storeys of Moyse’s house, both of which included the furniture. He used the plans to describe the crime scene in detail at the inquest. The surviving sketches consist of side and aerial views, on which the crime scene is labelled as ‘the deceased’s bedroom’. The body or its position is not marked as Holford visited the scene three days after the murder by which time it had been removed. There are also two commercial city maps included in the case papers, with key locations marked, including the defendant’s lodgings and the route taken by him to the

victim's house. Notably, there are two versions of the route marked, which correlate to changes in his statement.[176]

The model from the Moyse case has not survived and there is little information in the deposition as to the nature and purpose of it. Surveyor Frederick Hamilton Holford simply stated: 'I have shown upon the plans and in the model the position of the furniture.'[177] The *Liverpool Mercury* merely reported that it was 'a model of the house…where the tragedy took place'.[178] Presumably this was a three-dimensional representation of all three storeys of the premises with the corresponding furniture in each room. Significantly, this predates the use of a similar reconstruction by the Metropolitan Police in the trial of Patrick Mahon for the murder of Emily Kaye, three decades later in 1924, which was considered to be unusual at the time and was described in *Reynolds's News* as 'one of the most interesting exhibits ever displayed before a judge and jury'.[179] Even though the exact nature of the model used in the Moyse case is unknown, it further demonstrates the use of innovative techniques by the Liverpool Police in their role as prosecutors.

The plan included in the trial against John Holland for the murder of his son in Manchester in 1886 also contained a description of the route taken by the prisoner and key witnesses. The notes are in the form of a colour-coded timeline, which records the key events including the movements and locations of the police constables and the defendant in detail, such as 'where police constable heard screams from direction of viaduct'. The place where the child's body was found is also marked,[180] the presence of which concurs with Watson's findings also from the 1880s.

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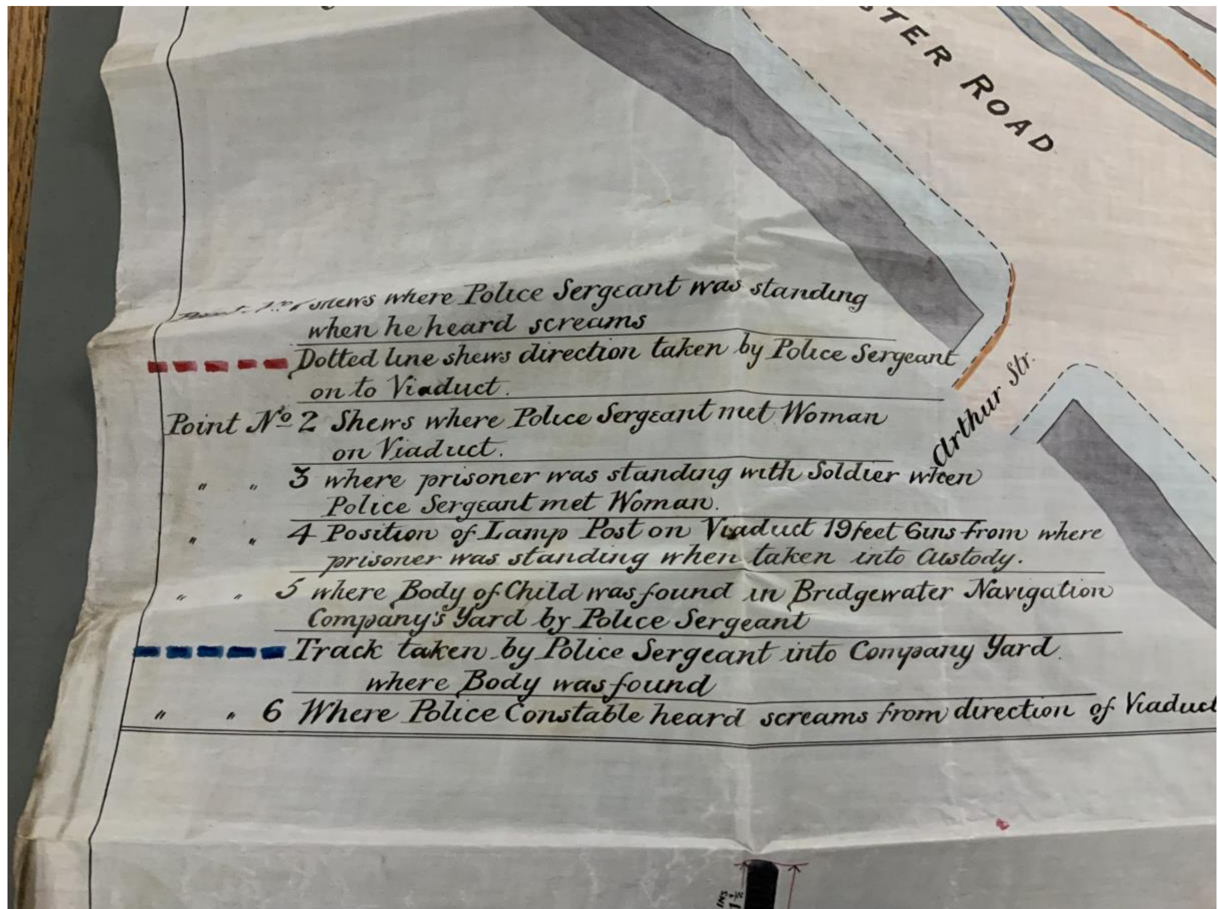
[176] R. v. Miller.
[177] Ibid.
[178] *The Liverpool Mercury*, 17 April 1895, 6.
[179] *Reynolds's News*, 13 July 1924, 11.
[180] TNA, ASSI 52/8, Regina v. Holland, Manchester, 1886.

Figure 5.11. Timeline of events leading to the murder of William Holland, Manchester, 1886.



Source: TNA, ASSI 52/8, Regina v. Holland, Manchester, 1886. © Crown copyright, 1886. With permission from the National Archives.

The data from the depositions demonstrates that crime scene plans, sketches and models were more routinely used as prosecutorial aids at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the earliest examples dating from the mid-1880s. They were all drawn by professional surveyors who were mostly employed by the city council. The nature of the plans varied considerably, from simple drawings of locations with items of furniture marked, to more sophisticated examples, which used colour-coding, explanations, notes and measurements of key features. Although there is sufficient evidence to support the contention that they were used primarily as visual tools in court, the additional information and notes on some of the crime scene plans suggest that they were used also for

investigative purposes, as posited by Watson, such as measuring the distances between key locations, retracing the route of the defendant and the witnesses, and mapping the crime scene by recording evidence such as bloodstains, albeit in a rudimentary fashion. Thus, it can be argued that the surveyors did not simply depict the scene, but they communicated with the police officers involved in the specific case and then recorded the significant details on the physical representation. In summary, borough detectives used such aids in their role as prosecutors to act as an aide-mémoire for witnesses, to reconstruct the offence for the jury and as an investigative tool.

In addition to crime scene plans, Adam emphasises the importance of photographic evidence in trials, due to its apparent objectivity and the impact of visual representation on a jury.[181] Watson argues that crime scene photographs were quite rare before 1914, and that they centred on the location rather than on the victim, although she adds the caveat that images of any dead bodies may have been removed prior to archiving. Watson concludes that photographing the victim was not standard policing practice at this time.[182] Amy Bell states that crime scene photography was originally intended for use in trials as evidence with authentication by an expert witness, such as the police photographer. She adds that such photographs were examined first by police detectives before their presentation as legal proof in court.[183] Two of the depositions studied contained crime scene photographs.

In the case against William Nicholas for the murder of his wife in 1905, a uniformed officer referred to crime scene photographs in his testimony: 'The dark mark as shown on the floor of photograph "W N 1" appeared to me to be a blood stain'. The photographs have not survived, but the evidence reinforces the contention that photographs were used in court partly as an aide-mémoire for witnesses, and to explain the physical crime scene to the jury, although in this instance the witness's comments are obviously based on conjecture rather

[181] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 27.
[182] Watson, *Medicine*, 205-206.
[183] Amy Bell, "Crime scene photography in England, 1895-1960," *Journal of British Studies* 57, no. 1 (2018): 53-56.

than scientific knowledge.[184] However, the reference to the bloodstain further suggests that this witness attempted to interpret the scene, rather than simply authenticate the evidence and, according to Bell's research, this is a rare example of a police officer commenting on crime scene images in court.[185] In the case against George Broadhead in Birmingham in 1914, photographs were taken of the crime scene, which was the smoking room of the Black Horse public house.

Figure 5.12. Photograph of the crime scene in the murder of Edward Cummings, the Black Horse public house, Birmingham, 1914.

Source: TNA, ASSI 13/44, Rex v. Broadhead, Birmingham, 1914. © Crown copyright, 1914. With permission from the National Archives.

[184] R. v. Nicholas.
[185] Bell, "Photography," 57.

In his testimony Edward Ernest Parrack described himself as ‘photographer to the Birmingham City Police’.[186] However, his occupation is recorded on the 1911 census as ‘detective constable’.[187] This might suggest that Parrack was an early example of amateur photographers who, according to Bell, were recruited into the larger police forces after the First World War.[188] Parrack took four photographs; one of the building’s exterior and three of the smoking room where the crime took place. They are all general images with no obviously incriminating evidence. There are no photographs of the murder weapon, nor of the body.

Although outside the geographical scope of this thesis, the most comprehensive surviving crime scene photographs in the Northern Circuit depositions are from the case against Archibald Norval for the murder of his father in Carlisle in 1910. The papers include eight photographs of the crime scene, mostly comprising the indoor location, which was the basement of the victim’s business premises. There are also photographs of the murder weapon, which was an axe, and of the victim.

[186] R. v. Broadhead.
[187] Census Returns of England and Wales, 1911, Series RG14, Piece 18201, ancestry.co.uk.
[188] Bell, “Photography,” 60.

Figure 5.13. Photograph of murder victim Alexander Norval, taken on 6 November 1910.

Source: TNA, ASSI 52/161, Rex v. Norval, Carlisle, 1910. © Crown copyright, 1910. With permission from the National Archives.

The Carlisle Police engaged the services of Clifford Smithson Vero, a local portrait and general photographer, to take images of the scene. A few hours after the victim was discovered, Vero began by taking two external photographs of the building from different angles on the street. The timely arrival of the photographer may account for the photographing of the body as it had not yet been removed. Of the four photographs taken indoors, three are of the basement, where the murder was believed to have taken place, and one is of a storeroom on another floor. The latter was not annotated, and there is no photographer's statement in the case papers. The basement stairs were photographed from two angles. The image of the axe is of the head only and, although it is in black and white, it is possible to discern what look like bloodstains. Finally, the images of the victim were taken

from the same angle, with one being slightly closer than the other. The photographs were accompanied by detailed plans of the crime scene.[189] Despite the use of these aids, the defendant was acquitted. In the newspaper reports there was a reference to 'an elaborate model' of the crime scene but not to the photographs,[190] which may suggest that the presence of a model was more unusual in court than photographs at this time.

In 1899, the Liverpool head constable reported to the watch committee that the taking of crime scene photographs in murder and arson cases was difficult due to the need for large images, for which the police did not possess a camera of sufficient size and had to resort to borrowing equipment when necessary. He emphasised that large photographs of indoor premises were 'most valuable' for the prosecution and saved costs on the preparation of plans, which were expensive due to being outsourced to surveyors.[191] This indicates that crime scene recording and the creation of prosecutorial aids was a significant cost to borough police forces, which would explain why such techniques were used selectively in specific cases rather than universally.

The concern about the financial impact, especially of photographing outdoor crime locations was shared by the Metropolitan Police. In 1902, New Scotland Yard reported that their current camera was only useful for copying and enlarging in relation to suspect identification, and that they required a hand or 'snap shot' camera for use in external locations, such as in the street or inside houses, which would be 'a valuable aid in the detection and investigation of crime'. They added that when photographs were needed of the exterior or interior of a building, they had to borrow a camera with a stand and two lenses, including a wide angle one for indoor shots. This demonstrates the need for a different kind of camera for crime investigation, including homicide cases, and reveals the complicated nature and costs of crime scene photography which may have been factors in the outsourcing of this scientific aid to professional photographers.[192] Bell further confirms the

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[189] TNA, ASSI 52/161, Rex v. Norval, Carlisle, 1910.
[190] *The Lancashire Evening Post*, 26 January 1911, 3.
[191] LRO, 352 POL/2/16, Head Constable, 28 November 1899.
[192] TNA, 2/575, Metropolitan Police report on photography cameras needed, 10 November 1902.

requirement for police photographers to possess up-to-date knowledge about equipment and techniques.[193]

In summary, the lack of use of crime scene photography by borough police forces prior to 1914, may be explained by the high cost of equipment and the expense of using professional photographers due to the lack of requisite skills within the force. However, it is notable that some borough forces, such as the Birmingham Police, engaged a police photographer from the ranks, which challenges Bell's assertion that early crime scene photographs were outsourced.[194] When Birmingham City's first photographic studio opened in 1891, PC Arthur Llewelyn Davies assumed responsibility for photographing prisoners and compiling the statistical returns. A former clerk, he had joined the police four years earlier.[195] Davies was succeeded by Edward Parrack, who was originally a house painter, and had entered the force in 1892. In 1911, he was promoted due to his 'skill and attention to his duties as photographer'.[196] These appointments would have significantly reduced the cost of photography for criminal records and crime scene examination. However, as seen in Figures 5.12 and 5.13, it is possible that in-house practitioners were not necessarily as skilled as professional photographers in recording the details of a crime scene. Despite the challenges of cost and expertise, the use of crime scene photographs in homicide cases is a further example of the variability in practice between borough police forces and it reveals the pragmatic and innovative approach of Birmingham Police in this area.

5.4. Conclusion

The findings of the 1939 Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure indicated that the application of scientific policing, particularly in homicide cases, was a

[193] Bell, "Photography," 68.
[194] Ibid., 58.
[195] WMPM, Police Files and Ledgers, West Midlands, Personnel Records Part 3, 152. Accessed at www.ancestry.co.uk as West Midlands Police Files and Ledgers, 1850-1950.
[196] Ibid., Personnel Records Part 1, 238.

relatively new development. However, this study reveals that during the Victorian and Edwardian periods forensic techniques were gradually introduced into and adopted by the borough police with some forces, such as the Liverpool Police, developing innovative and systematic investigative processes. The qualitative analysis of the depositions demonstrated that regional detective officers relied on traditional detection skills and strategies, such as making inquiries and using informants. Yet, there is clear evidence of change in detective behaviour and marked developments in the use of forensic science, which led to a more ‘blended’ approach to the investigation of murder, whereby individual detectives deployed a range of strategies depending on the gravity of the case and the availability of new techniques. This contributed to the professionalisation of detective practice.

Although homicides were investigated by both uniformed and detective officers, often without a clear demarcation between their roles, a pattern emerges of detectives formally assuming responsibility for murder cases, often on the instructions of the senior management after preliminary inquiries had been undertaken by their colleagues in uniform. Moreover, although the details were not usually recorded in the watch committee minutes, there was a gradual formalisation of procedures relating to homicide cases, with detectives overseeing the management and processing of suspects and coordinating external experts and providers involved in the judicial process, much of which took place in the central location of the detective office.

The data confirms that, during the earliest decades of regional policing, homicide investigations were based on witness information, inquiries and searches of suspects and their accommodation. However, there are examples of crime scene examination from the 1860s, including some notable cases which comprised evidence collection, preservation and chemical analysis. From the 1870s, there is substantial evidence of detectives examining crime scenes more methodically and displaying superior skills to those of their uniformed counterparts. During this period chemical analysis became a more regular feature of homicide investigations, with blood analysis being undertaken in the sampled depositions for the first time in 1879, even though there was no test for human blood available. From the

earliest use of forensic science in homicide investigations, even though the new techniques were applied by experts such as chemical analysts, the detectives were the main facilitators for the scientific processes as they collected, preserved and transported evidence from the scene, and engaged the services of external providers. At the same time, detective officers developed their prosecutorial role through the increased use of visual aids in court, such as crime scene plans, the earliest of which in the case papers date from the 1880s, although these were not integral to all homicide investigations throughout the period under study.

By the early decades of the twentieth century, methodical examination of a crime scene was more commonplace and was used as one of the principal methods of collecting evidence. Moreover, there was increased use of forensic techniques by detectives, especially in court, such as blood analysis and crime scene photographs and plans, the latter of which were also used as investigative tools. Several cases towards the end of the period demonstrate the deployment of multiple investigative strategies, such as in the R. v. Miller case in 1895, in which detectives examined the crime scene, organised an identity parade and commissioned blood analysis and the drawing of crime scene sketches.

This study reveals that regional police detectives became increasingly competent at crime investigation in relation to homicide cases throughout the period under study. Although the evolution is not consistently linear, it shows that from the earliest decades of detective policing, officers used methods in addition to those associated with traditional policing. Moreover, the 1870s marks a shift in detective practice towards the deployment of a wider range of investigative strategies. This could be due to multiple factors, such as the continued professionalisation of detective departments and their officers, innovative leadership by key head constables, as was the case in the Liverpool Police, and the increasing availability of forensic techniques, such as chemical analysis and crime scene photography. However, it is clear that individual detectives were influenced by the nature of specific homicide cases. For example, although there was only one poisoning case in the depositions, it offers compelling evidence of crime scene examination and evidence preservation as early as 1860. Furthermore, detectives selected techniques according to the circumstances of the alleged

crime, such as depending on whether the suspect was known to the victim or whether they were arrested at the scene. This contradicts the suggestion in the police historiography that Victorian and Edwardian detectives were slow to adapt to technological change but rather demonstrates that they deployed investigative tools appropriate to individual homicide cases.

Although investigative methods remained rudimentary in many of the depositions, the evidence of more sophisticated and multifaceted investigations, especially later in the period, indicates an overall development in detective technique, particularly in relation to homicide cases. These findings support those of Chapter 4 in that they are further evidence of detectives adapting their practices and adopting a pragmatic approach to individual cases where necessary, rather than working entirely by trial and error. As highlighted in the historiography, their progress in scientific policing was hampered by several factors, including a lack of funding either from their respective watch committees or from central government. Furthermore, any initiatives in crime detection instigated by the Metropolitan Police and supported by the Home Secretary were not made statutory and therefore regional police forces were not required to comply. This autonomy at a local level, as well as individual detectives' skills and experience, also contributes to the variability of practice between the three borough forces. However, despite the lack of access to scientific methods, there is evidence of innovation in the detectives' dual role as investigators and prosecutors, especially in reference to the Liverpool and Birmingham Police forces.

As highlighted in the historiography, significant progress was made in the development of scientific policing in the 1930s. The Metropolitan Police Laboratory opened in 1935 with similar innovations in regional forces, such as in the Bradford Police.[197] The West Midlands Forensic Science Laboratory was established in Birmingham in 1938.[198]

According to Adam, regional forensic laboratories 'generally fared better than the Met', although they were initially run privately and later encountered difficulties on being

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[197] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 124-125.
[198] Reilly, *Policing Birmingham*, 125.

incorporated into national services.[199] The first instructional pamphlet for police officers on using scientific aids in crime investigation and crime scene management was published in 1936 and circulated to all investigating police officers in England and Wales which, according to Burney and Pemberton, demonstrates the extent to which forensic science had become established in detective policing by this time.[200] As Adam observes, it was the professionalisation of the detective police which led to these groundbreaking developments.[201]

Finally, the disparity between the availability of surviving case papers renders it difficult to achieve a comprehensive overview of the evolution of investigative practice in homicide cases. For this reason, it would be valuable to extend this study to other borough detective departments to compare methods on a wider scale. Moreover, this chapter provides a sound starting point for further research into the use of forensic science in detective policing and the detective police's role as prosecutors.

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[199] Ibid., 136.
[200] Burney and Pemberton, *Murder,* 125.
[201] Adam, *Forensic Science*, 147.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: The Science of Sleuthing

As Detective Jerome Caminada of the Manchester City Police neared the end of his service in the force, he was praised in *The Police Review and Parade Gossip* as having had 'one of the most remarkable and eventful careers it would be possible to find in the annals of the Police.'[1] Yet, like many other regional police detectives, over a century later his contribution to investigative policing has been mostly forgotten, eclipsed in part by the enduring interest in the detective officers of Scotland Yard, such as Detective Inspector Charles Frederick Field, whose sleuthing activities were immortalised by Charles Dickens.[2] This thesis fills the gap in the police history narrative and in the public awareness of Victorian and Edwardian detectives by providing new insights into the lives and work of those police detectives who operated outside the capital throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and who have been 'hiding in plain sight' ever since.

Through a comparative study of the borough detective departments of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, and based on primary sources such as watch committee minutes, governmental commission reports and police records, this study provides a detailed analysis of how Victorian and Edwardian detectives developed their investigative practice. It covers the key themes of the organisation and management of detective departments, detective recruitment, training and deployment, and the evolution of investigative practice, including the adoption and use of scientific tools, which became increasingly available during the period under study. The findings challenge the assumption of crime historians that regional investigative policing was somewhat rudimentary, slow to adapt to change and

[1] *The Police Review and Parade Gossip*, 28 January 1898, 42-43.
[2] Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, eds., Introduction to *Police Detectives in History,1750-1950* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), 7-8.

based solely on experimentation. It demonstrates that, from the earliest days of the new police, many regional detective officers were capable, professional and able to adapt to the challenges they faced in tackling crime in their communities.

This concluding chapter summarises the key findings and highlights the recurring themes relating to historical detective practice. It reflects on the multifaceted and changing role of police detectives throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as they adapted to local and national crime cases, government legislation and guidance, and advances in technology and forensic science, and assesses the impact of these factors on their practice. Finally, it proposes areas for further study based on the solid foundation of this thesis.

6.1. Key findings

As recognised by police historians such as Haia Shpayer-Makov,[3] little has been published on the history of regional police detective departments either within more general police histories or as discrete studies, to the extent that the date of creation of some regional detective units was hitherto unknown. This omission was addressed in Chapter 2, with an overview of regional policing and a detailed account of each borough police force and their respective detective department in relation to their local environment and their organisational structure and management. This established the history of the detective departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham for the first time, highlighting key points of change, as well as providing a firm context for the thesis.

The evidence confirmed that the formation of borough detective departments was concomitant with the creation of Scotland Yard, as posited by Shpayer-Makov,[4] but it also revealed that Manchester's detective department predated that of the Metropolitan Police by

[3] Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9-10.
[4] Ibid., 44.

three years. As evidenced in the thesis, borough detective departments were individual and unique units, managed by their respective watch committee and their appointed head constable. The watch committees were autonomous and committee members were free to manage policing matters in their local community as they saw fit. They were not required to comply with government guidance on policing, and legislation was often vague in reference to specific police actions. There was some attention paid to the borough detective departments in the annual reports of the Inspectors of Constabulary, but this was inconsistent and often superficial.

The impact of this decentralised approach was variable, and the efficiency of specific detective departments and their personnel depended on the interests and abilities of the watch committee and, most importantly, of the head constable. Firstly, this research confirmed that detective activities were influenced, and often restricted, by finances. Funded by a levy on local taxpayers, watch committees had a fiscal responsibility for their whole force, as well as being accountable to their local community. This resulted in fluctuations in the recruitment of detective officers and the provision of equipment, which had a direct impact on investigative practice.

The primary sources showed that, although watch committees had some active involvement in their detective departments, such as initiating subcommittee inquiries, they were mostly preoccupied by their management of the force as a whole. Secondly, the study indicates that, whilst the head officer was instrumental in the development of detective practice, his influence was also inconsistent. Through an examination of the performance of individual head constables from all three police forces, it was clear that there was no obvious correlation between head constables with either policing or military experience, or both, and their impact on crime investigation. Also, despite a key change in Liverpool and Manchester Police forces to recruit more educated chief officers with a wider range of experience and expertise, their involvement in and influence on crime investigation remained variable and depended on the head officer’s interest and commitment, with the most active senior officers focusing more on organisational change than on the nature and evolution of detective

practice. However, although the factors affecting the development of individual borough detective departments were complex and unique, the borough police forces of Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham formed effective and fully-functioning detective departments from their inception.

With the history of regional policing firmly established, the roles, daily operations and working lives of borough detective officers were examined in more detail in Chapter 3. Extending the theme of organisational structure, the rank of detective superintendent emerged as a key role in the day-to-day running of the detective department, which had a significant impact on crime investigation. In all three boroughs, the detective superintendent not only managed the administration of the detective department, but also oversaw criminal investigations. He implemented routine procedures, such as the recording of crimes committed in the borough and selected appropriate investigators for specific cases. In addition, he advised and monitored the detectives in their daily investigative work, as well as preparing evidence for presentation in court. In contrast to the Metropolitan Police, this multifaceted role existed in all three borough police forces from their earliest years of policing, and it was integral to the efficiency of their respective detective teams. Moreover, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the duties of the detective superintendent were combined with those of the deputy constable. Although this was not consistently applied in all borough police forces and throughout the whole period, this emphasises the importance of this dual role, as well as highlighting the increasing importance of crime detection over prevention. As with the appointment of head constables, there is also evidence of a change in the selection process for the rank of detective superintendent, with some appointments being made externally and later candidates being more highly educated than their predecessors.

Also in Chapter 3, the number of detective officers in each borough police force was computed for the first time. This was followed by an examination of the role of divisional detectives, who had been in existence since before the creation of the new police. Although the delineation between their role and that of central detective officers remains unclear, as

they were often interchangeable, this study added to the ongoing discussion of this complex topic by showing that divisional officers became more integrated into the work of the main investigators throughout the period; and their role was increasingly formalised as they supported their colleagues in the detective office.

The professionalisation of all ranks of detective officers was traced throughout this chapter, demonstrating that, although recruitment remained internal, selection processes were formalised, focused and applied consistently within individual police forces, depending on the criteria and practices set by the management. Newly-appointed detective officers followed a set course of training which, although somewhat informal in nature, was monitored and regulated within the detective department. Usually, there was a period of probation which new recruits were required to pass. Furthermore, officers with specialist capabilities, such as foreign language skills, were recruited externally for the specific role of interpreter. This was particularly the case in Liverpool where, as a seaport, some witnesses were not native English speakers and required interpretation. All police officers in the three borough forces, including detective staff, had access to police reading rooms and, later in the period, to educational programmes, which increased their general knowledge and skills.

In addition to their investigative role, detectives undertook a range of other duties which contributed to the work of the detective department and of the local courts. Some were also created in response to changes in legislation. Ancillary roles, such as clerks, were undertaken by civilian staff but these often became integrated with police work, with some clerks assuming detective duties.

In summary, Chapter 3 presented new evidence to demonstrate the formal and professional nature of detective departments in their management structure, procedures, staff and investigative function which, together with the previous chapter, completed a thorough examination of the multilayered context for the study of the investigative practice in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4 addressed the principal theme of the evolution of investigative technique, which had been hitherto described by police historians as unsophisticated, slow to change

and based on trial and error. However, the findings of this study challenged this assumption. Firstly, the study established that borough detective officers investigated all types of offences. Despite their low numbers, they played a leading role in crime detection, with the support and assistance of their uniformed colleagues, with the latter mostly confined to investigating potential offences that they encountered on their beat.

Secondly, the analysis of watch committee minutes and police records confirmed the general consensus among police historians that investigative practice relied mostly on more traditional detection methods, such as surveillance and information gathering. However, it was clear that these strategies were discussed formally at management level, with individual head constables holding strong views on their officers' conduct whilst undertaking such activities. Moreover, the local knowledge acquired by detective officers was highly valued as a key investigative tool by other constabularies and, as demonstrated, had a positive impact on crime detection outside their jurisdiction through interforce collaboration.

The second part of Chapter 4 was devoted to an analysis of data collection and retrieval, in response to changes in legislation throughout the 1870s which led to greater centralisation of criminal records. The archival evidence showed that the response of individual borough forces varied, especially due to the complicated relationship with the local prison authorities, who were legally required to compile the records, and to whom the police had to apply for information. In addition, some police forces, such as Liverpool and Birmingham, developed their own innovative registers to record habitual offenders. This resulted in multiple sets of records which sometimes impeded collaboration. The study found that centralisation of criminal records later in the nineteenth century did not necessarily lead to greater engagement with regional detective departments, who tended to rely on their own registers and own initiatives.

Similarly, the use of other technologies, such as photography, was also inconsistent. The provision of equipment was influenced by financial concerns and there were regional variations in the deployment of technical skills either from within the force or through external procurement. There was some evidence of experimentation with the advanced identification

method of fingerprinting, but it was not undertaken in the three police forces under study within the time frame.

Although there were variations in investigative practice, due to several mitigating factors, the study concluded that the development was not haphazard, as suggested in the police historiography. Each borough detective department evolved according to the direct or indirect management of their watch committee and head officer. Detective officers adapted to the challenges presented by specific criminal cases and even shared good practice with other constabularies. The evidence confirms that they were generally professional, pragmatic and able to adapt to changing circumstances.

This key theme was studied in more detail in Chapter 5, which focused on investigative practice in relation to homicide. Through an analysis of assize records, it assessed the methods and procedures used in murder cases, including scientific policing techniques. This expanded on the findings of the previous chapter. Based on the first-hand court testimonies of detective officers, it was found that regional detective departments established specific processes for the investigation of this serious offence. The detective office was the central hub for operations and formal procedures were implemented for the processing and interviewing of suspects, and for the collection, preservation and preparation of evidence. It was clear that detective officers mostly led the investigations into homicide cases under the supervision of the detective superintendent and assisted by uniformed officers where appropriate.

Although there was no official guidance on crime scene preservation available to police detectives until the first decades of the twentieth century, there was evidence of individual officers collecting and preserving trace evidence, such as poisonous substances and blood, from the mid-nineteenth century. There were some formal safekeeping procedures in place in detective departments, such as the labelling of evidence. In several of the cases studied, blood was analysed by external experts, and this was used with varying degrees of success in court. Crime scene maps, plans and drawings were commissioned for

the prosecutorial process but, as the study revealed, they also had an investigative purpose, which reinforces the dual role of the detective police as investigators and prosecutors.

The study of court records demonstrated that detectives used a range of investigative tools in murder cases, including more traditional methods, such as information gathering and surveillance, but also some scientific techniques, including blood analysis, although these were still in their infancy. Rather than working on the basis of trial and error, it is clear that in relation to homicide, borough detectives selected the appropriate investigative tools for specific cases. They employed a range of strategies, using scientific techniques where appropriate. Throughout the period under study, the investigation of homicide became increasingly formalised, methodical and professional. At the same time, the complex role of detective officers as crime scene investigators, facilitators and prosecutors continued to evolve within the confines of their organisational structure, budgetary constraints, legal responsibilities and the availability of new forensic science techniques.

6.1.1. Key concepts

The key concepts of 'professionalism', 'effective' and 'scientific policing' have been used as points of reference throughout the thesis, supported by evidence from the primary sources. 'Professionalism' can be described as the skills, competence and behaviour expected of an individual within the framework of the organisation for which they work. Barry S. Godfrey, Paul Lawrence and Chris A. Williams use professionalism as the differentiator between the old and the new police.[5] This thesis has demonstrated that borough police detective departments and individual investigators became increasingly professional throughout the period under study. As detailed in Chapter 2, procedures and protocols, such as the processing of suspects and the collection and preservation of evidence, were implemented and developed in the detective office. Investigative practices, such as information gathering

[5] Barry S. Godfrey, Paul Lawrence & Chris A. Williams, *History & Crime*: *Key Approaches to Criminology* (London: SAGE Publications, 2008), 57.

(see Section 4.1.2), were refined and standardised following discussions between the head constable and the watch committee. Detectives were selected and promoted based on their performance, rather than on the length of their service (see Section 3.2.1), and training, albeit only semi-formalised, was introduced from the earliest years of the borough police (see Section 3.2.2). This led to the increased competence and professionalism of detectives, as noted by Shpayer-Makov: 'detectives developed a proficiency that set them apart from amateurs and endowed them with a socially recognized expertise'.[6]

The difficulties of assessing the effectiveness of detective departments and detectives were discussed in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.2.1), especially due to limited and inaccurate arrest and conviction data. However, 'effective' practitioners were those who met the professional standards set by their respective police force and which were expected by their profession. They fulfilled the role and functions of a detective officer, as examined in Chapter 4, which were primarily to obtain intelligence and evidence about crimes committed, to trace and arrest suspects, and to bring a case against them in court. Although it is hard to judge an individual detective's performance on the outcome of the judicial process, which is affected by multiple complex factors, there were however a small number of named detective officers in each borough police force who formed an elite group of investigators and who were considered by their superiors to be the most effective. These individuals, such as William Cozens in Liverpool, were deployed on the most complex and often high-profile criminal cases. They were also given additional responsibilities and duties (see Section 3.3.1) and were promoted through the detective ranks. Moreover, the effectiveness of these individual detectives is demonstrated through their use of specific investigative strategies and their acquisition and development of new methods, such as crime scene examination (see Section 5.2.1).

Finally, 'scientific policing' is the use of scientific techniques for the detection and investigation of crime. This thesis has revealed that Victorian and Edwardian detectives

[6] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 299-300.

gradually acquired and applied new scientific methods throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As examined predominantly in Chapter 5, these included photography, the casting of footprints, chemical analysis and toxicology, and fingerprinting.

6.2. Summary and recommendations

This thesis has established that regional detective officers were organised into formal units within their respective detective departments from the earliest years of new policing. They were based on a hierarchical structure within the wider police force and were managed by the watch committee through their appointed head constable. However, within that context, detective departments were to a certain extent autonomous in their daily operations and investigative functions, in that the detective superintendent was mostly free to run the detective department as he saw fit, without much direct interference from the management, and often in close collaboration with the head constable. Although detective matters were discussed by the watch committee, they tended to focus on organisational and financial matters rather than on the nature and efficiency of investigative practice.

The study revealed that the detective superintendent was the key role within the organisational structure of the detective department. He acted as the office manager as well as overseeing detective activities, such as selecting individual officers to investigate specific crime cases. As the linchpin of detective operations, he also liaised with his immediate superior and the courts. In some borough forces, the detective superintendent's role and duties became more formalised through its merging with that of deputy head constable. This signifies the importance of the detective department, which in turns suggests that crime detection was increasingly prioritised over prevention. Despite the focus of borough police forces on crime investigation throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, this study has found that, in the majority of published police histories, the emphasis has remained on uniformed officers and their role in crime prevention. The rank and function of the detective

superintendent has been largely omitted and yet, as demonstrated in this thesis, it was integral to the evolution of detective practice.

It is clear from the evidence that the detective department played a key role in crime investigation as the central hub from which all investigative operations were managed. From their inception, there were established procedures for the daily activities of following up information about alleged crimes, questioning suspects and preserving evidence in preparation for court. As shown, the borough detective departments under study were generally efficient and proactive with clear organisational structures and formalised processes. Moreover, they were able to continue functioning efficiently despite the financial restrictions imposed on them. They were also capable of initiating their own innovations, such as the use of police dogs in Liverpool, the development of detective patrolling in Manchester and the creation of the tattoo register in Birmingham. Watch committees and head constables assessed the performance of the detective department when relevant, and changes were implemented when required.

Despite the relatively low numbers of detective police officers, compared to those in uniform, the impact of the borough detective departments on policing the local community was considerable. It confirms Shpayer-Makov's statement that their role was 'considerably greater than the sum of its tasks'.[7] This is further supported by evidence of borough detectives regularly collaborating with other forces to tackle crime outside their jurisdiction. It is notable that borough head constables shared the functions and experience of their detective departments with the departmental commission into the detective force of the Metropolitan Police in 1877, and that many of their processes were adopted. This shows that borough detective departments made a significant contribution to the development of detective policing nationally. Although their progress was not consistent, linear or always rapid in pace, the officers of the borough detective departments were constantly active and

[7] Shpayer-Makov, *Ascent,* 1.

mostly open to adopting new ideas, techniques and, later in the period of study, new scientific methods.

This study also highlighted the factors affecting the development of detective departments and their investigative practices. The most influential factor was found to be financial constraints, as the watch committee sanctioned the recruitment and retention of detective officers. Within this, they had to take into consideration the needs of the entire force, which included decisions about total police strength, uniforms and equipment, working hours and regular duties such as beat patrolling. In addition, as the watch committees were funded by local taxpayers, they were required to respond to concerns by the borough council and in the local community when making decisions about spending. The impact of this for the detective departments could result in understaffing, sudden shifts in personnel and a lack of equipment, such as for photographing offenders.

The work of the detective departments was also affected by legislative change, in that this could increase the duties of detective officers, such as in relation to the licensing laws and in the control of habitual criminals. Moreover, the delineation between the police and other local authorities, such as the prisons, was not always clear and could add further complications to already complex working relationships. However, the wider factor which may have had the most significant influence on regional detective policing and may explain in part the rather dismissive attitudes of previous police research, especially in relation to their adoption of scientific policing, is that the guidance issued by central government was often vague and generally non-statutory. Therefore, borough police forces were not required to comply. This contributed to the variation in practice, which has been interpreted as weakness in comparison to the Metropolitan Police, which was under the direct control of the Home Secretary. Despite the non-obligatory nature of central guidelines and directives, it is evident that detective departments considered and discussed government initiatives. Consequently, they often combined the official advice with their own practice, thus adapting the guidance to suit their own needs and those of their local community.

Within the multilayered context of regional policing and borough detective departments, individual detective officers became more experienced, innovative and professional throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From the beginning of their existence, detective officers undertook a wide range of roles, duties and activities in their dual function as investigators and prosecutors. Although they were generally appointed from within the uniformed ranks, individual head constables had their own criteria for recruitment to the detective department. Each borough police force had its own procedures for selection, with a semi-formal programme of training and a defined period of probation. Although these processes were often flexible and senior officers responded differently to individual candidates for detective work, they were more formalised than presented in the police historiography. It is evident from the watch committee records that head constables and detective superintendents were fully aware of the abilities and characteristics of the officers in the detective department, who were selected for duties and specific cases on the basis of their experience and expertise.

Many borough detectives were adaptable, capable and able to learn from their experiences as investigators. Some developed specialist skills, which were deployed for specific offences, such as arson or homicide. The most experienced were able to coordinate and manage complex crime cases, in which they communicated and collaborated with a number of external experts, such as chemists, public analysts and photographers, as well as working with other police officers from outside their own force. They had regular opportunities to improve their basic skills through educational programmes and their occupational performance was carefully monitored by senior management.

The development of the abilities and professionalism of borough detective officers had a significant impact on investigative practice, which evolved gradually throughout the period under study. Although police detectives continued to rely on more traditional methods of crime detection, such as surveillance and information gathering, they extended their skills and techniques where necessary and adopted the strategies based on the advances in forensic science which were available to them, and as they saw fit.

In summary, the evolution of detective practice in the borough police forces throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods was not solely based on experimentation, as suggested in the police historiography. As demonstrated in this study, the evolution of regional detective policing was more complex. The borough detective departments implemented and developed clear and efficient processes for the management of their investigative work. Individual detective officers used their knowledge and experience to apply the most appropriate investigative tools to specific criminal cases, albeit not always successfully, and they adopted new scientific techniques where relevant. Throughout the period under study, borough police detectives developed their multifarious role as knowledge workers, facilitators, administrators and investigators, which led to the professionalisation of detective policing and the foundations of modern practices.

This thesis is a substantial first step in filling the gap identified by police historians and in response to the call for further research into the occupational lives and work of regional detective officers. It offers a detailed and comprehensive study of the investigative operations of the Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham detective departments throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods. For the first time, this study provides insight into the hidden history of borough police detectives, which has been largely overlooked in the general police historiography. As such, it is a firm foundation for opportunities for further research into this fascinating and important topic.

Using this study as a template, the geographical scope could be widened by further comparative studies of borough detective departments and their evolution throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It would be particularly interesting to compare borough detective work with that of the county forces and of the Metropolitan Police, especially in relation to detective numbers, recruitment and training, detective roles and investigative practice. Given that county forces, the City of London and the Metropolitan Police had different organisational and management structures to those of the borough forces, a comparison of their detective departments would provide valuable insight into the similarities and differences between the different types of constabulary.

In addition, the scope of this research could be expanded to an examination of earlier pre-Victorian police detectives by studying the modus operandi of thief-takers and of the police officers who assumed plain-clothes duties before the inception of the new police. It would also be beneficial to extend the time frame of this thesis by an assessment of investigative police practice beyond 1914, especially in the interwar years during which time many practices were formalised, and forensic science techniques were increasingly adopted. Other related topics for additional research based on this project could include more analysis of the factors which influenced detective policing, such as local financing, management, the role of national government and the impact of local community. These could also contribute to interdisciplinary studies, with links to politics, governance and society.

Furthermore, the broader themes highlighted in this thesis could be developed, such as the relationship between divisional and central detectives, or between uniformed officers and those in plain clothes. More wide-ranging subjects for future research based on the findings of this study could include the contribution of regional detectives to national policing initiatives such as the investigation into Fenian activities. A study of detective conduct and monitoring, in the light of accusations of corruption throughout the period under study, would also be beneficial.

There is scope for more research into detective practice, including the traditional skills of surveillance, knowledge gathering and observation, and into the acquisition and use of scientific techniques, such as blood and trace evidence analysis. As this study has focused on the investigation of homicide cases, other offences would also merit academic attention. An examination of detective practice in relation to an offence such as theft, for example, would enhance the work of historians such as David Churchill's research on crime control.

Finally, case studies of key figures in regional detective policing, such as Inspector William Cozens of the Liverpool Police or Chief Superintendent George Glossop of the Birmingham Police, based on biographical information, their police career and their investigative practice, would be valuable. This would provide further information about the

working lives, practices and behaviours of borough detective police officers. It would also make a significant contribution to current ‘history from below’ research into the lives of working people, especially as the outstanding achievements of these individuals have been largely forgotten, and their personal histories remain untold.

6.3. Original contribution

Based on a detailed analysis of a range of primary sources, including borough watch committee minutes, police records and parliamentary papers, this comprehensive study provides an original insight into the occupational lives of Victorian and Edwardian police detectives and the evolution of their investigative practice. This fills a substantial and well-acknowledged gap in the existing historiography. For the first time, the study has compiled histories of each of the borough detective departments in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, which had not been fully presented in local history publications relating to each force. This included the creation of the respective borough detective departments and the discovery that the establishment of the Manchester detective force predated that of the Metropolitan Police.

The project has traced the development of the three borough detective departments through the period under study, which included a calculation of the number of detective officers for the first time and an exposé of the processes and procedures formally implemented in the detective office, which was a central hub for investigative operations in all three constabularies. The study comprised a unique examination of the detective office personnel, including ancillary roles such as clerks. It also highlighted the prominent and important role of the detective superintendent as an administrator and investigator, which had not featured to date in previous academic research into policing.

The findings complement and enhance the groundbreaking work of police historians such as Haia Shpayer-Makov and Clive Emsley, particularly in relation to detective

recruitment, selection, training, probation and occupational life, by extending their research beyond the confines of Scotland Yard. Moreover, additional evidence was added to the ongoing discussion within the police historiography on the role of divisional and central detectives, and on the interaction between uniformed and plain-clothes officers, to which this study makes a valuable contribution, particularly through its focus on the investigation of homicide.

In addition, this thesis has presented a thorough examination of the deployment of detective officers and the development of their detective skills. It has argued that the blending of traditional strategies, such as information gathering and surveillance, with more innovative methods, including crime scene examination and blood analysis, is evidence of the professionalisation of regional detective practice, rather than being solely based on trial and error. The study of detective testimonies in murder cases in Chapter 5 offers further insight into how police investigators managed serious crime such as homicide, including the examination of the crime scene, collection and preservation of evidence, and the tracking and processing of suspects.

Although progress in relation to investigative practice was inconsistent, non-linear and, to a certain extent, based on speculative decision-making, for the first time, this thesis charts the evolution of regional detective practice within a wider context of external factors, such as local management by watch committees and head constables, and in response to local and national crimes, legislative change and government guidance. It has assessed the impact of these factors on the evolution of crime detection and highlighted the challenges, such as financial constraints. Within its multilayered context and complex environment, this thesis has clearly shown how borough police detectives investigated crime throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and how they adapted to specific situations, including individual criminal cases, the use of investigative strategies and the adoption of emerging scientific techniques. This forms a blueprint for future studies in this field.

In conclusion, this project has revealed that the police detectives in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were both reactive and proactive in the development of their

sleuthing skills. The most successful practitioners were capable and discerning. They were able to adapt to challenges in their daily work and acquire new skills. Regional detectives were knowledgeable about their local community and the strategies needed to bring potential offenders to justice, even though their efforts were not always successful. Victorian and Edwardian detective departments were collaborative, introspective and regularly discussed aspects of their investigative work in the search for improvement, with some initiation of new and innovative practice.

The evidence presented in this thesis exposes the modus operandi of the borough detective police for the first time and demonstrates that their investigative practice became increasingly formalised and professional throughout the first eight decades of their existence, which formed the basis for modern detective policing. This original research not only contributes to previous academic work but also presents an account of Victorian and Edwardian detectives and their sleuthing skills for the public domain, finally uncovering the fascinating histories of these early regional investigators, like Detective Caminada, who have been hidden from sight for more than a century.

Appendix A

Timeline of events in borough detective history, 1836-1914

1839 *The First Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Best Means of Establishing an Efficient Constabulary Force in the Counties of England and Wales*, emphasised the failure of crime detection in local constabularies.

1839 Creation of Manchester borough detective department.

1842 Creation of the detective department of the Metropolitan Police at Scotland Yard.

1842 Creation of Birmingham borough detective department.

1842 Policing of Manchester, Birmingham and Bolton returned to local control under the respective watch committees.

1845 Creation of Liverpool borough detective department.

1853 The Select Committee on Police reported that detection had had a positive impact on prevention in the counties which had adopted a professional police force but it highlighted a lack of cooperation between county and borough police.

1856 The Inspectorate of Constabulary was established, which included references to detective policing in its annual reports.

1877 The Departmental Commission into the state, discipline, and organisation of the detective force of the Metropolitan Police was initiated following the Turf Fraud Scandal. Reports on detective policing were given by regional head constables.

1878 The creation of the CID, Metropolitan Police following the departmental commission.

1880 The Convict Supervision Office was established to supervise released convicts and circulate criminal records.

1881 The Habitual Criminals Register was transferred to the Metropolitan Police.

1881 The first edition of Howard Vincent's *Police Code* was published.

1883 The editorship of *Police Gazette* was transferred to the Metropolitan Police.

1883 The creation of the Metropolitan Police CID Special Irish Branch (later known as Special Branch).

1894 Bertillon's anthropometric system was adopted at Scotland Yard.

1901 The Fingerprint Bureau and Criminal Records Office was formed at Scotland Yard.

Appendix B

Key statutes affecting borough detective departments, 1835-1914

1835 The Municipal Corporations Act (5 & 6 Will IV c.76) enabled boroughs to form watch committees.

1853 The Penal Servitude Act (16 & 17 Vict c.99) initiated the ticket-of-leave system and police supervision of convicts.

1856 The County and Borough Police Act (19 & 20 Vict c.69) required all boroughs and counties in England and Wales to form a police force.

1861 The new regulations of the Old Metal Dealers Act (24 & 25 Vict c. 110) led to detective officers undertaking responsibility for regulating the sale of second-hand metal.

1869 The Habitual Criminals Act (32 & 33 Vict c.99) established a central register of convicts.

1871 The Prevention of Crime Act (34 & 35 Vict c.112) required convicts released on licence to report regularly to their local police station. Photographs were also added to criminal records.

1876 The Prevention of Crimes Amendment Act (39 & 40 Vict c. 23) changed the criteria for inclusion of offenders on the central register.

1877 The Prisons Act (40 & 41 Vict c.21) transferred the control of prisons to the Home Office. They had previously been managed by local authorities.

1879 The Habitual Drunkards Act (41 & 41 Vict c. 19) tightened restrictions for public houses, which were monitored by detective police officers.

1888 The Local Government Act (51 & 52 Vict c.41) replaced the management of county forces by magistrates with standing joint committees comprising magistrates and city council members.

1891 The Penal Servitude Act (54 & 55 Vict c. 69) sought to improve criminal records through photography and physical measurements.

1902 Following the Licensing Act (2 Edw VII c.28), the Home Secretary issued new regulations regarding habitual drunkards, which led to increased monitoring and record keeping.

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