

# SOUTHAM BOBBIES

Policing in Southam since the 1800s



14 January – 19 May 2020  
Open 10am – 12noon  
Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays  
or by appointment

At Tithe Place,  
High Street, Southam CV47 0HB  
southamheritage@hotmail.com  
01926 613503



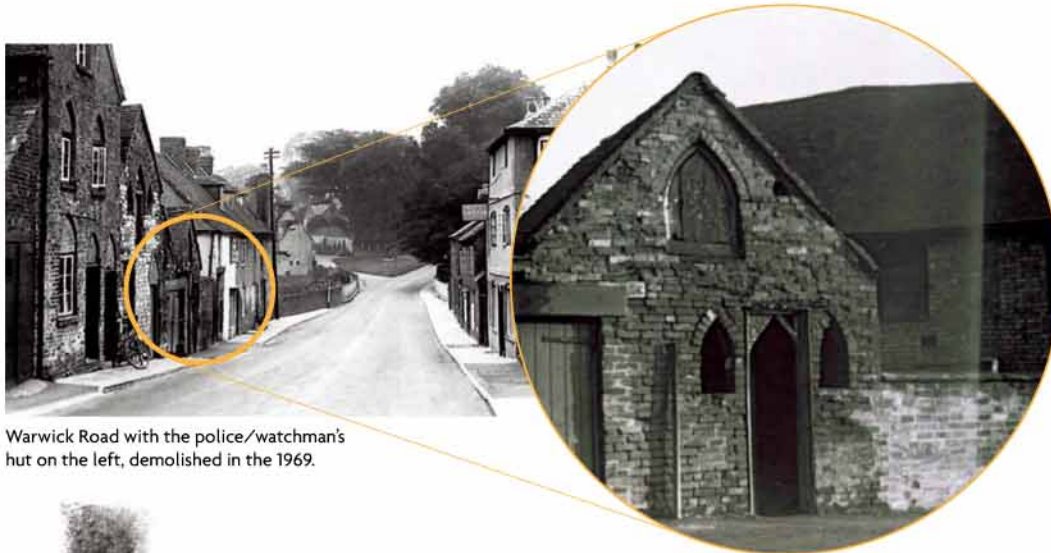
[www.southamheritage.org](http://www.southamheritage.org)

Admission free

# Law and Order in 18th Century Southam

Southam was a vibrant busy town sat on the Drover's crossroads en route from Wales to the Midlands and London with livestock. The north/south coaches passing between London and Edinburgh stopped at Southam's main coaching inn, the Craven Arms (Griffin) on Market Hill. With so many strangers passing through Southam, the constables were required to watch over the town and maintain law and order.

By 1829, when Sir Robert Peel's Metropolitan Police Force came into being, the criminal element was being forced out of the cities and into the countryside. In 1840 Southam became one of the five divisions of the Knightlow Hundred Police Force, which in 1857 became a division of the new Warwickshire Constabulary.

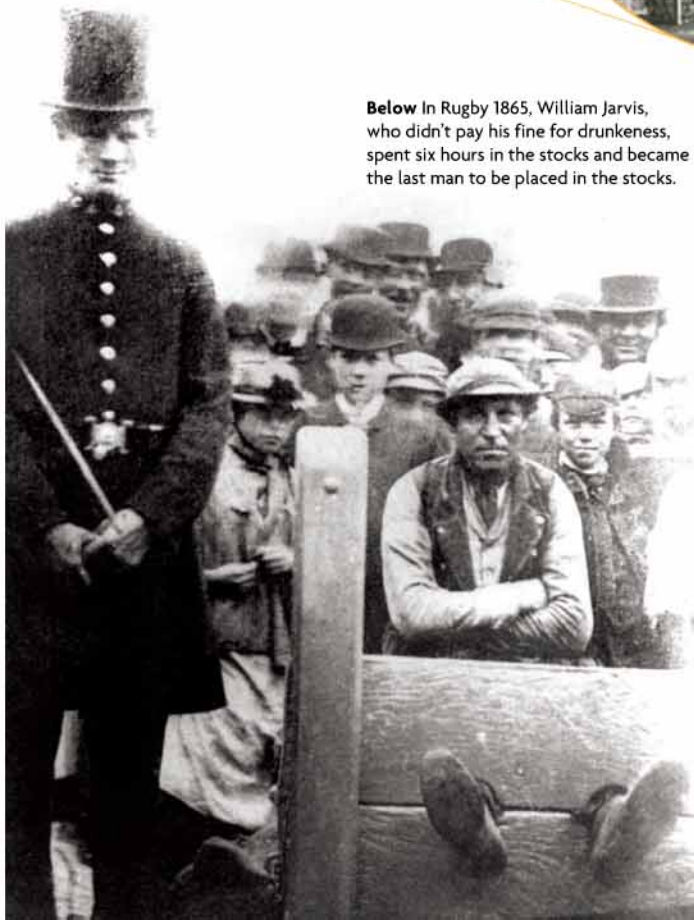


Warwick Road with the police/watchman's hut on the left, demolished in the 1969.

**From St James' Parish records**  
 1762 Buried Peter Pearsey, a traveller.  
 1762 Baptised Mary, daughter of James and Mary Pearsey, of parish of Wauchet of Somerset.  
 1770 Buried Ann Carter, a traveller.  
 1773 Buried Robert Lloyd of Dduallt in the county of Merioneth in Wales, a drover from Snowdon.  
 1779 Buried John Dixon a Scotchman.  
 1781 Buried Mary daughter of John Metcalf an Irish man and his wife.

**From the Vestry Meetings**  
 1684 £2 and 5 shillings received from Dissenters for Nonconformity on distress warrants and given to the poor.  
 1711 Paid for an order of sessions for Mrs Ann Marsh to take the office of constable 3 shillings.  
 1728 It was agreed to hire John Typler to serve the office of constable for a year, paying him £11 (value £1,300 today.)  
 1731 The pillory cost 10 shillings to set up.

**Above** Early church vestry meetings record the annual hire of parish constables and the expense of punishment through the use of stocks, cuckstool and pillory.



**Below** In Rugby 1865, William Jarvis, who didn't pay his fine for drunkenness, spent six hours in the stocks and became the last man to be placed in the stocks.

**Below** The cuckstool (ducking stool) was for ducking noisy and troublesome women. A new one was made in 1718 at a cost of £2 11s 4d (£300 today); 3s 2d to send a man to Daventry to draw their cuckstool; £1 8s 8d for timber and making it from the carpenter; 10s for painting it; 4s 6d from the blacksmith for the ironwork; 2s 6d for the men who put it in its place; 9s 6d for making the pond on the bank of the River Stowe deeper to use it.



# Inspector George Smallbones (1841-1855)

In 1841 Police Constable Smallbones (born 1810) was already living in Oxford Street when he became Southam's first Police Inspector for the Knightlow Hundred Constabulary. On September 14th that year he married Rebecca Oldham (born 1795) daughter of Charles Oldham, a Southam clockmaker. During his 14 year posting to Southam he was involved in many and varied cases of police work. In 1855 Inspector Smallbones was promoted to Superintendent and moved to Newbold Road, Rugby.

1841 Marriages celebrated in the Parish of Southam, in the County of Warwick								
No.	Name of Bride	Name of Groom	Age of Bride	Age of Groom	Parish of Bride	Parish of Groom	Signature of Minister	Signature of Registrar
11	Rebecca Oldham	George Smallbones	28 y	31 y	Southam	Southam	John Jones	Wm. Thompson

Copy of the Smallbones' Parish Marriage Record from Southam Church

**THE RUGBY MURDER.**—William Voss, the Rugby murderer, has been regularly hunted down. Inspector Chamberlain, of Rugby, with police-constable Smallbones and Inspector Smallbones of Southam were out on Tuesday night, and at midnight they were informed that Voss was seen in the parish of Stockton late in the evening. The policemen then made a wide circuit round that locality, calling at all the farmhouses on their way, and telling their errand. They also searched every hovel, barn, and stack in the neighbourhood. A party of labourers was put on the scent at daybreak, and while the police force were wending their way towards Grandborough these labourers saw Voss emerge from Tornlaw-wood. After a long run, he was taken, and conveyed to the police-station. On Thursday he was conveyed to the Rugby station in a fly, and thence by train to Warwick, where he will take his trial at the March Assizes, being committed on the warrant of the coroner.

Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette 2 December 1854

**RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, SATURDAY, JAN. 22.**  
Geo. Jones, John Jones, and Wm. Thompson, were charged with stealing two pork pies, the property of J. Jacob, of Rugby, confectioner.  
The prisoners were tramps, and had spent the previous night in the Union House, and before leaving this morning, each had breakfasted; this not satisfying them, they took their "eleven o'clock" at the prosecutor's shop, without obtaining his leave or consent thereto. Policeman Jacques coming by at the time, the prisoners were given into his custody.—Committed to the goal at Coventry for trial.

Coventry Standard 28 January 1848

**LOST.**  
**ONE POUND REWARD.**  
ABOUT Eight or Ten Weeks ago, a WHITE SPOTS, COLOURED POINTER, with a few White Spots, having a Large Broad Head, and answers to the name of "PONGO." Whoever has found the same and will bring it to Inspector Smallbones of Southam, shall receive the above Reward.  
June 20, 1850.

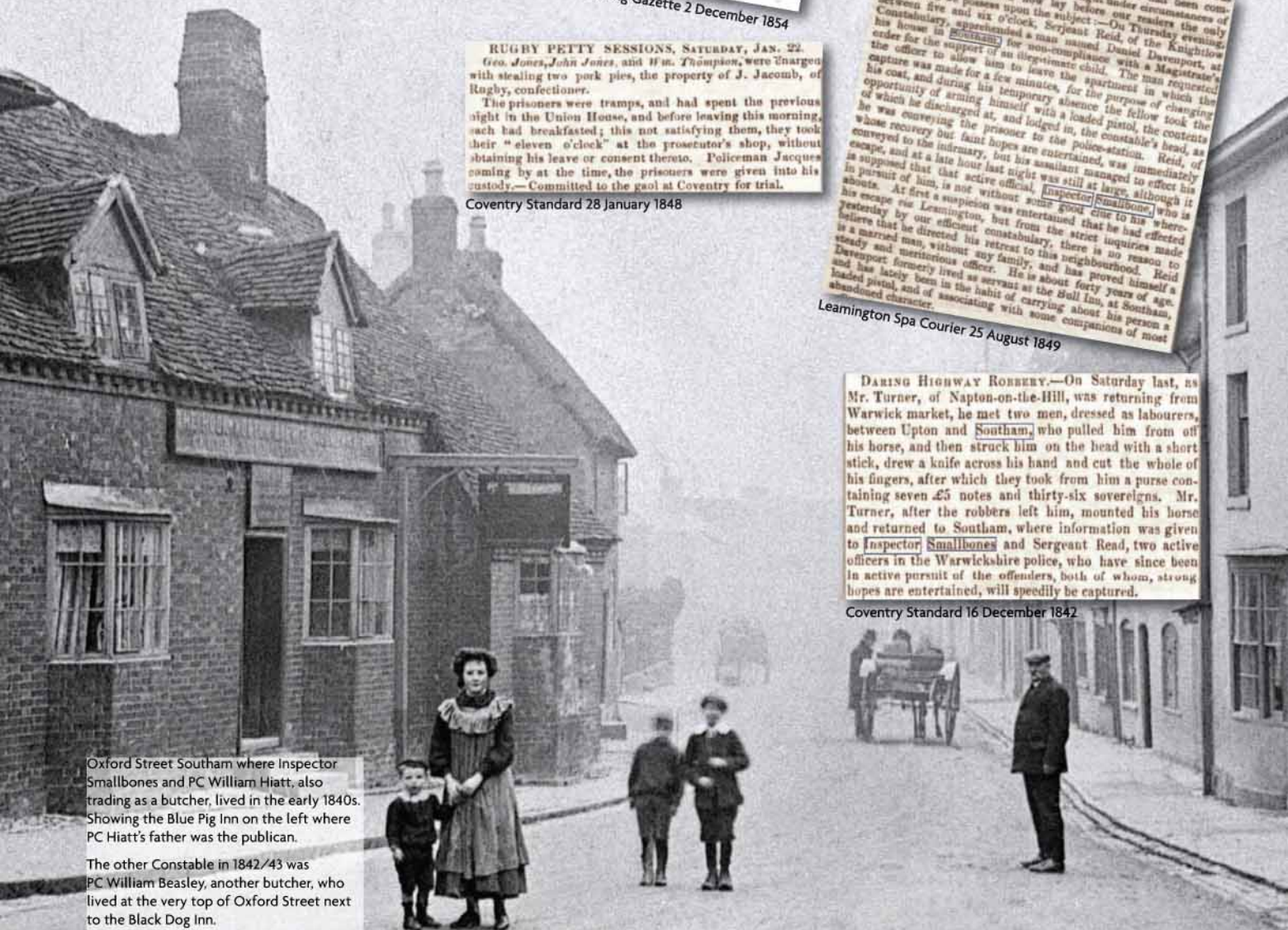
Leamington Spa Courier 22 June 1850

**ATTEMPT AT ASSASSINATION.**—Yesterday a report was currently circulated in this town, that a murder had been committed at Southam on the previous night under circumstances of great aggravation. We now lay before our readers the only information we possess upon the subject.—On Thursday evening, between five and six o'clock, Sergeant Reid, of the Knightlow Constabulary, apprehended a man named Daniel Daveport, in order for the support of an illegitimate child. The man requested the officer to allow him to leave the apartment in which the capture was made for a few minutes, for the purpose of changing his coat, and during his temporary absence the fellow took the opportunity of arming himself with a loaded pistol, the contents of which he discharged at, and lodged in, the constable's head, as he was conveying the prisoner to the police-station. Reid, whose recovery but faint hopes are entertained, was immediately conveyed to the infirmary, but his assailant managed to effect his escape, and at a late hour last night was still at large, although it is supposed that that active official, Inspector Smallbones, who is in pursuit of him, is not without some good clue to his whereabouts. At first a suspicion was entertained that he had effected yesterday by our efficient constabulary, there is no reason to believe that he directed his retreat to this neighbourhood. Reid is a married man, without any family, and has proved himself a steady and meritorious officer. He is about forty years of age, and has lately been in the habit of carrying about his person a loaded pistol, and of associating with some companions of most abandoned character.

Leamington Spa Courier 25 August 1849

**DARING HIGHWAY ROBBERY.**—On Saturday last, 19 Mr. Turner, of Napton-on-the-Hill, was returning from Warwick market, he met two men, dressed as labourers, between Upton and Southam, who pulled him from off his horse, and then struck him on the head with a short stick, drew a knife across his hand and cut the whole of his fingers, after which they took from him a purse containing seven £5 notes and thirty-six sovereigns. Mr. Turner, after the robbers left him, mounted his horse and returned to Southam, where information was given to Inspector Smallbones and Sergeant Reid, two active officers in the Warwickshire police, who have since been in active pursuit of the offenders, both of whom, strong hopes are entertained, will speedily be captured.

Coventry Standard 16 December 1842

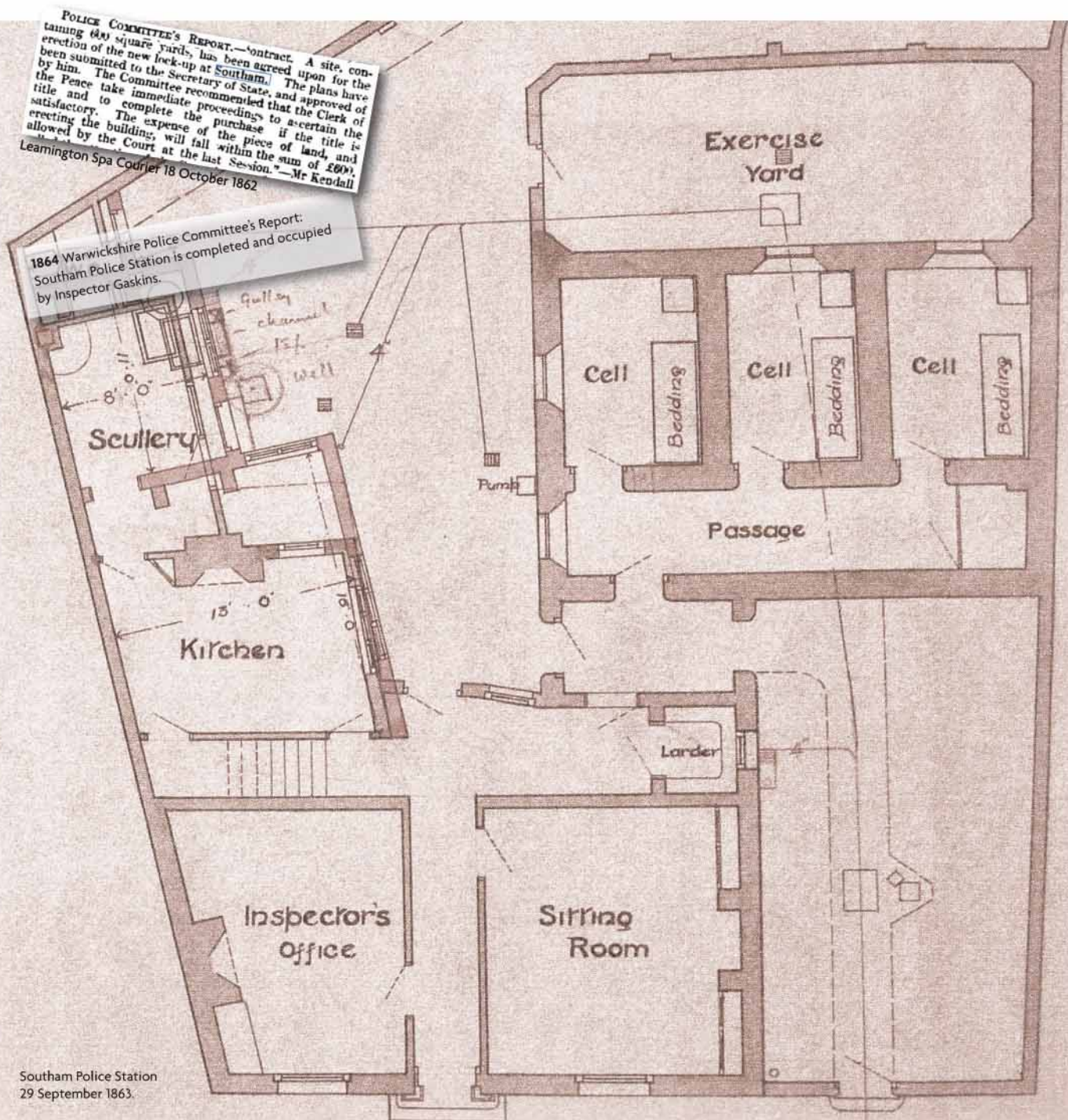


Oxford Street Southam where Inspector Smallbones and PC William Hiatt, also trading as a butcher, lived in the early 1840s. Showing the Blue Pig Inn on the left where PC Hiatt's father was the publican.

The other Constable in 1842/43 was PC William Beasley, another butcher, who lived at the very top of Oxford Street next to the Black Dog Inn.

# New police station in Oxford Street (1862)

The County and Borough Police Act of 1856 made compulsory the setting up of police forces for the whole country. The county magistrates appointed a chief constable to organising a force for the whole of Warwickshire. Lack of suitable buildings for police purposes was a serious handicap and a survey of the whole county was made. As a result, a programme of building was started county-wide and, by 1860, station houses and lock-ups, including a building here in Oxford Street, were being used. Officers who lived at stations had to pay part of the rent – sergeants and constables up to £6 per year and higher ranks £8 per year.



# The Old Victorian Court House

Prior to 1857, public meetings were held in public houses. Southam's Courts and Petty Sessions were held in the Craven Arms Inn on Market Hill. Private groups sold protection for a person's property and private possessions. Part law enforcement agencies, part legal aid societies and part insurance companies, they were made up of landowners, clergymen, farmers, tradesmen, craftsmen and innkeepers.

In 1857, with the establishment of the new Warwickshire Constabulary, Southam solicitors Robert Poole and his son Edward Poole decided to offer a purpose built Court Room and Public Hall for the Magistrate's Courts, general meetings, concerts, dinners, dances and, in later years, silent cinema. Edward, then age 30 years, took out an £800 mortgage on his property including the Court House. In 1863 the mortgage was upped to £1,200 (today's value £140,000).

## GENERAL ASSOCIATION For the Protection of Property.

AT the GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING of the above ASSOCIATION, held at the **GRAVEN ARMS INN**, in **SOUTHAM**, on **WEDNESDAY**, the 21st Day of **JANUARY**, 1835,

(The REV. T. R. BROMFIELD in the Chair,)

It was RESOLVED,  
That the usual Advertisements be printed in the Warwick and Leamington Papers, and also in Handbills, and be distributed in the Neighbourhood, as usual.

### THE FOLLOWING REWARDS

Will be paid to any Person giving Information to Mr. **ROBERT POOLE**, of **KENTWORTH**, or Mr. **T. S. WRIGHT**, of **SOUTHAM**, Solicitors to this Association, or to any Member thereof, leading to the Conviction of any Person or Persons committing any of the Offences following, against the Persons or Property of the said Members, or either of them. (that is to say,)-

Murder of any Member of this Association, or any of his Family or Servants .....	£50
Setting Fire to any Buildings or Effects .....	45
Highway or Footpad Robbery .....	40
Burglary .....	40
Stealing or Maiming any Horse, Mare, or Gelding, Pigs, Sheep, or Cattle of any description .....	30
Capital Offences against the Person of any Member of this Association, or any of his or her Family or Servants, short of Murder .....	20
Receiving Stolen Goods, knowing them to be Stolen .....	20
Breaking into, or Privately Stealing any Money, Goods, or Effects, from any House or Shop, in the Day-time .....	10
Stealing Poultry, Wool, Corn (threshed or unthreshed), Hay, Straw, or Polder .....	10
Stealing any Implement of Husbandry, or any Turnips, Carrots, or other Roots, Fruits, and Vegetables; or Cutting down or Stealing any Timber or other Tree .....	5
Maliciously pulling down or destroying any Wall, Fence, or Mound whatsoever; or wilfully leaving open any Gate, Door, Rail, or Slit; whereby any Cattle or other Animals shall Pass over the Field or Enclosed	

**SOUTHAM ASSOCIATION**  
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF FELONS.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of this ASSOCIATION, will be held at the **NEW INN**, in **SOUTHAM**, on **TUESDAY**, the 10th Day of **JUNE** next.

**ROBERT POOLE**,  
Treasurer and Solicitor.

ET Dinner at Two o'Clock.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 7 June 1823

'Negro Life.' Southam was not isolated from what was going on in the wider world and when slavery in the British Empire and its Colonies was abolished in 1834, such entertainment held in the new Court House was common.

**Negro Life.**-On Monday last, the Brothers Ormond gave an entertainment at the Court House, Southam, illustrative of American Life amongst the Negro population, and on the plantations. The room was crowded, and the performances, which were of a most superior kind, elicited repeated and long continued applause. They appear again on Monday next, at the request of many of the inhabitants.

Leamington Spa Courier 5 March 1859

Below The Court House built by Edward Poole. Documents at Warwickshire County Record Office specifically described the properties as 'in the occupation of Edward Poole, by whom a large room or Court House has been erected'. It was written in legalistic language, but included words about Robert's love for his son.

**THEATRE, SOUTHAM.**  
**MOP DAY.**

At Two O'Clock,  
OF  
**GEORGE BARNWELL**  
And there will be introduced the Scene representing  
**The Public Execution**  
OF **BARNWELL A MILLWOOD**, WITH  
**The Scaffold and Executioner.**

END OF THE PLAY.  
A COMIC SONG BY MR. MURRAY.  
**A COMIC SONG BY MR. JOHNSTON.**

To conclude with a GRAND COMIC PASTORAL, with Mrs. Maloney,  
Seniors, Punks, Trombones, &c. &c.

**MOTHER GOOSE,**  
OR HARLEQUIN AND THE GOLDEN EGG.  
First and last scenes, by the permission of the Proprietors, The  
Dresses exhibited at the Show Fair  
WILL BE USED ON THIS DAY

AND AT SEVEN O'CLOCK  
ON **MONDAY EVENING, 16th of OCTOBER, 1826.**  
Will be performed the Celebrated Farce of  
**Jane Shore**  
Or Golden Egg.  
THE CHARACTERS AN ENVOI.

Above Monday 16 October 1826 - Mr Davenport's travelling actors held a temporary theatre at the Mop Fair in the yard of the Craven Arms. Plays were put on for the moral welfare of those attending. This poster was just for the Southam Mop Fair day and apparently they were the same plays every year. Local parish constables must have been well in evidence at such times!



# Inspector James Gaskins (1856–1871)

Originally from Kenilworth, PC Gaskins came to Southam via Wolston and Radford Semele. He moved to Oxford Street and became Southam's first Police Inspector for the Warwickshire Constabulary when it was formed in 1857. When Gaskins' first wife Mary Trunkfield died in 1858 his eldest daughter Martha looked after the house until he remarried Eliza Keen in 1869 in Southam. He oversaw building the new police station and cells in Oxford Street during the early 1860s. After a long illness, Gaskins retired in June 1871 age 56 years and, sadly, died soon after.

**SHUCKBURGH.**  
**COTTAGERS' FLOWER SHOW.**—Yesterday week, his annual holiday was held, as usual, in Shuckburgh Park, the seat of Sir Francis Shuckburgh, Bart. From about noon till four o'clock in the afternoon, the arrivals were very great from Leamington, Rugby, Daventry, and the surrounding villages, and one time about 5,000 persons must have been in the park. Excellent arrangements were made for the admittance into the grounds, under the superintendence of Inspector Gaskins, of Southam. The show of flowers and  
 Coventry Times 6 August 1862

**SOUTHAM**  
 On Saturday last the police officers of this division presented to their inspector, Mr James Gaskins, on his resignation through ill-health, a very handsome walking stick, with the following inscription:—"Presented to Inspector Gaskins, by the sergeant and men of the Southam division, as a mark of esteem and respect, on his retiring from the Warwickshire Constabulary." A small present was also made at the same time to Mrs Gaskins. We find that Inspector Gaskins long and valuable services were recognised by the Court of Quarter Sessions, on Tuesday last, by a pension of £90 per annum; which, though well deserved, he can never enjoy, as we, with regret, have to announce his death, in another column.  
 Leamington Spa Courier 1 July 1871

**REVOLTING CASE OF CHILD MURDER**  
 A shocking case of child murder, at the village of Ufton, near Harbury, Warwickshire, has just been brought to light. It seems that a short time ago a communication was incidentally made to Mr. Inspector Gaskins, of Southam, to this effect:—That a young woman named Emma, who resided with her parents at the neighbouring village of Ufton, had been recently confined, and the child by some means been mysteriously made away with. On inquiry, Gaskins learned that Sarah, a sister of the mother of the child, was in the Southam workhouse, and to her he went. He found that she had been confined of an illegitimate child, and it was in consequence of that she was in the workhouse. He communicated to her what he had heard respecting the confinement of her sister, and questioned her very closely upon the matter. She then confessed that her sister had been delivered of a female child on the 21st of November last, which was destroyed by the child's mother, and afterwards buried in the garden adjoining the cottage in which she resided with her father and mother. Gaskins then went over to Ufton and saw the grandmother of the child, who denied all knowledge of the affair. Being closely examined, however, she at first hesitated, and then admitted that a child had been born in the house on the day named, and that it was buried in the garden. Gaskins, on having the spot pointed out to him, removed the soil to the depth of about eight inches, when he met with a large bundle. He removed the first covering, which consisted of a brown wrapper, and then he came to an apron, firmly and strongly sewn together. On cutting this there protruded through the opening the arm, foot, and leg of a child. He at once removed the remains to the Southam police-station, where Mr. Welchman, surgeon, inspected

**REWARDS.**  
**THE Guardians of the Southam Union offer**  
 the following REWARDS, namely—  
 £2. for the apprehension of THOMAS HUMPHRIS, for deserting his Wife and Children, whereby they have become chargeable to Southam Parish. He is a Labourer, 29 years old, about 6 feet 2 inches high, with black hair, whiskers, and beard. Had on black coat and waistcoat, dark trousers, and low black hat.  
 Also, £2. for the apprehension of JAMES HUMPHRIS, Labourer, who has left his Family chargeable to Southam Parish. He is 34 years old, about 5 feet 9 inches high, with dark brown hair, little or no whiskers. Had on a velvet-toned jacket, slop, cord trousers, and supposed to be together.  
 The above named are Brothers, and supposed to be together. Information to be given to Inspector Gaskins, Southam.  
 By order of the Board,  
 C. J. WELCHMAN, Clerk. 8254  
 Southam, 12th June, 1865.  
 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 17 June 1865

to save the rest of the old mansion. With this view, Munroe the carpenter, assisted by others, mounted the roof, and, with great presence of mind, succeeded in dividing the roof. The connection being thus severed, and the wind being favourable, all anxiety respecting the fate of the private part of the mansion was set at rest. As the men were performing this hazardous operation one of them fell from the roof and would have been dashed to atoms among the flaming debris below in the servants' hall, if Inspector Gaskins had not with much presence of mind caught him in his arms, in his descent. At half-past twelve, the roof at the east-end fell in with a tremendous crash. By five o'clock the flames were subdued and about six o'clock the engines ceased playing. The

Above and illustration below Gaskins attended the fire at Birdingbury Hall. One of the carpenters, removing wood from the roof to limit spread of fire, fell and was caught by Inspector Gaskins before he hit the ground.

Above The shocking case of the murder of a new born illegitimate baby at Ufton in 1865 reached UK wide newspapers. The grandmother and aunt of the baby had concealed the birth from the grandfather, who threatened them over any more illegitimate children! They were sentenced to 18 months imprisonment.



# Inspector Walker (1872–1875)

Unfortunately with such a common surname and living in Southam between the census records, as yet, we know very little about Inspector Walker.



Daventry Street circa 1880 near the Dun Cow Inn.

13s.—Andrew Hough, of the Dun Cow Inn, Southam, was charged with having permitted his licensed premises to be used as a brothel. Defendant said he wished to plead guilty to the charge, and to express his regret for what had occurred. During his absence from home, a man and woman were allowed to take lodging in his house, but when he returned, late the same night, and was spoken to by Inspector Walker, he went with him and turned them out. Inspector Walker said he did not wish to press the charge against defendant, who bore a very good character, but he was frequently from home, and then he must say, the house was not in good hands. The Bench said he be at home as much as possible in future. The punishment would be a very heavy. He was liable to a penalty of £30, and in the event of a conviction his license would be forfeited. They would adjourn the case till their next licensing meeting. Defendant must understand that he was responsible for the conduct of the house whether there or not.

Leamington Spa Courier 22 May 1875

**THE INQUEST.**  
Mr. W. Savage Poole, the Coroner for Central Warwickshire, on Friday afternoon opened an inquest at the Butchers' Arms, Priors Hardwick, on the body of the deceased, Betsy Handcock. Edward Handcock, the husband of the deceased, was present at the enquiry, in the custody of Inspector Walker, of Southam. Throughout the proceedings, he appeared calm and unmoved, and his surprising composure was the subject of general comment. The jury having viewed the body of the deceased, which lay in the cottage where the murder was committed, the subjoined evidence was adduced.  
Walter Handcock, a boy of 13, the son of the prisoner by a former marriage, was the first witness examined. He stated that his father was by trade a pig-killer, and resided with the deceased, himself and three children, at the cottage where the jury had viewed the body. On Wednesday night witness returned home about five o'clock, and found his father and mother in the house. The deceased said she would fetch the policeman, about something that had occurred before he got home. She left the house, and was away about a quarter of an hour. During that time his father was upstairs, and threw the casement of the window into the garden.

Left 13 November 1872 – A Priors Hardwick pig slaughterer killed his third wife through jealousy and drink. Handcuffed and brought into custody at Southam Lock-up by PCs Sharpe and Webb, he came before the magistrates at Southam. They concluded "...it was as clear as the sun at noonday that this poor creature had been killed by her own husband and therefore they would have to return a verdict of wilful murder". She was buried close to her son, who was killed some time ago by a plough falling on him. He was hung 7 January 1873 at Warwick.

**THE LOCAL POLICE FORCE.**—On Thursday next, September 30th, at five o'clock in the morning, the services of the present borough police force will cease, and, by arrangement between the Town Council and the County Justices, the borough force will be united with that of the county. Inspector Walker, of Southam, has been appointed inspector of the newly constituted force at Warwick. The present force consists of the superintendent, 2 sergeants, Webb and Maycock, and P.C.'s Woodward and Rickley. The force will be superannuated, after long terms of active service; P.C. Elvins will receive a gratuity of £100; P.C.'s Fletcher, Durham, Ruane, and Hunt will, it is believed, join the county force; and P.C. Warner, the police force of another town. Inspector Walker is spoken of in the highest terms respecting his courteous demeanour and the efficient manner in which he has hitherto discharged his duties. A more fitting man could not have been appointed. The

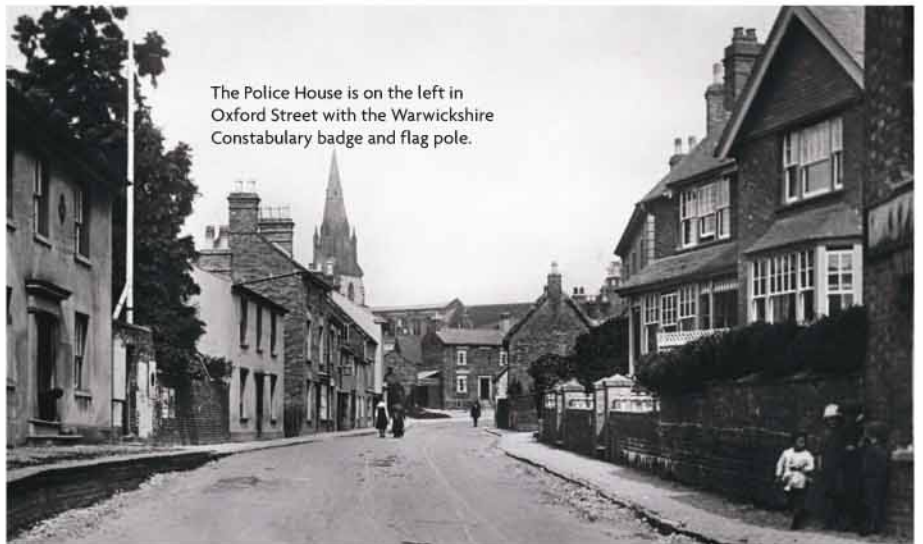
Leamington Spa Courier 25 September 1875



Coventry Street circa 1900, where the Cattle Market has been held since mediaeval days.

# Inspector Jesse Welch (1876-1891)

Inspector Welch began his long career as a Police Constable in Coventry, well before the Warwickshire Constabulary began. In 1858 he married Charlotte Buckley and became Inspector at the Foleshill Station in Coventry, before moving to Solihull. On leaving Solihull to come to Southam, bringing his wife and 7 children, 49 year old Welch was given a gold watch and £30. Welch was in the police force for 34 years and retired at the age of 65 on a life pension of £76.13s.4d per annum given to him by the county. Welch died very soon after retiring. His wife moved to Coventry Street and died in 1904.



The Police House is on the left in Oxford Street with the Warwickshire Constabulary badge and flag pole.

**DANCING AND MUSIC IN LICENSED HOUSES.—**Inspector Welch said that for some time past some of the licensed victuallers had been in the habit of encouraging music and dancing at their houses periodically. They seemed to think they had a perfect right to do so, but that was not the case. The Act of Parliament strictly forbids anything of the kind. It was the means of gathering people together until they ultimately became a nuisance and an annoyance to the general public. There were no houses holding music licenses in the neighbourhood.—The Bench said no doubt it was an illegal act to have music and dancing. The police were often allowed to use their discretion in respect to music, but dancing could not be allowed unless special licenses were granted. They hoped these remarks would be taken as a caution.

Nuneaton Advertiser 2 May 1891

monies were dismissed.—Wm. Walton, Harbury, market gardener, charged *Wm. Maltin*, of the same place, a youth of 16, with having stolen a quantity of radishes and cabbages from his garden. Defendant pleaded guilty. Mr Wood attended to prosecute on behalf of the Harbury Association, and said his client had reason to press the charge to some extent, because he had previously missed things from his land, and he was afraid defendant must be encouraged by someone who received such articles. Inspector Welch said defendant had already missed charge preferred against him, and bore a bad character. The Bench strongly regretted that defendant was a little too old for them to order him a birching, but he would have to pay a fine of £1 and costs, 19s. 6d., or 14 days' hard labour. Defendant's mother said she would pay the money if time were allowed, whereupon the defendant savagely forbade her doing anything of the kind, and was only silenced in his impertinence by the threat of the Bench to commit him directly to prison.—*Fanny*

Leamington Spa Courier 12 June 1880

**SOUTHAM**  
**PRESENTATION TO MR. INSPECTOR WELCH.—**On Friday evening last, Mr. Jesse Welch, Inspector of Police in the Warwickshire Constabulary, late of Solihull and now of Southam, was presented with a handsome testimonial at the former place, where he had been stationed 13 years, and where in the exercise of his duties, his integrity, ability, and courteousness, had gained him many friends. The testimonial consisted of a gold watch, chain, and appendix, an address on vellum, and a cheque for £30; and the presentation was made by A. O. Smith, Esq., Solicitor, Clerk to the Rural Sanitary Authority and the Local Board of Health, in most flattering and eulogistic terms. He congratulated Mr. Welch on having done his duty in such a manner as to give satisfaction to all, and not being the servant of the watch as a clique. The inscription on the watch was as follows: "Presented to Inspector Welch on leaving the Solihull police district, after 13 years active service, as a mark of esteem by numerous inhabitants. June, 1876."

Nuneaton Advertiser 8 July 1876

**SOUTHAM.**  
**POLICE, Monday last.—**Before Mr W. Chamberlayne.—*Benjamin Gales*, a tramp, was again brought up, charged this time with an assault upon *Emma Bloxham*, wife of *George Bloxham*, of the parish of *Radford Semele*, labourer, with intent to commit a rape, on the 2nd inst. Prisoner was last week committed for trial by Sir G. Shuckburgh, named *Hudson*, at Leamington similarly assaulted a woman *Mrs Bloxham's* identity, who had the prisoner in her custody at *Southam* lock-up, placed him among about a dozen other men when *Mrs Bloxham* visited the lock-up, and she readily identified him. The offence happened on

Leamington Spa Courier 14 December 1878

Early on Wednesday morning information was given to Inspector Welch by Sergeant Kitchener, of Laton, that two brown cob horses had been stolen from Laton, and that he had traced them to Towcester, Banbury, and Southam. Inspector Welch and P.O. Baker at once started in pursuit of the thieves. Near Upton Wood they espied a gipsy camp, and very soon found both the men and horses they were seeking after. The two men made a rush for the wood, but were soon captured and brought to Southam Police Station.

Rugby Advertiser 16 June 1888



seriatim. A gratuity of £57 was granted to the widow of Inspector Jesse Welch, who had died shortly after he retired from the force on a pension, after thirty-four years' service. He died almost in the act of assisting his successor to secure a prisoner. A sum of £50 was granted to

Nuneaton Advertiser 30 April 1892



# Inspector Hawkes (1892-1902)

Thomas Hawkes was born in Leamington Spa and started his working life in Birmingham as a coachmaker. In 1875, at the age of 24, he joined the Warwickshire Constabulary. He rose quickly through the ranks to sergeant in 1878 and inspector in 1888. Whilst serving he passed through the Atherstone and Warwick Divisions and came to Southam in 1892 from Aston. He was married to Mary Ann. They had no children, but his brother and nephew were also Warwickshire Police Inspectors. After nearly 27 years in the force he retired at Southam in 1902 on a substantial pension and moved to Deppers Bridge.



Left shows the typical uniform of a constable around the turn of the 20th century. He is PC D-117. Do you recognise him or know his name?

**THE ENGLISHMAN ARRESTED IN SPAIN.**  
George Potts, an agent for the Prudential Insurance Company, has been remanded at Southam, Warwickshire, on a charge of fraud. The prisoner is the man who some time ago created some excitement in Spain by his adventures. While in that country he wrote a piteous letter to his wife at Southam, saying he had been arrested for changing a sovereign. He begged that she might be taken for his release and said that after he had attempted to escape by leaping from a railway train, he was hunted in the woods by the Spanish authorities with bloodhounds, and that for three days nothing passed his lips but a cup of water. He still bears evidence of his serious injuries. It is charged against him that he forged and cashed a number of worthless cheques, representing about £70, and that he passed them mostly to innkeepers. Inspector Hawkes spoke to receiving the accused in custody from the steamer *Cleveland* on arrival at Cardiff from Bilbao. He is remanded until Monday next.  
Pall Mall Gazette 6 January 1898

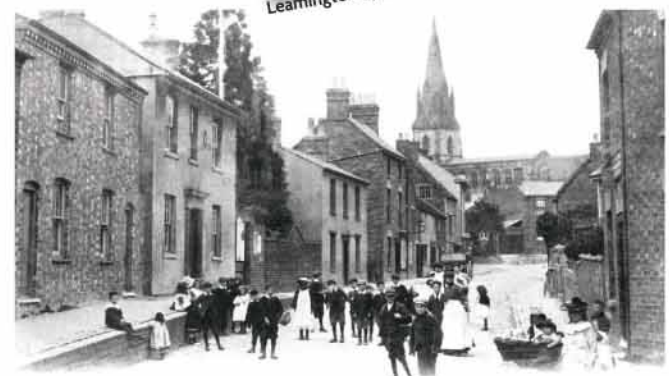
Inspector Thomas Hawkes deposed: I am an Inspector of Police, stationed at Southam, in the County of Warwick. At 5.50 p.m. on Tuesday, August 21st, I was on duty in Oxford-street, Southam, when I saw the prisoner riding a brown pony bare-back up the street, at a fast trot; he was coming from the direction of Banbury. I shouted to him and motioned to a fast trot; I went after him on a bicycle and caught him about a mile out of the town, on the Coventry-road. I spoke to him and found he was deaf and dumb. I took him to the police-station at Southam. I put some questions to him in writing, and he answered them in writing. The papers produced contain some of the questions and some of the answers. I gave him some paper while he was in the cell, and he handed me the paper produced with the answer now written upon it. At the time of taking possession of the pony it was wearing the bridle (produced) and the hempen halter (produced) was found in his (the prisoner's) pocket. It is about 32 miles from Woodstock to Southam.  
Oxfordshire Weekly News 12 September 1900

# Inspector Lee (1902-1911)

PC Thomas Lee began his career in 1884 and became an Inspector at Aston, Birmingham in 1898. In November 1901 he was transferred to Southam where he arrived with his wife Emma, 7 children and a baby, and his eldest daughter Amelia immediately started teaching at Harbury school. In 1911 he took up a new position as Superintendent at Stratford on Avon.

**HORSE STEALING.**  
The horse belonging to Mr. F. Oldfield, stolen the beginning of last week from Kenilworth, has so far not been discovered. Inspector Parkinson, in co-operation with Inspector Lee, of Southam (where another horse was missing), and assisted also by the Leamington Police, scoured the country and soon got on the trail of the thieves. It fell to Inspector Lee, however, to make the capture, he having proceeded to London, while Inspector Parkinson was searching provincial towns. Two men, who have since been identified as having been seen in possession of Oldfield's horse, were apprehended in London, on Sunday, and brought by Inspector Lee to Southam. The robbery is the work of no "amateur" thieves, but of a large organised gang, who have worked throughout the country, but their history and doings are now known to the police. The capture reflects extreme credit on the officers concerned.  
Leamington Spa Courier 24 July 1903

Inspector Lee, Southam, said there were about 35 previous convictions against prisoner, for wilful damage, assault, and drunkenness. He was a most violent man, and when in drink, if he went to a public-house everybody went out.  
Leamington Spa Courier 15 July 1910



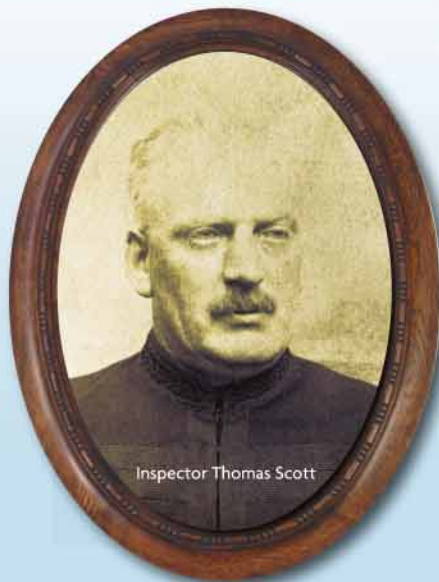
Oxford Street



Map Fair on Market Hill

# Inspector Thomas Scott (1911-1923)

The only surviving son of a Lancashire gas worker, Scott joined the Aston police in 1896 age 20 years. In 1898 he was given £3 reward for rescuing a drowning child at Aston and received the Royal Humane Society Certificate. He left the Force and married Alice Hinson that year, and took over The Leopard Inn in Bishops Tachbrook from her mother for the next 4 years, before rejoining the police force in 1902. In 1911 when Scott came to Southam from Sutton Coldfield, he'd been married for 12 years and 4 of their 5 children had died.



Inspector Thomas Scott

promotion. In January 1898, he was granted a reward of £3 by the Standing Joint Committee for meritorious conduct in rescuing a child from drowning at Aston, and he received the Royal Humane Society's certificate.  
Leamington Spa Courier 24 November 1911

RETURN OF INSPECTOR SCOTT.—At the conclusion of the Court the Chairman said the Justices were pleased to see Inspector Scott back after his long absence owing to the accident he met with while on duty. Mr. Hunt also paid a high tribute to the very efficient manner in which Inspector Scott carried out his duty.—The Magistrate's Clerk (Mr. W. H. Plummer) associated himself with the Chairman's remarks, and in returning thanks, Inspector Scott said he was glad to be back again, and would like to take the opportunity of thanking the Justices for their kind inquiries and sympathy during the time he was incapacitated.  
Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 14 February 1920

PROMOTION OF INSPECTOR SCOTT.—Mr. Hodges, the magistrate at the Petty Sessions on Monday, referred to the recent promotion of Inspector Scott, who is leaving the district shortly to take up the position of superintendent at Solihull. He said, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, how sorry they were to lose one who was so capable of combining his qualities as a gentleman with justice.—The Clerk (Mr. W. H. Plummer) said he would like to endorse the remarks of the chairman. He had worked with Inspector Scott for eleven years, and it had always been a pleasure to work with one who carried out his duties so efficiently.—Inspector Scott thanked Mr. Hodges and the Clerk for their remarks, and said that he was pleased that they were satisfied with the manner in which he had performed his duty. If it were satisfied, that was all he required. If it was not promotion to him, he would have found it very hard to leave the people with whom he had worked for the past eleven years. It was his experience that if people were treated properly they were always willing to help the Police; and by so doing were helping them.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 3 March 1923

On Monday Mr. E. F. Haslow, Deputy Coroner, held an inquest at the Southam Workhouse concerning the death of an infant (unknown) whose body was found in a pond at Hill on the previous Thursday.—Mr. W. H. Plummer was chosen foreman of the jury. The body, which the jury had seen in the water so long.—Harry Cockerell, farmer, Hill, deposed to finding the body in a pond on the farm of his brother, Charles, James Cockerell. He turned it over with a stick thinking it to be a lamb, but afterwards found it was the body of a baby. The body was got out of the water and removed to a hotel, and the police communicated with. The body was badly decomposed. The pond was about 300 yards from the highway.—Inspector Thomas Scott, of Southam, deposed that on the following day, he searched the pond and found a square piece of sacking, with particles of flesh adhering to it. He found nothing else in the body before its removal to the Southam Workhouse. The body was dreadfully decomposed.—Ernest W. Ormerod, surgeon, Southam, who examined the body, and said it was that of a full-time child, but it was so decomposed that it was impossible to tell its sex, or whether it had ever had a separate existence. The body had been in the water at least 3 months, or probably nearly 12 months, as the sacking might have protected it.—The Coroner said the jury would probably assume that the child had "lived" otherwise an inquest could not be held.—The jury returned an open verdict.  
Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 22 March 1913

The Police House is on the left in Oxford Street with the Warwickshire Constabulary badge and flag pole.



# Inspector Robert Cresswell

## (1923-1930)

The son of a north Warwickshire coal miner, he left the pits to become a Constable. He was a popular person and Southam's last Inspector, moving on in 1930 to be chief of the new Warwick Sub-division of the Solihull Constabulary Division. During WW2 he was Superintendent in Nuneaton where he was then stationed.



Inspector Robert Cresswell

### EXCITING MOTOR CYCLE CHASE. SMART CAPTURE BY SOUTHAM POLICE.

A smart capture of alleged motor cycle thieves was effected by Inspector Cresswell and P.C. Johnson, of Southam, on Tuesday night. About 9 p.m. Inspector Cresswell received information from the Banbury Police that a Royal Enfield motor cycle combination had been stolen from Bicester, and that it was believed to be proceeding towards Southam with a male driver and a woman passenger. The Inspector immediately set out in his motor-cycle combination towards Banbury with P.C. Johnson in the side-car. When near Fenny Compton they met two motor cycle combinations and shouted for them to stop. The approaching machines slowed up, but on seeing the constable, who was in uniform, the drivers again put on speed. The Inspector gave chase and was rapidly overhauling the other machines, when the rear one started tracking across the road and prevented the police getting by.

Meanwhile the leading combination got well away out of sight. The rear machine (a Douglas) kept tracking across the road, but when near Ladbroke the Inspector noticed the other machine (the Enfield) abandoned by the side of the road, so he crashed into the Douglas, overturning it into the fence. He pulled up within a few yards, but the driver was apparently uninjured, and jumped the fence into a spinney, and although the police gave chase, got away. The Inspector obtained assistance from the village and searched for the drivers. Some time afterwards he saw a man and woman in the village, and recognised them as the driver and passenger of the Enfield. He arrested them and conveyed them to Southam, where they were on Wednesday handed over to the Bicester Police. The driver of the Douglas combination had not been found on Wednesday, but the machine is in the possession of the Police, and is also believed to be stolen.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 21 April 1923

"Found dead" was the verdict returned at the inquest held at Southam on the unknown woman whose body was found in a ditch. No clue to her identity was forthcoming. Henry Shaler, of Bascote Heath, told the Coroner (Mr. E. F. Hadow), that at 6.40 a.m. on Wednesday, June 29, in consequence of an overpowering smell which he had noticed, he looked into the ditch, and there saw the body of a woman. The ditch was between Ufton and the Bascote cross-roads. He did not touch the body, but reported the matter to his employer, Mr. J. J. Reed, of Ufton, who telephoned for the police. The ditch at the spot was pretty deep, and grass very nearly covered the body. Police Inspector Cresswell stated that after getting a telephone message he, in company with Dr. E. W. Ormerod, went to the spot and found the decomposed body of a woman lying in the ditch which was overgrown with grass and bushes. The doctor examined the body, and stable at the "Bull" inn. The woman's hat lay beside her, and a little bag and parcel lay at the other side. The grass had grown up round the woman since she had lain there. It appeared as if she had got in the ditch purposely and crawled to where she was found. It was a common occurrence for tramps to sleep out in the open at this time of the year. He fetched two out of the same ditch a year ago. The woman had on her £6 16s. 6d., the majority of which was small silver, but included one ten shilling note. The money was secreted in various parts of her clothing. He also found among other papers on her a receipt for £2 from the Gloucester Union.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 9 July 1927

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 3 January 1925

**MOTOR CAR OBSTRUCTION.**—Charles Duckett, of Napton, farmer, was fined 5s. for obstructing the highway by leaving a motor-car for forty minutes without just cause, on the Daventry road, Southam, on December 20th, 1924.—P.C. Townsend stated that he was on duty when he saw a Ford car standing outside the "Crown" Inn, Southam. They kept the car under observation for 40 minutes, and then went into the hostel where they found Duckett, the owner of the car, sitting in the smoke-room with a glass of beer in front of him. Defendant was told he would be reported.—There was a letter from Duckett, who did not attend court, admitting the offence, but stating that the car was left in an open space, and, in his opinion, was not an obstruction. The Police Inspector added that Southam was the finest place in the county for parking cars. There was a place where they could leave them all day long without causing an obstruction.—A similar summons was heard against Alfred Goodman, of Bunker's Hill, Offchurch, a farmer, who was

Above and below The Crown Inn, on the corner of Wood Street and Daventry Street, was a popular public house where parking was a constant problem.



**A BUTCHER'S COMPLAINT.**  
Inspector Cresswell mentioned that Mr. Rainbow, who was kind enough to fetch the body to Southam, had complained of a certain amount of persecution by people in the place, who objected to him carrying the body in his meat-van. The Coroner observed that, on behalf of the Crown, he was very grateful to Mr. Rainbow for what he had done. He supposed the van had been cleaned out after its wetting; to say the least he did not think people who made remarks were very sensible.

Leamington Spa Courier 16 October 1925

Southam is another area which is not satisfied with the police provision made for it. At this week's meeting of the Parish Council it was decided to write to the Standing Joint Committee protesting against the decision to remove a police officer of the rank of Inspector from Southam and to point out that this being a large area and one which had had the services of an Inspector for many years it was a matter for regret that Southam was to be deprived of an officer of this rank in future. Tribute was paid at Southam to be due to the services of Inspector Cresswell in future. Mr. Jaggard, speaking from the Bench, said Inspector Cresswell had always carried out his duties to his superiors, and at the same time discretion, particularly in his dealings with the Foot and Mouth Restrictions. The Bench were extremely sorry he was leaving the district, and hoped it would be to his own advantage.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser 8 February 1930

# Our own Keystone Cops

## Early 1920s

Constable is the lowest rank of police officer. Today there is specialist police training, but prior to 1929 the Warwickshire constable was sent to the Kenilworth Police Headquarters where they received training in police duties and foot-drill for up to ten weeks. Southam's inspectors between 1860 and 1930 lived in the Oxford Street Police Station and were supported by two constables in the town and further constables who lived in the surrounding villages of Long Itchington, Bishops Itchington, Stockton, Harbury, Fenny Compton, Napton, Marton and in earlier years in the Priors.

### BODY IN A POND AT HILL.

When going round the farm at Hill, in the occupation of Mr. C. J. Cockerill, on Thursday afternoon, Mr. H. Cockerill noticed a bulky object floating in one of the cattle ponds. Curiosity as to whether it was a dead lamb prompted him to procure a long pole and secure it, when, to his extreme surprise, he found that it was the body of a baby. The body was in such a shocking state of decomposition as to leave no doubt that it had been in the water some considerable time. P.C. Smith, of Stockton, took charge of the body.

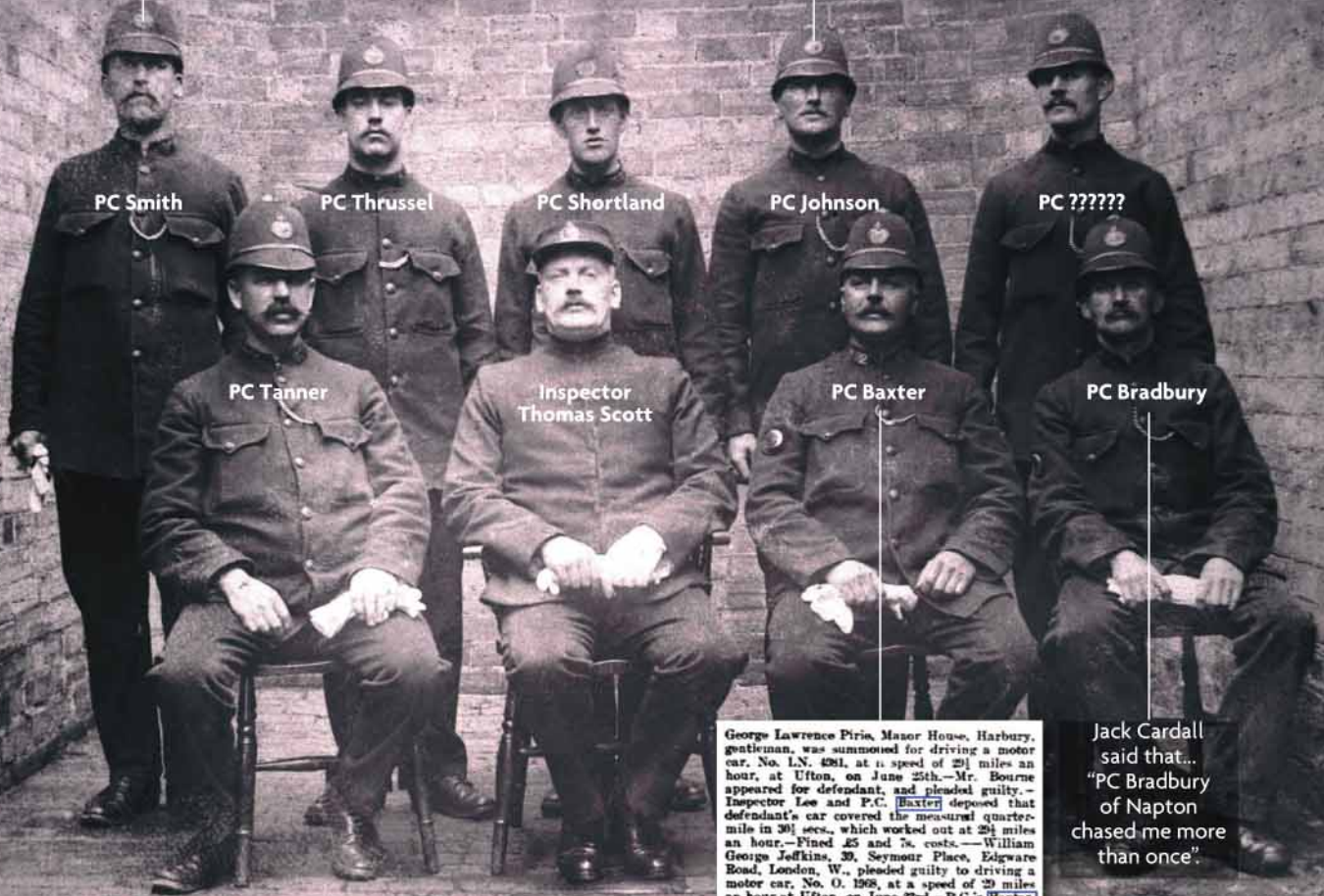
### "THREE UP."

Clarence Lancelot Hessing, machinist, of 47 Highfield Terrace, Leamington, was summoned for not having proper control over a motorcycle in High Street, Southam, on October 16th. Defendant did not appear. P.C. Johnson said defendant was riding on the tank, and had two ladies behind. When stopped he said he was bringing the ladies to catch the bus. Fined 10/., after Inspector Cresswell had read three previous convictions.

OBSTRUCTION.—Francis Alfred Sudlow, baker, Napton, was charged with obstructing Daventry-street, Southam, with a motor-van. P.C. Johnson said the van blocked the entrance to Bull-street, and also to a nearby garage. Police-Inspector Cresswell said it was the worst case of obstruction that he had ever seen. There was one car standing by the rails, and this man came and put the front of the car on the tail-end of the other, so that it completely blocked the road. The police had to continually shift these cars at this place.—He was fined 5s.

PC Martin Smith, the Stockton bobby until his retirement in 1931, composed music played by local orchestras. One such composition was in the possession of a Southam resident entitled 'Eternal Love', published by John Blackburn Limited.

PC Johnson was an excellent sportsman and first class shot. He worked with both Inspector Scott and Inspector Cresswell.



George Lawrence Pirie, Manor House, Harbury, gentleman, was summoned for driving a motor car, No. LN. 484, at a speed of 29 miles an hour, at Upton, on June 24th.—Mr. Bourne appeared for defendant, and pleaded guilty.—Inspector Lee and P.C. Baxter deposed that defendant's car covered the measured quarter-mile in 30½ secs., which worked out at 29½ miles an hour.—Fined £5 and 7s. costs.—William George Jenkins, 39, Seymour Place, Edgware Road, London, W., pleaded guilty to driving a motor car, No. O. 1968, at a speed of 29 miles an hour at Upton, on June 23rd.—P.C.'s Baxter, Jones, and Bradbury proved the charge.—Fined £5 and 8s. 6d. costs.—Charles Bertram Foxhall, 21, Hyde Place, Leamington, motor-car driver, pleaded guilty to driving a motor car, No. D. 2431, at a speed of 29 miles an hour, at Upton, on July 2nd.—P.C.'s Baxter and Bradbury stated the facts.—Fined £2 and 8s. 6d. costs.—Edward Newbold, Everdon Hall, Daventry, motor-car driver, pleaded guilty to driving a motor-car, No. BD. 234, at a speed of 28 miles an hour, at Upton, on July 2nd.—P.C.'s Baxter and Jones stated the facts.—

Jack Cardall said that... "PC Bradbury of Napton chased me more than once."

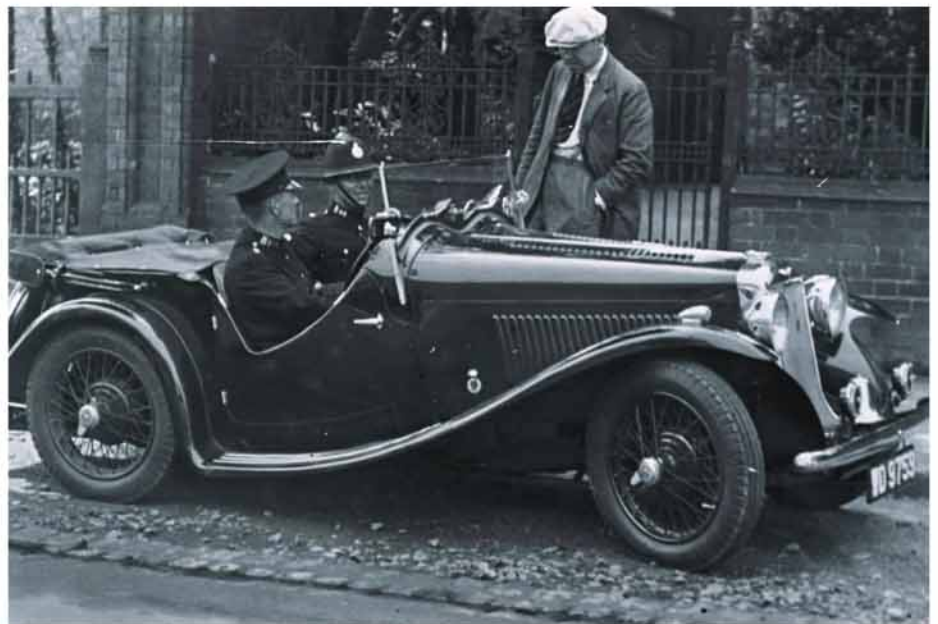
The Southam Division Constables who worked under Inspector Scott. Taken about 1920 in the exercise yard of the Oxford Street Police cells.

# Special Constables in WW2

## 1939-1945

The Special Constabulary in the United Kingdom reached its peak during the 1939-45 war. It then became a fully uniformed, equipped and trained body of police officers and gave invaluable assistance to the regular force.

During WW2 Special Constables covered new duties such as rationing and patrolling the blackout in addition to ordinary duties of maintaining law and order. Officers were also used as first aiders, providing medical treatment at bomb sites, as well as co-ordinating rescues and carrying out crowd control measures.



PC Drinkwater

During WW2 PC Drinkwater lived at Lawford Heath, Rugby. He was a frequent visitor to Southam and the villages throughout the war, following up crime into the Southam Court Room..

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OFFICE,  
SOUTHAM,  
10th, August, 1944.

**P.O.N.E.R.F.A.C.I.O.N.**

P.W.R. No. 4, S.T. PARKER, of the Rugby Division, is commended by the Chief Constable for the efficient manner in which he effected the arrest of a cycle thief at Southam on the 17th July, 1944. (H.S. 64070).

At 7.0 p.m. on the 17th July, 1944, P.W.R. Parker was on duty at Southam when he received information that a soldier had been offering a bicycle for sale. Acting swiftly on his own initiative, P.W.R. Parker immediately commenced to make enquiries, as a result of which a little later he saw two soldiers standing near a bicycle at the junction of Abbey Lane and Babbury Road, Southam. Upon going towards the soldiers, they both walked away from the bicycle, and one of the two soldiers who had gone overtook and observed that he had no connection with the bicycle. At this time the other soldier was upon a considerable distance, so P.W.R. Parker very promptly obtained a lift in a motor car and overtook the second soldier, who he questioned in connection with the bicycle. P.W.R. Parker took the motor car from the possession of P.W.R. Parker, who was obtained from the Southam Police Station, where it was obtained from the Hopper 1444298, Leslie Saunders (18) an apprentice from 11th since the 2nd July, 1944, and that he had stolen the bicycle traced to his possession, at Babbury earlier the same day.

Saunders was later handed over to the Babury Police and at Babury Borough Petty Sessions on the 4th August, 1944, charged with the above offence. He was fined 25 and ordered to be detained to await an appeal.

P.W.R. Parker dealt with this matter in a prompt and efficient manner.

Requisite entries from paragraph 1 to be made in P.W.R. Parker's records at Headquarters and Divisional Headquarters, respectively.

To be brought to the notice of all ranks, regular and auxiliary.

S.H.B. KERRIX,  
Chief Constable.

To Superintendents.

Special PC Samuel Parker - copy of letter of commendation.

Form with handwritten details for Samuel Thomas Parker:

FORUMET No. 415, Div. No. C1433, P.W.R. No. 2944.

SURNAME: PARKER (In block capitals), CHRISTIAN NAME (in full): Samuel Thomas, DATE SWORN IN: 30.4.1937.

PRIVATE ADDRESS: Market Hill, Southam.

OCCUPATION: Butcher, BUSINESS ADDRESS: Market Hill, Southam.

PHONE No. Southam 30.

DATE OF BIRTH: 19.7.1901, HEIGHT: 5' 11 1/2", MARRIED OR SINGLE: Married, NAME(S) OF WIFE: Elsie Virginia, No. of CHILDREN: 3.

NAME(S) OF OTHER DEPENDANTS: None.

RANK: Constable, DATE PROMOTED TO RANK: 20.10.41.

VEHICLE AVAILABLE FOR DUTY IF REQUIRED: YES.

Above Special PC Samuel Parker. A butcher on Market Hill.



Special PC Samuel Parker.

Below Special Jonathan Cardall. 1931 letter of long service.

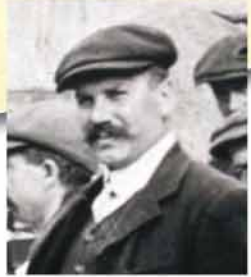
CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OFFICE,  
SOUTHAM.

Dear Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to forward herewith the Special Constabulary Long Service Medal which has been awarded you.

May I thank you most sincerely for the services which I trust may long continue to be available as and when required.

Yours faithfully,  
Jonathan Cardall, Esq.,  
7 Oxford Street,  
Southam.



Special Jonathan Cardall.