

CAMPDEN POLICE STATION – a brief history

Sir Robert Peel's 1839 Constabulary Act enabled counties to set up police forces paid out of the rates, and Gloucestershire lost no time in agreeing to form a County Force, appointing the first Chief Constable in November of that year.

Those wishing to be policeman had to be *'under 45 years old, 5'7" tall, be able to read, write and keep accounts, be fit and of a strong constitution and generally intelligent. There were also certain jobs which disqualified a candidate from becoming a policeman, for example gamekeepers, bailiffs and innkeepers.'*

Gloucestershire Constabulary: A Short History 1839 – 1981



The first Police Station with accommodation for staff (seen to the left of the cart)

Initially there were only Superintendents and Constables, but Sergeants were introduced as the Force grew. In 1844 Superintendent William Sale Evans was in charge at Campden, working from the first Police Station on the corner of Cidermill Lane.

'The Superintendents of the Gloucestershire Constabulary will so arrange the duty at the different stations in their Districts that each man will have a whole night's rest in the week except anything extraordinary shall occur. 8th July 1856'



Police Station left centre

The Police Station and Magistrates Court in Campden was built on the site of two houses and gardens at a cost of £2500. The inscription on the front reads 'County Police Station 1871'.

The new building contained accommodation for the Superintendent of Police and the Sergeant and their families as well as three cells, offices and a Court Room.

The builder was Emmanuel Tomes, who also was the owner of Westington Quarry.

Superintendents of Police

At this time Superintendent William Monk was in charge. He was followed by Superintendent John Matthews, who was listed at the Station in the 1881 Census together with Sergeant Edward Bunker, and their respective families.

By 1891 the Superintendent was Jesse Helps, a widower with three children. Superintendent Frederick Jones is shown in the 1901 census with his wife Mary and their three children.



Supt Jones, right

Superintendents of Police clearly had some standing in the community – the photo shows Superintendent Jones to whom a presentation was made in the Town Hall when he retired in 1914 including an illuminated address (by Michael Pippett and F L Griggs) and a ‘purse of gold’.

Evesham Journal

In 1910 the Force was reorganised into 11 Divisions, but Campden still retained its status as ‘A’ Division covering the North Cotswolds.



Supt. Edward Bunker

Supt. Edward Albert Bunker followed his father into the service, and took charge in Campden in 1920, until his retirement in 1932, when he was followed by Supt. Frederick John Williams, and then Supt. Frederick Wearing.

Gloucestershire Constabulary Archives

23 January 1937

Campden Police recover a stolen car belonging to Mr G.G. Pearson of Shanghai, China.

Mr Pearson '*desired to bring their Worships notice the prompt and efficient work of Inspector Wearing and Sgt. Silvey, of Campden, who, immediately his car was missing, took action which led to its recovery.*'

Evesham Journal

With the build-up to World War II the requirement for backup resources became more important and plans were made to increase the strength of the Special Constabulary. Campden was in C2 Division, with '*the importance necessarily attached to a frontier post The special problems of liaison with adjoining constabularies have strongly influenced the details and work for local Specials...*'

The War Record Book (CCHS Archives)

The County Divisions were gradually amalgamated over the years, and the Divisional Headquarters were firstly moved to Cirencester in 1962 and then to Cheltenham. The last Superintendent in Campden was Supt Baker.

In the mid-1950s a house was purchased in Aston Road for the Inspector and his family. The stable at the Police Station was converted into a modern garage block with rooms above for single men's quarters, but they were in fact never occupied, the constables preferring to continue lodging locally.

In 1966 the Police Station was renovated, with a flat upstairs for the Sergeant and his family, and changed arrangements for the Court and the Magistrates' retiring rooms.

Local memories

In 1968 the police sub-divisional headquarters was relocated to Stow-on-the-Wold Station, and Inspector Eric Markham moved there, leaving Sgt. Des Gay in charge of Campden Police Station, where he remained until his retirement in 1981.



After lying empty for some years, the Police Station was bought in 2000 by the newly-formed Peelers Trust. The Trust did extensive refurbishments as the building was in a poor state, and opened in 2002 as a community building with offices and shops. The Court Room is now a community room, well used by local groups.

In 2001 a Police Information Point was set up at Malvern Strollers, where Rural Beat Officer PC Christopher Skinner, calls to collect messages and enquiries.



PC Christopher Skinner with Mr Satterthwaite,
Owner of Malvern Strollers.