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National Council of Women of
Great Britain and Ireland.

1914 to 1922.

THE HISTORY
OF
THE OFFICIAL
POLICEWOMEN

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THE HISTORY OF THE OFFICIAL POLICEWOMEN.

1914.

Deputation of National Council of Women and other women's organisations to the Home Secretary urging the appointment of Women Police. **June.**

War declared. **August 4th.**

Women Patrols organised by National Council of Women. **September.**
Authorisation cards, signed by Chief Constables in provincial towns, by the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police in London, carried by Patrols.

Women Police Volunteers organised by Miss Nina Boyle, with Miss Damer Dawson as Chief Officer.

First trained National Council of Women Woman Patrol organiser began work. **October 27th.**

Grantham. Two uniformed Women Police Volunteers started work. **November 27th.**

Authorised by Provost Marshal and Chief Constable.

Authorisation cards signed by Brigadier-General Hammersley.

1915.

Miss Damer Dawson left Women Police Volunteers and started Women Police Service. **February.**

Hull appointed two policewomen, paid by the rates. **May.**
Supplied by Women Police Service. Voluntary Women Patrols worked under them.

August. Glasgow Corporation applied to Secretary for Scotland for permission to appoint a female officer to assist the police in securing evidence from females. Appointment sanctioned, but could not be paid from police grant.

1916.

Police, Factories (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act enabled pay of whole-time policewomen in England to become chargeable to the Police Fund.

1916-1918.

Women Police Service supplied 985 trained women to police factory areas, where large bodies of women were employed under the Ministry of Munitions.

Paid by Ministry of Munitions.

Training and uniform supplied by Women Police Service.

June, 1916. Sir Edward Henry (Commissioner Metropolitan Police) employed as paid workers eight National Council of Women Women Patrols to investigate and report on cinemas in the Metropolitan district.

The completion of that work was followed by the employment of 30 Patrols on duty officially in Hyde Park, Victoria, King's Cross, and Euston. Paid out of Police Fund.

1917.

March 10th. Mrs. Stanley appointed Supervisor of Women Patrols, working with the Metropolitan Police.

April 1st. Two whole-time Women Patrols appointed for work in Leicester Square with the Metropolitan Police.

June. All work done by Women Patrols with the Metropolitan Police made whole-time. Forty employed at the rate of 30s. for a 42 hours' week plus 6s. war bonus. An unlimited number of part-time women employed for miscellaneous duties paid by the day.

Provincial policewomen included in the Report of **September.** H.M. Inspector of Constabulary for England and Wales. Thirty-one Police matrons, 43 policewomen, 89 Office and telephone. Total, 163.

Four Women Patrols and a Patrol Leader employed **October.** with the Metropolitan Police at Holton Heath Cordite Factory at the cost of the Admiralty.

Nine Women Patrols with Patrol Leader employed at **November.** Woolwich Arsenal with Metropolitan Police at the cost of the War Office.

1918.

Sir Edward Henry retired. General Sir Nevil Macready **August.** appointed as Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Glasgow Corporation agreed to adopt a friendly attitude towards the Scottish Training School for Policewomen and to grant facilities for training.

Provincial policewomen included in Report of H.M. **September 29th.** Inspector of Constabulary for England and Wales.

Forty Police Matrons, 86 Policewomen, 148 Office and Telephone. Total, 274.

Negotiations were in process with the Commissioner of **September,** Metropolitan Police and the Home Secretary for the **October,** formation of the official force of the Metropolitan Police **November.** Women Patrols.

X Mrs. Stanley appointed Superintendent of the Metro- **November 21st.** politan Police Women Patrols. Authorised strength of the Force: one Superintendent, one Assistant Superintendent, 10 Sergeants, 100 Women Patrols.

Selection Board appointed. President, Mrs. Carden (Hon. Sec. Women Patrols, National Council of Women).

Police Order issued by Commissioner of Metropolitan **December 23rd.** Police, inaugurating the Metropolitan Police Women Patrols.

1919.

- February 17th.** First 25 Metropolitan Policewomen left the Training School (Peel House) and joined the Metropolitan Police Force.
- March.** The Directors of the Federated Training Schools of Bristol, Scotland, and Liverpool saw Sir Edward Troup at the Home Office to press for a Committee of Inquiry on policewomen.
- April.** Convention of Royal Burgh, Scotland.
Women Police on the agenda.
Twenty-nine Burghs with their own police forces asked to state their views on Women Police.
- May.** Federated Training Schools asked to be allowed to give evidence before Lord Desborough's Committee, but were informed that the Committee was not competent to hear evidence of policewomen.
- July.** Major Wm. Murray introduced an amendment to the Police Bill to include policewomen.
- August.** Scottish Office Circular 1485.
Pay and clothing of full-time policewomen allowed to rank in claims on Police Grant.
Policewomen cannot be attested.
- August. 8th.** Deputation received by Sir John Baird on behalf of the Home Secretary.
Assurance given of inquiry to be made into the employment of policewomen.
- August 15th.** Police Act, 1919, passed.
- September 29th.** Provincial policewomen included in Report of H.M. Inspector of Constabulary.

105⁷ Police Matrons, 144 Policewomen, 108 Office and Telephone. Total, 357.

Metropolitan Police Women Patrols, 104.

Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill before the House of Commons. **October**

Advised that the Bill established the legality of women as members of police forces.

This Bill became law in December.

Scottish Training School submitted Draft Scheme for training, qualifications and conditions of service of policewomen for Scotland to the Secretary for Scotland. Glasgow Corporation sanctioned the appointment of ten policewomen for Glasgow police force. **November.**

1920.

Police Orders—Duties of Women Patrols issued for Metropolitan Police Women Patrols. **February 4th.**

Authoritative Statement drafted by Scottish Office informing police authorities in Scotland of the effect of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act legalising policewomen as members of police forces. **February 12th.**

Committee appointed to inquire and report as to the nature and limits of the assistance which can be given by women in the carrying-out of police duties, and as to what ought to be the status, pay, and conditions of service of women employed on such duties. **February 14th.**

Committee heard evidence on 11 days and heard 47 witnesses. **February 24th to March 30th.**

Chief Constables (Scotland) Club met in Glasgow and Perth. Draft Scheme of Scottish Training School for Policewomen submitted also *questionnaire* from the Home Office. **March 5th and March 18th.**

Report of the Committee on the employment of Women on Police Duties presented to Parliament. **August.**

Recommendations on :—

Need for Policewomen, Nature of Work, Status and Powers, Control and Organisation, Pay, Rent Aid and Allowances.

Recruiting and Training, Conditions of Service.

Signatories :

Major JOHN LAWRENCE BAIRD, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P.
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Sir FRANCIS BLAKE, Bart., M.P.

The LORD COTTESLOE. [LL.D.

Dame HELEN GWYNNE-VAUGHAN, D.B.E., D.Sc.,

BEN C. SPOOR, Esq., O.B.E., M.P.

CHARLES DAVID MURRAY, Esq., C.M.G., K.C., M.P.

The VISCOUNTESS ASTOR, M.P.

Major WILLIAM MURRAY, O.B.E., M.P.

A. S. HUTCHINSON, Esq., Secretary.

September 7th. Home Office circulated the Report to Police Authorities in England and Wales with a covering letter which advised that the policewomen should not be attested and to defer standardisation of pay on the basis of the Report.

September 29th. Provincial policewomen included in Report of H.M. Inspector of Constabulary.
105 Police Matrons, 126 Policewomen.

1921.

February 25th. Deputation received by the Home Secretary who promised a circular recommending police authorities to standardise the pay of policewomen on the basis of the Report.

March 17th. Home Office Circular issued.

Pay of the Metropolitan Police Women Patrols retrospective to 1st January.

March 24th. In answer to a question on what steps had been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Report put by Sir Francis Blake, the Home Secretary referred Sir F. Blake to the Circular of 17th March.

Scottish Office Circular.

May 23rd.

Pay and allowances on the Report basis sanctioned for women who are employed on whole-time police duties, in uniform or plain clothes, in the prevention and detection of crime.

Police Pensions Act.

June.

During the debate on the third reading Mr. Shortt said : " This Bill provides that if Women Police are employed they must be employed properly. With regard to the Metropolitan Police, the few women police we have are exceedingly valuable." (*Hansard*, 13-vi.-21).

Provincial policewomen included in Report of H.M. Inspector of Constabulary. **September 29th.**

Police Matrons, 108 ; Policewomen, 105.

Metropolitan Police Women Patrols, 111.

Total, 213.

1922.

Report of the Committee on National Expenditure : **February 12th.**
" We have considered the question of the employment of the Women Patrols . . . Their powers are very limited and their utility from a police point of view is, on the evidence submitted to us, negligible."

First Protest Meeting arranged by the National Council of Women. **February 22nd.**

Forty-seven women's societies were represented.

Chairman : Mrs. Ogilvie Gordon, D.Sc., Ph.D., J.P., etc.

Sir Robert Horne in the Debate on National Expenditure **March 1st.**
(*Hansard*, 1-iii.-22).

Viscountess Astor : " May I ask if it has been definitely decided by the Government to do away with all women police ? "

Sir R. Horne : " I believe that is so. "

The Home Secretary met the Joint Central Committee of the Police Federation, who adopted the recommendation for the removal of all women police officers.

- March 7th.** Question in the House to ask the Home Secretary whether he would state what witnesses appeared before the Geddes Committee to give an account of the Women Patrols and whether any members of the Women's Force were called?
Mr. Shortt: "The Committee consulted the Commissioner and myself. No witnesses from the force were called."
- March 8th.** House of Lords debate (*Hansard*, 8-iii.-22).
Lord Aberdeen and the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke on behalf of Women Police.
- March 9th.** Conference in the House of Commons.
Twenty towns, branches of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, were represented.
- March 16th.** Conference in the House of Commons.
- March 20th.** Deputation organised by National Council of Women to the Home Secretary.
Mr. Shortt in reply said: "As in the past so in the future work that has always been done by women will still be done by women."
- March 23rd.** Conference in the House of Commons.
- March 28th.** Debate in the House of Commons.
Viscountess Astor, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Mrs. Wintringham spoke on behalf of Women Police.
- March 31st.** Disbanding of the Metropolitan Police Women Patrols began.
- April.** Many questions were asked in the House of Commons.
Mr. Shortt in his replies gave the following information: Police Matrons—16 whole-time and 26 part-time matrons are employed in the Metropolitan area. There are upwards of 160 Police Stations in the Metropolitan area, in all of which there are women's cells.
Pay, 18s. a week whole-time matrons; 4d. a head for for every prisoner searched.

Protest Meeting organised by the National Council of Women in the Central Hall, Westminster.
Chairman: The Lady Frances Balfour, LL.D.

May 3rd.

Debate in the House of Commons.

May 10th.

Mrs. Wintringham raised the question of the disbandment of the Women Police Patrols.

Conference in the House of Commons.

June 28th.

Question. Viscountess Astor asked the Secretary of State whether in view of the fact that he has stated that the Metropolitan Police Women Patrols will be reduced and not disbanded, he will state how many he proposes to retain, and in what capacities and for what duties?

Mr. Shortt: "Up to the present it has been arranged that three women patrols should be retained for the purpose of taking statements from women and girls."

Debate in the House of Commons.

June 29th.

Mrs. Wintringham raised the question of the maintenance of the Metropolitan Police Women Patrols.

Mr. Ronald McNeill, Sir James Remnant, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, Viscountess Astor, Sir Donald Maclean, Lord Eustace Percy, Brigadier-General Cockerill, Lord Robert Cecil, Major Glyn, and Mr. Naylor spoke in support. Sir C. Warner supported the Home Secretary, who made the following promise:—

"I wanted the three chief officers and I wanted the total number of officers of the force to be 20 as a nucleus upon which a new force could be immediately built up any moment there was financial power to do so."
". . . . I am still anxious that this offer should be accepted and I will do anything to secure all that anyone can reasonably ask Up to the 20 they will be available for work just as they are at present."

Mrs. Wintringham: "I do not think one could possibly reduce the number below what it is to-day, namely 56."
Question put and the House divided. Majority in favour of the acceptance of Mr. Shortt's offer, 91.

Mr. Shortt in the course of his speech referred to disloyalty in the Women's Division of Police; when challenged to prove it he read a statement taken that day from Inspector Lilian Wyles in which she accused Mrs. Stanley (Superintendent, Metropolitan Police Women Patrols) of having brought pressure to bear on the women to prevent them from accepting the Home Secretary's offer. Miss Wyles' statement was laid upon the table.

July 10th.

Questions: Women Police—Mrs. Stanley. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland asked the Home Secretary whether he had called for any statement from Mrs. Stanley (head of the Force) before publishing the statement of her subordinate officer?

Mr. Shortt replied that a statement denying the allegations of Inspector Wyles had *since* been received from Mrs. Stanley which he would lay upon the table of the House, but as the matter would have to form the subject of an inquiry he refrained from further comment. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland and Lord Robert Cecil expressed indignation that the Home Secretary had read to the House a statement without any attempt to check its accuracy in any way, and Captain W. Benn pointed out that the House had been largely influenced by the statement and asked how the matter is now to be set right?

The Speaker: "We cannot debate every question."

To be obtained from
 THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN, Parliament Mansions,
 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W. 1. Price 6d., postage extra.