

## THE OATH OF A PARISH CONSTABLE

A Parish Constable was elected annually by the Vestry, and received no wages for his labours. It was a part time responsibility which had to be fitted in with his own trade or calling. And sometimes, as can be seen from the previous article, the consequences of being the Parish Constable for a year could be very dire. However, this is the Oath taken every year by every Parish Constable :

'You shall true constable be of (his township) for the space of one whole year. You shall see that His Majesty's peace shall be preserved so far as in you lieth. You shall true presentments make of all bloodsheddings, outeries, rescues, affrays, misdemeanours within your constabulary. You shall duly execute and serve all precepts,<sup>[1]</sup> writs and warrants to you directed by the King Majesty's officers and commissioners, sheriffs, justices of the peace, escheators,<sup>[2]</sup> coroners and all others. You shall see the watch and ward observed and kept within your constabulary, learn and understand the Statute of Winchester and other statutes made for the punishment of rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars haunting and resorting within your constabulary and see them punished according to law. You shall see all persons as play unlawful games punished. So help you God, and by the content of that book.' (The Holy Bible)

<sup>[1]</sup> The two routine precepts to a constable were the order to forward names for jury service and the order to collect a rate.

<sup>[2]</sup> An 'escheat' was a reversion of property to the Crown or a Lord of the Manor on the owner's dying without legal heirs, and the 'escheator' was the officer overseeing this.

## THE OAKSEY COMMITTEE

The Oaksey Committee, under its Chairman, Sir Jeffrey Lawrence, 1st Lord Oaksey, was set up by the government in May 1948, when faced with a chronic manpower shortage. Its mandate was *'to consider in the light of the need for the recruitment and retention of an adequate number of suitable men and women for the police forces in England, Scotland and Wales, and to report on pay, emoluments, allowances, pensions, promotion, method of representation and negotiation and other conditions of service'*.

The Police Federation was lobbying for a fifty-four percent pay rise, but Oaksey recommended only fifteen percent, which was implemented in July 1949. But within a year, this was obviously seen to be ineffectual, and the Oaksey Report was never to achieve the same gravitas as the Desborough Report had done some thirty years earlier. This photograph of the Oaksey Committee was taken on its visit to Glamorgan in 1948.



In the front row are the members of the Oaksey Committee (left to right): Professor D. R. Seaborne Davies, Miss Zoe Freeman, Lord Oaksey, D.S.O., Mr. J. Sullivan, Mr. C. N. Gallie, Mr. H. E. Parkes, C.B.E. Behind them are (left to right): Mr. R. J. Whittick (Home Office), Mr. E. Victor Hayman (County Police Architect), Mr. E. Stanley Evans (Chairman of Glamorgan Quarter Sessions), Mr. Joseph Jones, C.B.E. (Chief Constable of Glamorgan), Alderman J. Jones Edwards (Vice-Chairman of Glamorgan Standing Joint Committee), Mr. D. J. Parry (Clerk of the Peace) and Mr. N. J. P. Hutchison (Scottish Home Department).