

## The talented Whincup brothers

For centuries policing was a community issue. Parish constables and night watchmen were appointed to patrol and deter crime. The local JPs could impose punishments and curfews as they felt necessary. Most crime in Settle was vagrancy related, together with breaches of drinking regulations, burglary and occasional assault, often committed by the illiterate working classes who were unable to receive any support. If you found yourself in a spot of bother the easiest way to escape justice was to move to another parish or, if the worst came to the worst, emigrate for a fresh start.

The development of a national police force came about because of the concern over dangerous situations such as the increased crime in ports and the Chartist and Luddite riots. Glasgow had the first organised local police force, and Ireland had the first national police force.

In 1856 the government passed an Act enforcing county borough police forces. The West Riding division commenced officially on 1 January 1857 [1], ably led by the **Superintending Constable Cockshott**, whose story is given alongside petty criminal **John Cockshott**. In 1877 a National CID was formed to provide a central record of crime and criminals. The introduction of classic 'convict' photographic records such as this one of **Henry Whindem** [ph2], otherwise known as Henry Whinnerah or Henry Edwards, meant that having an alias or moving to a different part of the country was no longer a way to escape justice.

THE NEW WEST RIDING POLICE.—The New Police commenced on the 1st of January. In Staincliffe West they are 11 in number and are stationed as follows, one at each place: viz:—Settle, Giggleswick, Wigglesworth, Hellifield, Gisburn, Bolton by Bowland, Slaidburn, Bashall Eaves, Newton, Grindleton, Malham, and one for Littondale who has not yet arrived.



**Thomas Whincup** was the son of **John Whincup**, and his wife, a widow **Harriet (Avison) Bastow**. John was a master wool-stapler in Leeds who became deputy governor of Kirkdale Gaol in Liverpool and also owned and managed a number of quarries – a busy man. Thomas joined the West Riding Police Force at its commencement and had a long career of 46 years, moving through the ranks to Police Superintendent. One of his obituaries explains Thomas was the 34th recruit to the Force. When he signed up Thomas said he was 25 although was only 23. He was described as 5ft 8 and a quarter inches tall, had light brown hair, blue eyes and worked as a wheelwright at Brighouse. After training, Thomas set to work as a divisional clerk in Staincliffe, the Settle area, where he stayed for seven years. His records show regular promotions and several good conduct awards.

In Settle in 1859 Thomas married **Jane Dickinson**, the daughter of **John Dickinson** and **Sarah Smith** who farmed at Cow Bridge near Wigglesworth for decades. At the time of the 1861 census Thomas and Jane lived in Chapel Street in Settle. They had three sons: infant **John Whincup** is buried in an unmarked plot in Settle Churchyard, **Richard Whincup** became an accountant after resigning as a policeman, and **John Thomas Whincup** became an inspector on the tramways in Leeds.

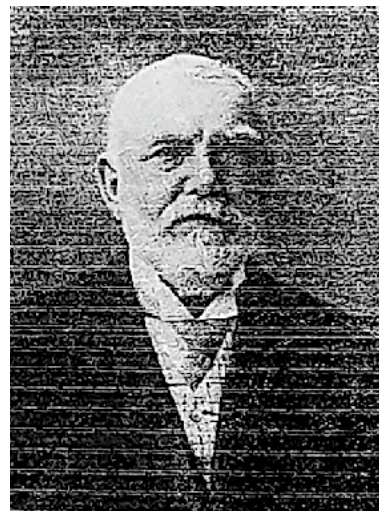
During his time in Settle Thomas dealt with all sorts of petty crime, including burglary and robbery, enforcing regulations at inns and lodging houses, traffic offences, attending dead bodies and being the '*inspector of weights and measures*' to ensure fair trading. He had to enforce additional regulations during the Cattle Plagues of the 1860s. In a wonderful example of 1865 policing methods, Thomas even had to hide in a cupboard to apprehend a suspected burglar, 47 year old widow Betty Shepherd [4]. Betty had been working as a charwoman for **Mrs Margaret**

Saturday morning found to be missing. It was suspected that the person committing the theft had gained access to the post-office through the shop of Mrs. Wildman, which adjoins it, and calculating upon the possibility of something of the kind being attempted again, it was arranged that P. C. [Whincup] should conceal himself in the shop early on Monday morning, ready to pounce upon his customer if such an opportunity presented itself. P. C. Whincup accordingly secreted himself in a cupboard in the shop, and had not been long in ambush before the prisoner, who is Mrs. Wildman's charwoman, made her appearance. She

**Wildman**, the widow of printer **John Wildman**, who ran the Post Office. A year later Mrs Wildman resigned and the family emigrated to Australia. Betty was, unsurprisingly, found guilty and sentenced to Wakefield House of Correction for three months with hard labour. Upon her release she moved to Carnforth with her daughters.

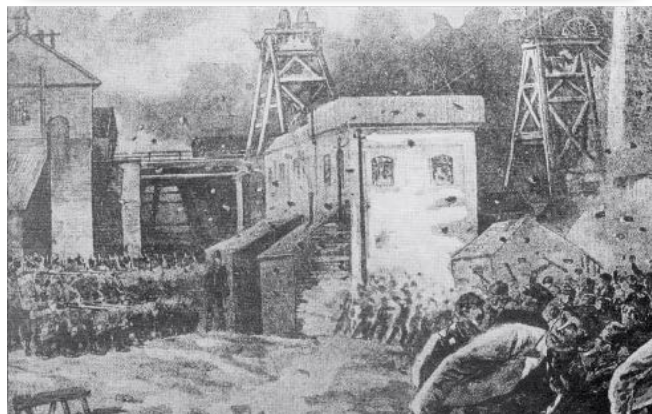
Thomas was transferred to Bolton By Bowland and then to Halifax, York and Saddleworth. In 1878 Thomas was promoted to the position of Superintendent of the Upper Osgoldcross Division in Pontefract and took over the County Force when local divisions merged. The family were able to employ a servant after this. In 1897 Thomas was awarded a bronze medal for bravery by the Prince of Wales (Bertie). Despite sustaining long lasting internal injuries, Thomas saved the life of a woman who had slipped down under the foot-board of an excursion train at Baghill Station in Pontefract.

Thomas [ph1] was the first detective appointed to the West Riding Force, soon dealing with 'the arrest of some Fenians in Manchester'. Following this he was on the team of detectives for the Phoenix Park Murders on 6 May 1882. These were the fatal stabbings of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Henry Burke in Phoenix Park in Dublin. Cavendish was the newly appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland and this was his first day in Ireland. Burke was the Permanent Undersecretary. The assassination was carried out by five members of the rebel group Irish National Invincibles, radical activists for Home Rule who were subsequently found guilty and hanged. Thomas also investigated several high profile murders.



Thomas retired in 1903 and was 'presented with handsome bunting by his superintendent brothers' having served for 46 years. Upon retirement Thomas was the oldest serving officer in the country. Thomas and Jane celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1909. Thomas died in 1911, aged 78 and Jane in 1916, aged 80. Thomas' obituaries indicate the esteem in which he was held [2,3] and his involvement in the Featherstone Riots [ph3].

**46 YEARS IN THE FORCE.**  
**DEATH OF PROMINENT WEST RIDING**  
**POLICE OFFICER.**



**POLICE VETERAN'S DEATH.**  
**STORIES OF EX-SUPERINTENDENT**  
**OF WEST RIDING.**

The death occurred at Leeds on Saturday of Mr. **Thomas Whincup**, ex-Superintendent of the West Riding Constabulary, in his 78th year. Mr. **Whincup**, who was of kindly disposition and a most popular officer, was at the time of his retirement, eight years ago, the oldest police-officer in the kingdom. Mr. and Mrs. **Whincup** last July celebrated their golden wedding.

A native of Great Horton, Bradford, Mr. **Whincup** joined the West Riding Police Force on its formation in 1856. Twenty-two years later he was promoted to superintendent of the Upper Osgoldcross Division, and with that town he was mostly connected during his public career.

During the Featherstone riots he was met by a body of rioters one dark night in a lonely lane at Purston. The Superintendent was accompanied by several Metropolitan policemen, and it would have gone hard with them but for the fact that Mr. **Whincup** was recognised with the remark, "Oh, it's all right. It's the old superintendent; let him go."

Mr. **Whincup** was decorated by King Edward (then Prince of Wales) in 1897 for an act of bravery at Baghill station, Pontefract. He rescued a young woman, who had been caught by an incoming excursion train and dragged between the carriages and the platform. By jumping on to the line he held her clear of the metals until the train had passed through the station.

The Featherstone Riots took place in 1893 near Wakefield – the miners at were locked out of the mine due to the the overproduction of coal. Soldiers fired on a crowd who were demonstrating at the colliery gates, killing two instantly. However, due to his reputation as a

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fair man, a gang of rioting miners chose not attack Thomas and a few of his colleagues when they found them in a lonely lane. They even offered to make a presentation to him when he retired.

A few years after Thomas' marriage to Jane, his brother **Richard Whincup**, married Jane's sister **Betsey Dickinson**. Richard had taken over his father's quarrying business in Shipley. Unfortunately, Betsey died in 1871, aged 31, perhaps with issues related to childbirth. She is buried in Long Preston graveyard, near the church door, with a fine stone.



*In Affectionate Remembrance of Betsey the beloved wife of Richard Whincup of Shipley and youngest daughter of John & Sarah Dickinson of Wigglesworth who departed this life November 10th 1871, aged 31 years*

Richard married again, this time to **Ellen Brown**, from Malton. They moved to Pateley Bridge where Richard managed Scotgate Ash Stone Quarry. They had ten children [ph4] brought up with the help of Ellen's mother, **Mary (Bulmer) Brown**, who lived with them until she died in 1901. This is surprising because Ellen and her younger brother, **John Bulmer Brown**, were not brought up by their parents but by **Ann Thackry**, a postmistress in Whiston, in Rotherham – they had been adopted. In 1856 Mary, aged 23, was six months pregnant with Ellen when she married 17 year old



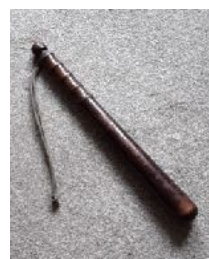
**Charles Sokell Brown**, a gardener. The marriage didn't work. Charles got a post with the police force but was dismissed for being drunk and absent from his beat. By the time of the 1881 census, Charles lived with **Mary Ann Gambles**, 'as man and wife', with a son and working as a gamekeeper. Naughty Charles. However, in the style of 'Long Lost Family' Ellen was able to reunite and live with her daughter again, describing herself as 'a widow'. Her son, John Bulmer Brown stayed with postmistress Ann Thackry for the rest of her life, even after he married.

Richard's Pateley Bridge quarry had fluctuating fortunes but, at one point, employed over 150 men. It was a national business – Richard was one of the main contractors involved in building the Hartlepool tramway. Richard had 'Woodlands' built [ph5], overlooking Bewerly Park, close to the quarry. Richard was at the heart of the community, being the honorary treasurer for Nidderdale Conservative Association, the 'Lighting Inspector' for the town, a member of Pateley Bridge Improvement Association, which coordinated action to promote the village, and a member of Yorkshire Naturalists Union. In 1875 Richard was a steward at the 'Nidderdale Feast', otherwise known as the 'Nidderdale Rant' a traditional annual gathering at which relatives and friends met up and those who left the village returned. Several thousand people attended a day of sports. 'It will to some leave regrets, while others will look back at it as being a time of pleasure, spent among their friends and relatives and a happy re-visit to the scenes of their childhood, which they have left, having to go forth to some distant place to fight the battle of life.' [5] Richard and Ellen retired back to Leeds.



Richard and Ellen retired back to Leeds.

What a talented pair of brothers! Richard and Ellen's son, **Horatio Avison Whincup**, and then his son, **Claude Horatio Whincup**, ran several 'picture theatres' in Headingley and in Briggate, Leeds throughout the golden age of the cinema industry. However, like his maternal grandfather, 35 years after marrying, Horatio found himself with a different 'wife' and daughter, working as a laundry salesman in London while his actual wife and sons stayed in Leeds. Oh dear.



Incredibly, **Clive Whincup**, a descendant of Richard Whincup, lived in Settle for a few years recently, initially unaware of PC Whincup's importance here. He is the proud owner of Thomas' truncheon.

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Thomas and Richard's mother was **Harriet Avison**. Before she married John Whincup, the wool-stapler, Harriet had married **Mark Bastow** from Halifax. As a boy Mark was hired as a stable boy working for a surgeon and, being a curious lad, helped out with surgery, learning the trade.

Mark joined the army in 1818 but was discharged for some reason in 1820. Being a bit of an entrepreneur, Mark reinvented himself as 'Dr Mark Bastow'. Unfortunately, in 1822, thanks to the new 'Statute of 1815 against unqualified apothecaries', Mark was found guilty of trading as an apothecary without appropriate qualifications [4]. He was fined a penalty £20 for every act of unqualified practice which, understandably, wiped him out. As the Act was new Mark may well have been used to set an example to other potential miscreants. A year later Mark found himself in York Castle debtor's prison. He would have had to stay there until some generous relation of benefactor paid off his debts.

Six years later, in 1828, Mark married Harriet Avison and they had a daughter, **Nancy Bastow**, but Mark died two years later. Harriet married John Whincup three years later, and little Nancy was brought up as part of the Whincup family.



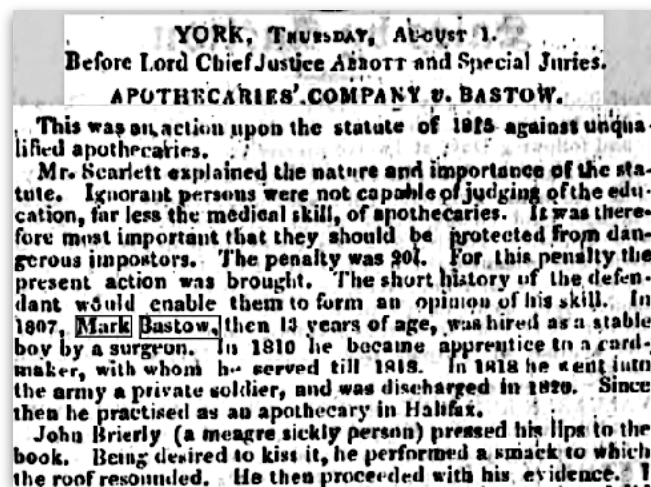
*This account has been compiled as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. Life stories can be found on [dalescommunityarchives.org.uk](http://dalescommunityarchives.org.uk), 'settle graveyard project'. The 'Old Settle' family tree on [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk) includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on [settlresearch@gmail.com](mailto:settlresearch@gmail.com). Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.*

*With thanks to relatives Clive and Pauline Whincup for their help with the compilation of this story.*

*Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 3 – Leeds Mercury, 4 – Leeds Intelligencer, 5 – Hartlepool North Daily Mail*

*ph1,4 – with thanks to Clive and Pauline Whincup, ph2 – thanks to Sarah Lister, ph3 – photo credited to Yorkshire Historic facebook page, posted by Edward Downes, ph5 – credited to onthemarket.com*

*Some of the material in this account has been published by Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust in the book 'Meandering down the Ribble, Born and Bred in the Long Preston Floodplain'. They have given permission for it to be included in this account*



*It may be of use, that the observation which fell from the Judge on this trial, should be publicly known viz. that according to that act, a penalty of £20. attaches for every act of unqualified practice, and that*