

Meeting of Ketton History Group – 10 October 2017

Six members of the Group convened in the Parish Office on Tuesday 10th October 2017 when John Collier gave a very interesting presentation on the formation and implementation of Stamford Police which took place on 1 Feb 1836 from a 1995 case study of Stamford Police during the period 1836 – 1840..

Although London had a Police force much earlier in 1829, it was the Municipal Reform Act in 1835 which provided the powers for local authorities to set up a Police Force which followed the same rules and format across England.

The Force had a Chief Constable and 9 Constables. The appointed Chief Constable was William Read who was the current Constable in Stamford. There were only 40 applicants for the 9 constable positions, surprisingly few for a permanent position paying 12 shillings/week. Constables were to be of good character and habit, but there was dissension and concern amongst the people of Stamford as to whether they would abuse their powers. These concerns were well founded as was shown by a number of constables being dismissed in the early years for misconduct.

The cost of setting up the police force was recorded as £275, which included uniforms, Station houses etc. There were 3 police stations – 56 St. Martins, St. Peters and High St., Shambles, (Library building) with 3 constables allocated to each. The police used the beat system with beats e.g. High Street – Up the High st. to St. Paul's to the infirmary and return, to Brazenose Lane – St Leonard's street down to Gas Lane and return, on to St. Mary's, around the church – St. John's St. return, up the hotel yard to Station House.

There was an interesting discussion on policing in that period, and also the use of the Town Hall building as a Gaol.

The next meeting will be on **Monday 13 Nov 2017**, at 7.0pm in the Parish Office.