

# BRECONSHIRE








Breconshire is a large but sparsely-populated county in Wales. To the west and north it is bordered by the Welsh counties of Carmarthen, Cardigan and Radnor, and to the east by the English county of Herefordshire. Its major commercial links lie to the south, in the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire.

A lone inspector was appointed for the county in 1834/5, but he was soon replaced by the superintendent constables of the hundreds [1]. A regular police force was established in 1858, and was responsible for inspection until 1890.

The Borough of Brecon did not obtain its own standards until 1852. It claimed separate jurisdiction until 1889, although no tangible evidence of inspection of weights and measures has yet been found.

## A: Inspection by the County of BRECONSHIRE

Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1826	One set of standards [37] issued.		
1834	<p>One inspector appointed for the entire county.</p> <p>In the 1840s the six superintending constables for the hundreds were appointed, and they continued until the police force was set up [1].</p>		<p>The inspector appointed in 1834 was William Williams, a watchmaker, of Brecon. He was still listed as a watchmaker in 1852 [S1] .</p>
1858	County police force formed. Two police superintendents acted as WM inspectors.		<p><b><i>Police officers as inspectors 1858-89 :</i></b>  <i>Ystradgynlais</i> (hundreds of Merthyr, Defynnock, Penkelly)</p>
1875	The Deputy CC was inspector for both districts.		<p><i>Hay</i> (hundreds of Bealt, Talgarth, Crickhowell).          David Evans [1858 S1]</p>
1879	Nos..259-260 issued.		<p>John Price (DCC ) for the whole county (-1871-80-) [1871 K, 1880 S2 ]</p>
1889	Brecon CC formed.		<p><b><i>Qualified inspectors:</i></b>          John Williams (q1890 - 1903)</p>
1890	<p>No. 260 withdrawn. Only one qualified inspector.</p> <p>The WM office was in Builth Wells until 1909, when it moved to Brecon.</p> <p>There was only one inspector until c1939, when an assistant was appointed for a short period. In the late 1940s another assistant was appointed.</p>		<p>James Campbell (q1892/3 in Radnorshire, moved to Brecon 1903, retired 1936) [MR 03:55]</p> <p>G.E. Bastin (1936-72-) [MR 36:121]</p>
1974	Authority transferred to Powys County Council.		



¶ Two weights verified in the county of Brecon. The one on the left has the GR marks of the examiners appointed from 1795 onwards, as well as later marks for the East and West divisions of the county. The one on the right has the mark VR/B, presumably signifying the county as a whole, and the uniform verification number 260, allocated in 1879.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF BRECON.**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, ETC.**

APPLICATIONS are invited for the appointment of INSPECTOR OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, etc., for the Administrative County of Brecon.

Applicants must be qualified persons holding the Board of Trade Certificate and must have had at least five years' practical experience of the work to be carried out under the Weights and Measures, Food and Drugs, Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs, Pharmacy and Poisons, Explosives, Merchandise Marks, and Shops Acts, and the Orders and Regulations made thereunder.

The salary will be £300 per annum, rising by annual increments of £10, to a maximum of £350 per annum with travelling and subsistence allowances in accordance with the County scale.

The person appointed will be required to devote the whole of his time to the various duties of his office and to reside in Brecon.

The appointment will be subject to three months' notice on either side and to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, in connection with which the selected candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.


Applications, stating age and experience, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, and endorsed "Inspector of Weights and Measures, etc.," must reach me not later than the 4th January, 1936.

ALBERT JOLLY,  
*Clerk of the County Council.*

County Hall, Brecon.  
30th November, 1935.

¶ Advertisement for a successor to Inspector Campbell, who retired in 1936. The successful candidate was G.E. Bastin.

## B: Localities with separate jurisdiction in the county of BRECONSHIRE

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
<b>Brecon</b>	AncBo MB:1835 cp	 ?	434	s:1852

It is recorded [2] that in 1822 the weights used in Brecon were in a deplorable state, and this included those belonging to the corporation. Brecon was given the status of a municipal borough in 1835, but standards were not acquired until 1852 [1064A].

In 1866 the chief constable was the inspector, and this arrangement continued until 1889 when the borough was disqualified because its population was less than 10,000. The chief constables were: Henry Lee (1861-71, listed as IWM in 1871 [K]), Samuel. A. Webb (1872-80, listed as IWM in 1875 [W] and 1878 [E]), J. Watkins (1880-87), P.S. Clay (1887-89).

The non-uniform mark has not been confirmed, and no weights stamped with the uniform number 434 have been seen.

## C: The trade in Breconshire

No specific references to the trade have been found. It must be assumed that the local ironmongers in the larger towns supplied and repaired scales and weights.

## References for Breconshire

### *Published works*

1. *Third Report of the Standards Commission*. London, 1870. Pages 117-123 contain a verbatim report of an interview with Martyn Roberts, a magistrate for Breconshire, regarding the methods of inspection in the county.
2. John E. Lloyd. *Historical Memoranda of Breconshire*, Vol.2. Brecon: Owen, 1904. Contains report on defective weights in the Borough of Brecon in 1822.

### *Directories*

- S1. Slater's Directory of ... South Wales. [ST39] 1858.
- K. Kelly's Post Office Directory of ... South Wales [ST1689] 1871, 1891.
- W. Worrall's Directory of South Wales. [ST1691] 1875.
- E. Eyre's Wales Register and Guide. [ST1693] 1878.
- S2. Slater's Directory of North and South Wales. [ST1694] 1880.

### *Original documents*

*Powys Record Office, Llandrindod Wells.*

B/Q/AC: There are extensive police records from the nineteenth century, but the online catalogue reveals little of relevance to the inspection of weights and measures. However, item B/Q/AC 301 is a letter (1862) from De Grave concerning the price of scales, which confirms that the police were responsible for these matters.