

# CAMBRIDGESHIRE

and

# THE ISLE OF ELY





The geographical county of Cambridgeshire was historically divided into two parts. The northern part, known as the 'Isle of Ely', was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ely until 1837, when administrative control passed to the justices, although remaining separate from the rest of the county. The southern part was usually referred to as the County of Cambridge, but the administration of the county was distinct from that of the town.

In Cambridge the ancient university was responsible for weights and measures from the fourteenth century onwards. The situation was regularized in 1856 when jurisdiction was transferred to the borough authorities. The only other separate jurisdiction was in Wisbech, which operated as a Weights and Measures authority until 1889, when authority passed to the Isle of Ely.

The Stanley family were scale makers in Cambridge for much of the nineteenth century, and the trade continued to flourish there until recently. There is little evidence of the trade in the rest of the county, possibly due to competition from neighbouring towns in Norfolk and Suffolk.

In 1965 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely were combined in a single administrative unit, and in 1974 the county was enlarged by the addition of Huntingdonshire and the Soke of Peterborough.

## A1: Inspection in the county of CAMBRIDGESHIRE



Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1826	One set of standards [274] verified.		18 hundreds: not used for WM purposes.
1834	One inspector appointed.		W. Playford was examiner for whole county before 1834, and continued as such after 1834.
1851	County police force set up. Four police districts.		<b>Inspectors 1834-56</b>
1857/8	Three more sets of standards [1189, 1190, 1215] verified, probably indicating that the police were taking over WM inspection.	<b>A D</b> <b>C</b>	John Harrison Angier, of Cambridge, gentleman (1834-35) James Levett (formerly a Taxor's man) (1835-44-) William Smith, grocer (-1850-56)
1867	Four police superintendents acted as WM inspectors.	<b>C D</b> <b>C</b>  <b>L D</b> <b>C</b>	The marks denote the districts whose superintendents were the inspectors of WM:
1882	Pre-uniform marks still in use [AR], and continued until 1890.	<b>N D</b> <b>C</b>	Arrington Cambridge Linton Newmarket
<b>Police superintendents as inspectors 1856-90</b>			
<p>Although the police force was set up in 1851, it was not until 1856 that there was any involvement with WM inspection, when first Supt Algernon William Low was appointed for the whole county. Later the same year, Supt Charles Stretton replaced Low. In 1857 the County resolved that each divisional Supt be appointed IWM in his own district.</p>			
<i>Arrington (AD)</i> Phillip Pallant (1858-77-) William Dade (-1879-) James Carlow (-1888-)		<i>Cambridge (CD)</i> Charles Stretton (1857-88)  Stretton became chief constable in 1888 and continued as nominal chief inspector of weights and measures until his retirement in 1915.	
		<i>Linton (LD)</i> Charles Yeo (-1860-64) Charles Long (1864-81&) Edward Dyson (-1888-)  <i>Newmarket (ND):</i> -- Marson (1857) William Benson (1857-81-) Charles Long (&1882-88-)	



¶ A bronze weight with the original Cambridgeshire mark, W IV above C OF C. Also visible are several later marks: specifically, ND above C, for the Newmarket district, and the London Founders marks before 1826.


Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1889	Cambridgeshire CC formed.		
1891	No.565 issued; one qualified inspector appointed. The Chief Constable remained in charge. Office in the Shire Hall, Cambridge.		<p><b><i>Qualified inspectors:</i></b>            J.F. Bellamy (1891-1923)            [MR 23: 59]            M.H. Horgan (1927-1945)            [MR 47:111]            T.A.T. Davies (1946-1974)            [MR 77:175]</p>
1965	Cambridgeshire and Ely united to form one administrative county.		After amalgamation with the Isle of Ely, both offices were in the Shire Hall, Cambridge.
1974	County enlarged to include Huntingdonshire and the Soke of Peterborough.		

## A2: Inspection in the county of the ISLE OF ELY

Dates	Events	Marks	Comments
1826	One set of standards [276] issued.		The Isle of Ely comprised four hundreds (Ely, Wisbech, North and South Witchford) in the geographical county of Cambridgeshire.
1834	Another set [553] issued; inspectors appointed for two divisions.	 <b>ELY</b>	
1841	Isle of Ely police force set up.		<b><i>Inspectors 1835-58:</i></b>  <i>Div 1 Ely &amp; S. Witchford</i>
1857	Two more sets of standards [1187-88] issued; the police took over on 12 November, 1858, with four WM divisions initially.	<b>D.I</b> <b>ELY</b>	John Bacon (1835-1856) (high constable)  <i>Div 2 Wisbech &amp; N. Witchford</i>
1859	Another set [1272] issued, but the Whittlesey division was split between Wisbech and Chatteris	 <b>I of E</b>	William Squier (1835-54) John Bacon (1854-56)  <i>Isle of Ely</i>
1867	Three police superintendents acted as WM inspectors.		John Bacon (1856-58)
<b>Police superintendents as inspectors 1858-90</b>			
In 1858, the police superintendent in each of the four districts acted as IWM; the following year, there were three WM districts			
<i>Ely division</i> William E. Lantsbury (-1859 –72-)		<i>Chatteris and Whittlesey divisions (March)</i> James Lees (-1859-72) Thomas Smith (1872-)	
<i>Wisbech division</i> Thomas Stocking (-1859-70-) - Foster (-1872-)		Thomas Collins (-1875-) Benj.Burrows (-1881-83-)	



¶ Two weights verified in the Isle of Ely. The one on the left has a mark comprising simply a crown above ELY, which was possibly the earliest mark. It also has two small marks with D. I above ELY. The one on the right has two large D.I ELY marks, presumably indicating Division I, although D.II has not been recorded. The VR number is actually 125, but this weight was stamped with a broken punch and the '1' is missing.

1879	Nos.125-127 issued (and 128 for Wisbech).		<b><i>Qualified inspectors:</i></b>
1889	The Isle of Ely continued as a separate administrative county. Took over from the Borough of Wisbech.		Nathaniel. Edwards (q1890/1, retired 1924)
1891	Nos.126, 127 cancelled; one qualified inspector using No. 125, office in Wisbech.		W.A. Davenport (1924-1935) [MR 24:213, 35:227]
c1925	Office moved to March.		F.W. Crabtree (1935-72) [MR 73:30, 76:55]
1965	Cambridgeshire and Ely formed one administrative county.		From 1965 Crabtree was joint chief for Cambridgeshire.
1974	Huntingdonshire and the Soke of Peterborough added to the county.		

**B1: Localities with separate jurisdiction in the county of CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
<b>Cambridge</b>	UniTown AncBo MB:1835	<b>B<sup>O</sup>F<sup>C</sup></b>	427	s:1826 r:1867 n:1882-1974

Under a charter of Richard II (1382) the University was responsible for Weights and Measures in the town, and at the famous Sturbridge Fair held nearby. The WM duties were carried out by the Taxors, University officers, who were appointed annually. The stamp used comprised the initial letters of the surname of each Taxor. The standards [300] issued in 1826 were delivered to the Vice-Chancellor. In 1835 the Taxors were Rev. John Graham of Queen's College, and Rev. Samuel Ward of Magdalene College, and when the standards were reverified in 1840 they were delivered to Rev William Baily and Rev John Mills.

Following the report of a Royal Commission of 1852, a local act of 1856 (19 Vict.c.xvii, section 13) transferred authority to the Borough Council; the University lent their standard weights and measures to the Corporation, who undertook a bond to return the same on demand. (One hundred years later, the University decided to present the bond to the Corporation, making the temporary arrangement permanent.) Edmund Wells was elected as IWM in 1856 and when standards [1394] were verified in 1867 for the borough [4Rep:272], they were delivered to him. He continued in post until his death in 1869. Subsequently the inspectors were Joseph Wright (1869-1884-) and Henry List (-1887-1900-). In 1874 a set of grain measures for the borough [1579] was delivered to Alfred Stanley, a local scale maker.

Apparently the first qualified inspector was Ernest Meara, who qualified in Hull 1902/3, and was in Cambridge from 1904 to 1912 [MR 04:41; 12:205]. From 1912 to 1946 the chief inspector was J. Heathfield Phillips M.A., who had qualified in Ipswich in 1909. He was succeeded as chief inspector by F.W. Cartwright, who died in office in 1967 [MR 67:130]; J.W. Ford was promoted to succeed him [MR 67:178].

¶ These three weights date from the period when the Taxors were still responsible for the WM within the Borough of Cambridge



¶ Stamped with the initials HM, this weight was stamped in 1850/1, when the Taxors were the Rev Henry George Hand, of King's College, and the Rev William Marsh of Trinity Hall. It also bears the County mark C OF C and the later mark for the Cambridge District of the County.



¶ Stamped with the initials TB, this weight was stamped in 1854/5, when the Taxors were the Rev Edward Reed Theed, of King's College, and the Rev Mynors Bright, of Magdalene College. It also bears the later mark of the Borough.

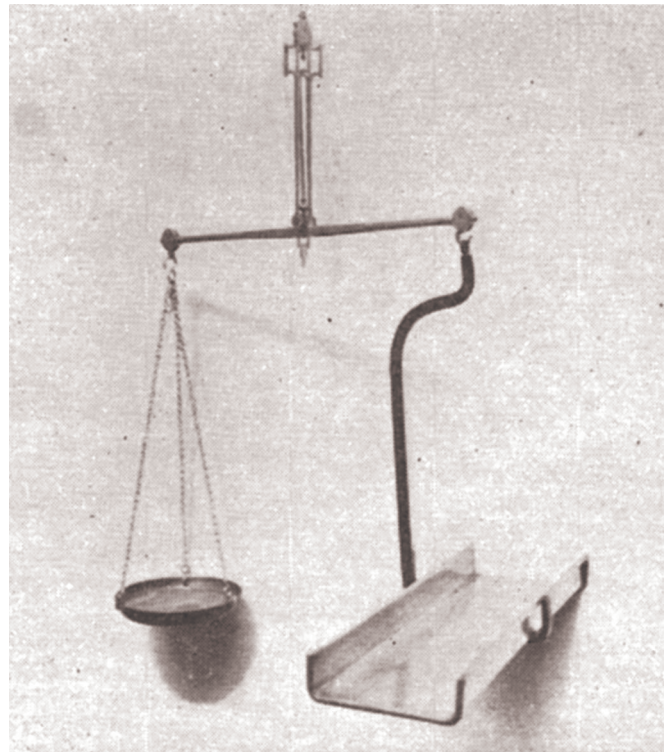


¶ Stamped with the initials ED, this weight was stamped in 1855/6, when the Taxors were the Rev Joseph Edleston, of Trinity College, and the Rev Charles Style Drake, of Jesus College, the last Taxors to act as IWMs for the borough. It also bears the later mark of the Borough of Cambridge.




¶ An 8oz brass weight with Cambridge Borough marks, including the letters BC several VR 427 marks, and an ER 427 mark.

¶ In Cambridge butter was traditionally sold in rolls one yard long. This may have been because the Colleges were expected to provide each student with three one-inch sections daily. After the city took over as the WM authority in 1856 it was thought desirable to standardize the 'yard of butter' and a local by-law enacted that it must weigh one pound. The scales shown here were specially designed to enable the inspector to check a yard of butter by weighing [3].





## B2: Localities with separate jurisdiction in the county of the ISLE OF ELY

Locality	Status	Marks		Dates & Notes
		Non-uniform	Number pre-1951	
Wisbech	AncBo MB:1835 cp		128	s:1834 r:1867  n:1879-1889

The corporation took over the regulation of Wisbech Market in 1786 and obtained standards weights and measures at that time. Their powers were increased by a Local Act of 1810 (50 Geo III c206).

The inspector appointed in 1834 was G. Cottam, an ironmonger, to whom standards [485] were issued.

In 1857, the Isle Magistrates appointed an IWM for the whole Isle, including the borough of Wisbech, despite it having its own IWM [CIP: 21/2/57]. When County inspection passed to the police, Wisbech was included in the division of that name. The borough fought the decision and the County force ceased to inspect the borough as of December, 1861 [CIP: 15/2/62]. William Warner, a cooper, was the IWM appointed in 1862 [CIP: 27/2/64] and is also mentioned in 1872 [SBk] and 1875 [K]. He was succeeded by John Terrington, who is mentioned in 1877 [SBk]. He was listed as IWM in 1883 [K], and probably continued as such until the borough was disqualified in 1889, because its population was less than 10,000.



¶ A 1oz brass weight with the Wisbech borough verification mark. It also has a pre-uniform county mark and the uniform mark VR 125 used from 1880 onwards.

## C: The trade in Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely

<b>CAMBRIDGE</b>	
<b>Stanley</b>	<p>Nathaniel Stanley was apprenticed to Joseph Reynolds, a London scale maker, in 1795. He was in partnership with Joseph Sommers 1805-1816, and sole proprietor of the business thereafter.</p> <p>He is listed as a scale maker in Cambridge [1847 K], and died in 1850, aged 70 [<i>CIP</i>: 29/6/50]. at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 16 Corn Exchange St &lt;1847&gt;.</li> </ul> <p>At the same time another establishment was run by his son, John Stanley, scale maker [1847 K], [1851 G]. He was reported to be an insolvent debtor in 1855 [London Gazette 8 Feb 1855] and died in 1868 [<i>CIP</i>:28/11/68].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 Wheeler St &lt;1847-1869&gt;.</li> </ul> <p>Succeeded by Alfred Stanley [1855 Cr] at the same address. In 1874 he received a set of grain measures for the use of the borough. Also at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 6 Union St</li> <li>● 7 Butcher Row [1869 K]</li> </ul> <p>Succeeded by Charles Stanley, scale maker [1875 K]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Black Swan Yard, Guildhall St &lt;1875–1879&gt;.</li> </ul> <p>See also <i>Norwich</i> for another branch of the Stanley family.</p>
<b>Macintosh</b>	<p>Alex Macintosh jnr, scale maker [1883 K].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 21 Market St &lt;1883&gt;</li> </ul> <p>Firm continued as A. Macintosh &amp; Sons [1892 K, 1913 Sp]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Market Hill &lt;1892-1913&gt;.</li> </ul>
<b>Avery</b>	<p>First noted 1904 [K]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Falcon Yard, Petty Cury &lt;1904&gt;</li> <li>● 1 Corn Exchange St &lt;1913-1916&gt;</li> <li>● Avery House 69-73 Regent St &lt;1965&gt;..</li> </ul>
<b>Dent</b>	<p>R.W. Dent, scale maker [1913 Sp]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 37 King St.&lt;1913&gt;</li> </ul>
<b>Headley &amp; Edwards</b>	<p>Headley and Edwards, scale makers [1913 Sp]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corn Exchange St &lt;1913&gt;</li> </ul> <p>Acquired by <b>Avery</b> in 1934.</p>

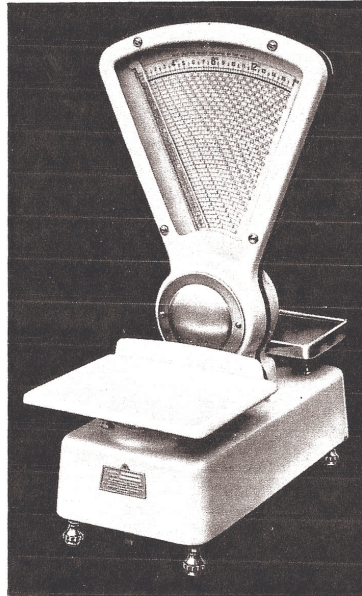
<b>Todd</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">TODD CAMBRIDGE</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Seen on a 4oz brass weight</i></p>
	<p>P.J. Todd &amp; Sons, established 1931, later known as Todd Scales, scale and weighing machine makers [1955 K advt] .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 118 East Road 1931-1967&gt;</li> <li>• Trinity Hall Industrial Estate &lt;1981&gt;</li> <li>• Studlands Park Industrial Estate, Newmarket &lt;2000-2004.</li> </ul> <p>Company acquired by <b>Avery</b> 2004?</p>
<b>Fry</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">FRY CAMBRIDGE</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Seen on a 4lb iron flat weight</i></p>
	<p>F.H. Fry, scale maker [1955 K advt]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 Gold St, [1967 Kelly]</li> <li>• 27 Perowne St.</li> </ul>
<b>LINTON</b>	
<b>Librasco</b>	<p>Libra Scale Co. Ltd, established 1972, makers of Librasco scales and weights, expanded into general household furnishings as The Libra Company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambridge Road, Linton &lt;2007-2009&gt;</li> </ul>

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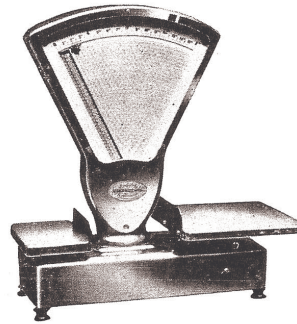


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¶ Above: advertisements for two competing firms in Kelly's Directory of Cambridgeshire, 1955. Left: a 4oz brass weight with the name of the Todd firm.

## References for Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely

### *Published works*

1. Charles H. Cooper. *Annals of Cambridge*. 5 vols. London: Warwick & Co. (1842-53). Contains many references to the controversies at Sturbridge Fair, and the activities of the Taxors.
2. 'The Local Standards of the City of Cambridge.' *Monthly Review* 65 (1957) 22-23.
3. 'Cambridge: Butter by the Yard.' *Monthly Review* 65 (1957) 131-132.

### *Directories*

- P. Pigot's Directory of ... Cambridgeshire. [N53, N67] 1830, 1839.
- R. Robson's Directory of ... Cambridgeshire. [N101] 1839.
- S. Slater's Directory of ... Cambridgeshire [N85] 1850.
- G. Gardner's Directory of Cambridgeshire ... [N135] 1851.
- Cr. Craven & Co.'s Commercial Directory of ... Cambridge. [N374] 1855.
- K. Kelly's (Post Office) Directory of Cambridgeshire. [N110, ST 237] 1846, 1853-1967.
- Sp. Spalding's ... Directory of Cambridge. [ST 240] 1875-1939.

### *Newspapers*

*CIP* Cambridge Independent Press (1839-1872)

*London Gazette*, 9 February 1855. John Stanley of Cambridge, scale maker, insolvent.

*Cambridge Daily News*, 23 October 1956. 'City Released from 1856 Bond'. In 1856 the university standards were handed over to the city subject to a bond, which was cancelled in 1956.

### *Original Documents*

*Downing College (Bowtell Bequest)*

'The Case of the Taxors ... .' Paper by Thomas Johnson, Taxor, Magdalen College, dated 8 Sept. 1733, with historical background to a dispute at Stourbridge Fair.