

History of Concord Police Department (Pre 1853)

Early Settlers

Concord's history dates back thousands of years to Native American settlements along the banks of the Merrimack River. Pennycook, "the crooked place", was the original name the Indians gave the land surrounding the winding turns of the Merrimack River. Settlers from the English colony of Massachusetts, attracted to the valley by the good soil for farming as well as the easy transportation provided by the river, made their way north beginning in 1725.

The township of Penacook, as all of Concord was known, had been established in 1726, early settlement was concentrated at the north end of North Main Street in the central village. By 1732, the area became known as the parish of Rumford.

On June 7, 1765, the province of New Hampshire enacted a law granting a town described as 'a Parish of Bow...by the name of Concord.'

Town records dating back to 1732 show that during town meetings the residents elected a Constable who also served as tax collector. By 1850 the number of constables being elected had increased to 14. If you were selected at the town meeting as constable and chose not to serve, you were required to buy your way out (one individual had to pay 5 pounds in 1739). Many well known Concord names such as Walker, Eastman, Rolfe, and Kimball are represented on the list of Constables.

By the mid 1830's, there were also 7 police officers serving Concord. They were appointed to their positions by the town selectmen.

The first city charter, "An act to establish the City of Concord", was enacted by the NH general court in the June session of 1849 and was voted upon and approved by the voters of Concord on March 10, 1853. The law and its adoption by the town meeting dissolved the town, and created the city on that date.

Section 15 of that charter created the City of Concord Police Department by stating: "The City Marshal shall, under the Mayor, have the control and direction of the police of the city; shall collect the taxes, and attend upon the Mayor and Aldermen when required; and shall be, by virtue of his office, be constable and conservator of the peace."

The 1853 annual report shows that just before Concord became a city, there were night watch and night police.

Historic Buildings

Concord and Penacook residents take great pride in their city, and much has been done to preserve its history. Some of Concord's earliest houses, including the 263-year-old Reverend Timothy Walker House, can be seen today at the north end of Main Street. Walker was Concord's first minister and founding father, and his 1734 home is considered the oldest two-story house between Massachusetts and Canada.

In the city's early days, it was surrounded by Rumford Garrison, erected for the protection of the community's first nine families. Downtown is a historical gold mine of buildings such as The Eagle Hotel (which accommodated Andrew Jackson, Benjamin Harrison, Jefferson Davis, Charles Lindbergh and Eleanor Roosevelt), Eagle Square (home of the Museum of New Hampshire History), Phoenix Hall (built

on the spot where Abraham Lincoln spoke just prior to being elected president), New Hampshire State Library (the oldest of its kind in the nation), Bicentennial Square (a former 1890 police station), the First Baptist Church (its bell was made at Paul Revere's Foundry) and the First Church of Christ Scientist (opened five years after Baker Eddy moved to Concord from Bow in 1892).

Seat of State Government

In the years following the Revolutionary War, the city's central location made it a logical choice for the state capital and, in 1808, Concord was named the official seat of government. Today, the State House, built of local granite in 1819 by state prison inmates, is the oldest state capital in which the legislative branches meet in their original chambers.

Industries Leave Legacies

Penacook's early industry included small lumber mills, a grist mill and a carding and cloth finishing mill that ushered in the woolen manufacturing industry that thrived in Penacook for nearly a hundred years. Other important industries to emerge included furniture manufacturing as well as electrical production and instrument manufacturing.

In the 19th Century, one of the city's best-known industries was carriage manufacturing. The Concord Coach, often seen in western movies and credited with opening the American West, was made here and one is on display at the Museum of New Hampshire History.

Granite quarrying earned the state its nickname, The Granite State. Local stone from nearby Rattlesnake Hill was used for the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. The quarry remains active and is still a major granite supplier.

History of Concord Police Department (Post 1853)

The City of Concord Police Department was officially created on March 10, 1853 by city charter. The original charter placed the duty of tax collection on the office of the City Marshal. The first three Marshal's of Concord performed that duty. An amendment to the city charter officially removed this responsibility in 1859.



The first police building for Concord was located on the west side of North Main Street (almost across from Phenix Hall), next to the L. Downing Carriage Manufacturers, makers of the stagecoaches that opened the west.. In the course of years leading up to 1900 the salary of the Marshal increased from two hundred to twelve hundred dollars per annum.

Up to 1883 the whole police force never numbered more than nine, generally less. In that year, it consisted of the City Marshal, Assistant Marshal, three regular police and night watch. There were eighty special police appointed for the seven wards of the city, including twelve for the railroad.

This arrangement continued till 1889, though the personnel was somewhat changed, and the number of the police and night watch had increased by one. A uniformed police squad of fifteen, under the guidance of a captain, was created. The special police for the wards and the railroad was continued with the railroad picking up an additional four in number.



In 1890, the special police of the wards numbered one hundred, while, on the petition of the Concord & Montreal Railroad Company, two hundred policemen were appointed for that corporation, and at its expense. This large, sometimes larger, supply of police was yearly made for the railroad until 1896.

The number of regular police and night watch, including the captain, rose from four in 1888 to ten in 1892. In 1898 it became nine, and so remained through 1900.



In January, 1889, Mayor Stillman Humphrey said, "The uniforming of our patrolmen has met with universal approval, and will doubtless be continued. The special squad organized during the past year, which has done escort and other duty in this city and elsewhere, has won the hearty favor of all, at home and abroad, by it's gentlemanly bearing and excellent deportment."

In 1893, the Governor of the state created a board of three appointed commissioners to which was assigned the power of appointing or removing police officers. The commissioners were required to report quarterly to city council and annually to the Governor. During their first year, the commissioners issued a book of rules. The intent of the commission was to remove the police departments from the domain of politics.



In 1899, Concord Mayor Martin took an opposing position and determined that the resident's of Concord should choose their police officers, and remove them when the occasion requires. His position was that the department would be more efficient under the control of the city than under a commission. *The Police Commission was officially abolished in 1909 by a charter change which created, in its place, a police department subject to the orders of the Mayor. It was reinstated in 1935 for a short period before being permanently abandoned.*

In 1890, a modern two story police station was built on Warren Street. Later a smaller two story police sub-station was built in Penacook. *Today, the old Warren Street police station is a private restaurant where dinner is still served in the original holding cells. The station at the north end of the city now houses the Penacook branch of the public library.*



"Police Signal Service" was a desideratum supplied in 1898, when a police telephone line with twelve boxes at convenient points was

constructed by the New England Telephone Company. The number of calls that were rung in by police officers during the year 1900 was twenty-nine thousand three hundred, besides a large number of emergency calls.



During the period around 1909, the police equipment consisted of an ambulance, patrol wagon, light driving wagon, motorcycle, and horse. The horse was kept in a stable located on what was then Durgin Lane.

In 1913, City traffic laws were passed. Officer J. Edward Silva became the city's first traffic officer and his post was the intersection of Main and

Pleasant Streets.

The use of horse drawn vehicles came to an end in 1914 with the purchase of a second-hand touring car. The first city police cruiser, added in 1924, was a five-passenger Overland touring car.

In 1922, the annual police budget was \$49,229 with \$10,229 being paid by the Boston & Maine Railroad yard for special police services.

In 1923, the police department reported among its accomplishments having conducted security checks on 907,155 doors over the course of the year.

In 1925, the Gamewell Company installed a new police signal system. An updated police and fire system was later installed in 1949. *The police Gamewell system remained functional until system removal in 2002.* By the following year, the title had changed from City Marshall to Chief of Police. At that time, the department had 20 full-time regular members.

In 1927, a switch board was installed to process calls.



1939 a two-way police communications system was installed.

In 1940, the department had 27 full-time regular members with a budget of \$64,077.

1942, the department, in its war effort, sharply curtailed its cruiser activity due to a shortage of gas and tires. The position of Inspector was created to investigate crimes.



1944, the Concord Police Benevolent Association Boys' Club was formed to deter juvenile delinquency. This group would later develop into and become independent as the Concord Boys and Girls Club now located on Bradley Street.

1948, a new radio switchboard was installed, as well as a Dictaphone Electronic Belt Recording Device which recorded all radio, telephone, and call box communications. The department budget had increased to \$129,997.

1951, the department acquires the Acometer, a device which measured alcohol intoxication.

1952, the department fleet had increased to four police cars, a limousine ambulance, a combination patrol and emergency wagon, a panel truck, and a three wheeled motorcycle.



1953, the first female police matron was hired to serve as a meter maid.

In 1954, the department had 43 full-time regular members with a budget of \$170,852.

1960s, the police were still responsible for conducting the annual census.

1971, the department had 45 full-time regular members with a budget of \$554,074.



1974, the department hired its first female police officer in a part-time capacity.

1975, the current police station headquarters was opened on 35 Green Street as a two story structure.

1976, the ambulance service was switched to the Fire Department, and a major reorganization of the department was undertaken.

1977, the Police Community Resources Unit was developed and initiated a number of programs designed to strengthen the police-community relationship.

1985, a third story was added onto police headquarters and was occupied early in 1986 by the administrative section of the department.

The 1990's and into the new millennium have continued to bring many changes to our organization. The department has increased to 80 full-time sworn members with an annual operating budget of approximately 6 million dollars. Many new specialties were introduced including such things as School Resource Officers, K-9, and bicycle patrol units.

March 10, 2003 the department celebrated it's 150th birthday as an incorporated city police department. To celebrate the event, the department commissioned a Sesquicentennial Badge that was worn by all sworn personnel during that year.

Department facilities have been refurbished, a modern digitalized communications system was installed, and the equipment currently provided is state of the art. The Concord Police Department remains well prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

The Concord Police Department is an agency proudly steeped in history and tradition. Visitors will find our station to be adorned with a variety of historic memorabilia. If you have any historical artifacts, photographs, or information concerning the Concord Police Department, the members of our history team encourage you to contact us at (603) 225-8600 or by [email](#).



Special Thanks to Sandra Lee of the Concord Public Library for all of her research efforts on behalf of the Concord Police Department.

Chiefs of Police



Robert C. Barry
2007-2011



Jerome K. Madden
2001-2007



William J. Halacy
1998-2000



David G. Walchak
1975-1997



Walter H. Carlson
1956-1975



Arthur W. McIsaac
1942-1956



Victor I. Moore
1935-1942



George S. Kimball
1909-1935



James E. Rand
1902-1909



George S. Locke
1888-1902

Photographs not available:

John Connell	1870-1888
William H. Buntin	1866-1867
Jonathan L. Pickering	1868-1869 1863-1865
John Kimball	1859-1863
Nehemiah G. Ordway	1859
Benjamin F. Gale	1855-1858
Jonathan L. Cilley	1854
John C. Pillsbury	1853

Historic Photos- Officers



Circa 1900s



1940s



1950s



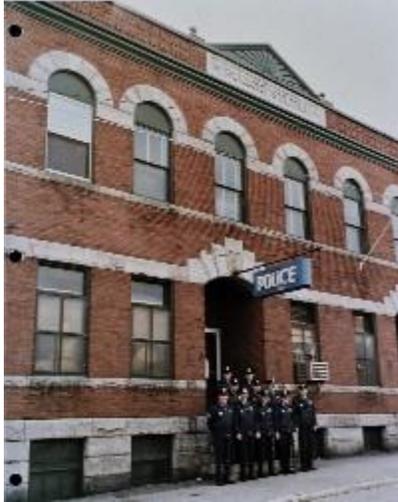
1950s



1960s



1970s



1970s



1980s



1990s

History Gallery



Our Nations 150th
June 1915



Circa 1940s
(Thomas Roy)



Circa 1950
Mud Turtle, Long Pond
(Worthern Muzzy)



Chief W. Carlson
Installing sign at old
Warren Street Headquarters



1905



Circa 1940s



Watch Commanders Office
Circa 1900



Posed Reproduction



Circa late 1950s
(Charlie Lapierre, Unknown)



1958
Vault Installation
Concord Savings Bank
(Herbie Norton)



Tommy Gun in department archives



Concord Stage Coach
(Paul Murphy, Daryl Gwinn,
Debbie Fuller, Jim McGonigle)