

# THE HISTORY OF RICHLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



by

Trinette Denise Mullineaux

## SHERIFFS OF RICHLAND COUNTY

1787 – 2006

The office of the sheriff has grown from a sheriff and one deputy to a sheriff and a fleet of over 500 deputies sworn to serve and protect the communities of Richland County. Over the years, sheriffs have made changes to the department to meet the growing needs of the people in the County.

The following is a list of the sheriffs of Richland County from the first sheriff, Joel McLemore, 1787 – 1788, to Sheriff Leon Lott, elected in 1997. Before the sheriff took office he paid and signed a bond (Code 3479). These bonds were hand written prior to the 1900s and this list was compiled with as much detailed accuracy as possible by going through all the bonds recorded at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. The spelling of the earlier sheriffs' names may not be completely accurate due to the poor quality of the hand written bonds.

It is interesting to note the inter-relatedness of the early sheriffs and their ties with other prominent families in the county. In several instances, brothers or fathers and their sons served as Richland County Sheriffs. One, Jesse Dent, served as sheriff three different times.

Joel McLemore	1787 – 1788	Jesse E. Dent	1873 – 1880
Henry Rives	1789 – 1798	Samuel W. Rowan	1881 – 1892
Sterling C. Williamson	1799 – 1802	William J. Cathcart	1893 – 1900
Charles Williamson	1803 – 1806	William Henry Coleman	1901 – 1912
William S. Taylor, Jr.	1807 – 1816	John Calhoun McCain	1913 – 1920
Wright C. Tyson	1816 – 1817	T. Alex Heise	1921 – 1952
Eli Kennerly	1817 – 1820	Strother S. Sligh	1953 – 1964
David Becket	1821 – 1824	Shep Griffith	1965 – 1968
William Hilliard	1825 – 1828	Frank Powell	1969 – 1988
Jesse DeBruhl	1829 – 1832	Allen Sloan	1989 – 1996
Stephen C. DeBruhl	1833 – 1836	Leon Lott	1997 – (still in office)
Jesse DeBruhl	1837 – 1840		
Eli Kennerly	1841 – 1843		
Theodore Stark	1844 – 1847		
Nathaniel B. Hill	1848 – 1850		
Charles Neuffer	1851 – 1854		
Jesse E. Dent	1855 – 1858		
Samuel Beard	1859 – 1862		
Jesse E. Dent	1863 – 1866		
Frederick W. Green	1867 – 1868		
Phineas F. Fraser	1869 – 1872		

Early Sheriffs, 1787 – 1900 The early sheriffs served through times of turmoil and social change. They did not have the manpower nor the resources and equipment that the sheriffs of today have. The first sheriff, Joel McLemore, served with only one deputy. The early sheriffs had the assistance of the constables and later the rural police, however, since the sheriffs did not have direct authority over them it was hard to function as a complete law enforcement unit. For the early sheriffs serving from 1790 – 1860, South Carolina was a lawless place. (Williams, 1959)

Joel McLemore, who immigrated from Virginia, was Richland County's first sheriff from 1787 to 1788 (Moore, 1993). He was born to John and Casey McLemore (Green 1974). His brothers were John and Burwell McLemore. His brother John would later name his son after Joel, which can cause some confusion in reviewing records. Joel McLemore married Elizabeth McLemore and had six children, John, Sarah, James, Mary, Joel, and Jesse Claiborne ("Record of Wills," 1787-1853).

During the Revolutionary War, Joel served as a Captain in the regiment from Richland County which was commanded by Colonel William Thomson and Colonel Robert Goodwyn (Hicks, 1998). He was promoted in 1780 to Colonel and served with Lt. Colonel Taylor and Colonel Sumter. During the war, he was captured at Fishing Creek but escaped (Moss, 1983) with Colonel Taylor and John McLemore as they were being marched to Camden (Green, 1974).

Henry Rives became the second Richland County Sheriff in 1789 and stayed in office until 1798, serving five terms (Richland County Bond, 1789). Henry was born to William Rives and Lucy Wyche. His siblings were Green, Rebecca, William, Silas, and John. Timothy Rives, Henry's grandfather, along with his sons, William, Robert, and Timothy moved to South Carolina from Virginia just before the Revolutionary War. William's brother Timothy had a daughter, Mary that later married Sterling C. Williamson, who became Sheriff of Richland County after Henry Rives (Green, 1974). Henry Rives served with Joel McLemore, as a subaltern, in the Revolutionary War in the regiment from Richland County (Hicks, 1998). In 1779, Colonel Taylor Sumter were in command of the regiment from Richland County and Henry continued to serve as a subaltern until 1782 (Moss, 1983).

Sterling C. Williamson served sixty-five days in the militia in 1782 and was sheriff of Richland County from 1799 to 1802 (Richland County Bond, 1800,1799). On January 4, 1793 Joseph Tatum died and Williamson raised his daughter Elizabeth Tatum. He married Mary Rives, the daughter of Timothy Rives (Green, 1974).

Charles Williamson was a foot soldier in the regiment from Richland County during the Revolutionary War. He was commissioned sheriff of Richland County on May 17, 1803 (Hicks, 1998) and served as Richland County Sheriff from 1803 to 1806 (Richland County Bond, 1803). On August 9, 1806, Sheriff Williamson sold his house and the land which sat on Gervais Street to Thomas H. Egan for \$50.00. His son, Colonel Charles Williamson, married Miss Ann Howard on June 18, 1820 ("Literary Register," 1820).

Elected Sheriff of Richland County on December 4, 1807, William S. Taylor, Jr. was known as “Black-eyed Billy” (“South Carolina,” 1907, volume 8). He was born on September 30, 1779, and his father, William Sr. died when he was a small boy. Taylor was reared by his uncle, Colonel Thomas Taylor, one of the most influential men of Richland County who served as Justice of the Peace in 1785. It was at Colonel Taylor’s house that the citizens of the County gathered and chose Meyer’s Hill (Horrell Hill) as a site for the courthouse of Richland County (Hennig, 1936). Billy Taylor served as captain in the War of 1812 during his term as sheriff from 1807 to 1816 (Richland County Bond, 1807, 1808, 1811, 1812). It was reported that Taylor left Richland County to live in Louisiana with his brother Simon but quickly returned. For many years after his tenure he was a merchant in Columbia. He married Elizabeth Calvert on June 1, 1804 and died October 23, 1857. Their children were Jane E., Sarah M., John C., Thomas, House, Simon, Mary Ann, William Sumter, Elizabeth Calvert, Martha P., and Eloisa Marion (Rhett & Wragg, 1983).

Wright C. Tyson was sheriff of Richland County for one year from 1816 to 1817 (Richland County Bond, 1816). His son, Wright C. Taylor Jr. served in the Civil War as a rifleman for the Infantry 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Company H (Hewett, 1998).

Eli Kennerly served as the Richland County Sheriff from 1817 to 1820 (Richland County Bond, 1816, 1817). Eli Kennerly was heir to John Malone’s estate on January 28, 1836, along with Martha Marsh, Eliza Blocker, and Robert Malone. He was also heir to Samuel Levy’s estate on February 9, 1836 and to Mary Malone’s estate on October 18, 1843. His son, Eli Kennerly (Jr), along with his children, Julia and James Boatwright, were heir to Mary Malone’s estate (Green, 1974).

David Becket served as Richland County Sheriff from 1821 – 1824 (Richland County Bond, 1821). David Becket died while in his last year of his tenure in 1824. Documentation of the circumstances of his death could not be located except for a petition dated July 30, 1824 that referred to him as the late sheriff of Richland District (Hicks, 1998).

William Hilliard served as Richland County Sheriff from 1825 to 1828 (Richland County Bond, 1825, 1828).

The DeBruhl brothers served consecutive tenures as Sheriff of Richland County through the years of 1829 to 1840. Jesse served his first term from 1829 to 1832 and his second term from 1837 to 1840 (Richland County Bond, 1828, 1836, 1839). His brother, Stephen served from 1833 to 1836 (Richland County Bond, 1832).

Jesse Debruhl led the Democrats against the Whigs during the elections of 1837 (Hennig, 1936). They wore red caps and assembled at the Coleman Theatre. Major Stark, who later became Richland County Sheriff in 1844, rallied on the side of the Democrats (Scott, 1884). The Democratic candidates, Elmore, DeSaussure, Hopkins, and Douglas won the Columbia Precinct, but the Whig candidates, Admas, Threadwell, Black and Wade were elected (Hennig, 1936). The Democrats contested the election and the Chronicle

published 26 illegal voters in Columbia, so a new election was ordered. The result was the same and Whig candidates still won their positions.

Jesse DeBruhl owned a plantation on the banks of the Congaree River. In August of 1852, the waters of the Congaree rose to an unusual height. The river flooded into the cotton fields of Jesse's plantation, exposing several Congaree Indian skeletons that had remained in a fair state of preservation (Green, 1974). Jesse served as a rifleman in the Civil War for the Infantry 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Company A (Hewett, 1998).

Stephen C. DeBruhl served one term from 1833 to 1836. After his tenure he was still a primary voice in political and business interests of Columbia. In 1839, cotton was an extensive and profitable business until the completion of the up country railroads. This transferred the cotton trade from Columbia to the towns and villages above it. Stephen C. DeBruhl and John A. Crawford had publicly opposed the subscription to the stock of these railroads and predicted the decline of business in the cotton industry for Columbia. Stephen lived on the North side of Gervais Street next door to Dr. Fitch. They were not on good terms and when Dr. Fitch wanted a tree removed that was on DeBruhl's property he got a friend to tell DeBruhl that Fitch threatened to indict him if he cut it down. DeBruhl immediately had the tree cut down and contrary to his intention had fulfilled his neighbor's wishes. (Scott, 1884)

Eli Kennerly served a second tenure as Richland County Sheriff from 1841 to 1843 (Richland County Bond, 1840). His son, Eli Kennerly married one of Dr. Augustus Fitch's daughters (Scott, 1884).

The Stark family originated in Petersburg, Virginia and moved to the Ninety Six District, South Carolina in 1766 (Bailey, Morgan, & Taylor, 1986). In 1804, the Starks moved to Columbia and resided on Stark's Hill on the east end of Pendleton Street. Theodore Stark, Richland County Sheriff from 1844 to 1847, was born to Robert Stark who was married three times. It is not certain which wife was Theodore's mother. Robert had nine children with his first wife and eleven with his second wife. The names of his children that are known are Theodore, Martha, Charlotte, John, Robert, Elizabeth, Mary Sophia, Harriet, Emma Elizabeth, Thomas, and Sarah Rebecca. Robert Stark, Jr. served in numerous positions. To name a few, he fought in the Revolutionary War, as a solicitor for Richland County, and the mayor of Columbia in 1806 (Bailey, Morgan & Taylor).

Theodore Stark was heir to his father's will of December 9, 1829 – October 1, 1830. Part of his inheritance included the library and law office near the courthouse (Green, 1974). Like his father, Theodore Stark was active in a number of areas. He was Secretary of State and became Sheriff of Richland County in 1844 (Scott, 1884). He owned 1,400 acres of land in Columbia that in 1848 he sold to Charles Neuffer who would later become Sheriff of Richland County (Draine & Skinner, 1986). Theodore served in the Civil War in the Calvary Battalion, Holcombe Legion, Company B (Hewett, 1998).

Nathaniel B. Hill served as Richland County Sheriff from 1848 to 1850 (Richland County Bond, 1848). He joined the Confederate Army in April of 1862 and was killed at Williamsburg, South Carolina May 5, 1862 (Salley, 1930).

Charles Neuffer was a native of Germany and arrived in Richland County with other German immigrants in 1841 (Hicks, 1998). As noted earlier, in 1848 he bought 1,400 acres in Columbia from Sheriff Theodore Stark for \$1,575.00 (Draine & Skinner, 1986). He was sheriff of Richland County from 1851 to 1854 (Richland County Bond, 1851).

Jesse E. Dent served as Richland County Sheriff on three separate occasions. He served his first term from 1855 to 1858, his second term from 1863 to 1866, and his final term from 1873 to 1880 (Richland County Bond, 1872, 1876). During his first term, Sheriff Dent gained a reputation for bravery when he went unarmed to quell a riot at the South Carolina College. It happened in 1856, when two college students were arrested for drunkenness and disorderly conduct on a city street. They were put in the guardhouse and other college students gathered to protest their incarceration. The South Carolina president, C.F. McCay arranged for the release of the two students, but they violently assaulted John Burdell, the Chief Marshal. With help of a guard, named Sonendrecker, the Chief Marshal fought back and roughed up the students, who left but soon returned and began another disorderly demonstration. Mayor Edward J. Arthur ordered the ringing of the alarm bell. The citizens assembled and Sheriff Jesse E. Dent summoned them to keep the peace (the hue cry for a posse comitatus). About thirty to forty armed citizens followed Sheriff Dent to the guard house where a mass of students were standing with guns and pistols, cursing and daring the sheriff to fire. The sheriff ordered his men to be on the defensive and attack only if the students attacked them. There was a standoff until Dr. Thornwell came onto the scene and ordered the students to follow him back to the college (Scott, 1884).

Samuel Beard served as Sheriff of Richland County from 1859 to 1862. (Richland County Bond, 1859, 1863).

Frederick Green served as Richland County Sheriff for one year from 1867 to 1868 (Richland County Bond, 1867). In 1843, Frederick leased the Columbia Canal for 21 years and collected the toll. In 1882, the Canal was turned over to the Board of Directors of the Penitentiary and in 1892 it was turned over to the Columbia Water Power Company, now known as the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company (Hicks, 1998).

Phineas F. Fraser served as Sheriff of Richland County from 1869 to 1872 (Richland County Bond, 1868).

Samuel W. Rowan served as Sheriff of Richland County from 1881 to 1892 (Richland County Bond, 1880, 1884, 1888).

William J. Cathcart, who served as Sheriff of Richland County from 1893 to 1900 (Richland County Bond, 1892, 1896), was the son of Hampton Cathcart and Francis Farmer (Death Certificates, 1923). The Cathcart family was well known for their

involvement in politics. Mr. John S. Cathcart, cousin to William, was the county commissioner of Fairfield County for ten years. He died a year before William became sheriff of Richland County. ("Death of," 1892). Mr. George Rhett Cathcart was on General Longstreet's staff, a leading member of the American Book Company, and widely known in business, literary, and social circles in South Carolina and in Europe. He died the year William became Sheriff. William J. Cathcart was married to Cornelia Shell and their son, W.J. Cathcart was listed as a Special Agent upon his death on July 12, 1923 (Death Certificate, 1923).

During the elections of 1892, William J. Cathcart was County Chairman but had to resign his position after announcing his candidacy for sheriff of Richland County ("County Executive," 1892). Cathcart defeated Mr. Starling for Richland County Sheriff by 386 votes. Cathcart received 1,168 votes and Starling had 782 votes ("The Full," 1892). On September 7, 1900, Sheriff Cathcart announced his resignation as sheriff, effective the 13<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Cathcart expressed a desire to go into his own business and retire from public life. William Coleman was appointed sheriff for his unexpired term and then went on to serve a full term of office ("Sheriff Cathcart," 1900). William J. Cathcart died as a farmer in Spartanburg County on September 12, 1923.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Sheriffs, 1900 - 2001

The first sheriff of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was William Henry Coleman. He was born in Pickens County, March 9, 1850 to parents William Henry Coleman and Martha Martin (Death Certificates, 1919). He spent his boyhood in Tennessee and enlisted in the Confederate Army when he was 15. After the war he relocated to Columbia as a farmer. During the Reconstruction Period he was a member of a Red Shirt company commanded by Captain Lykes (Wallace, 1935). He married Miss Annie Taylor Moore of York County who was the daughter of the prominent Dr. Alexander A. and Annie (Taylor) Moore. They had four daughters and three sons. Their daughters were Mrs. F.F. Hough, of Richmond, Virginia; Mrs. J.A. Krentzlin, of Washington, District of Columbia; Mrs. J.B. Sylvan, of Columbia; and Miss Myrtle Coleman of Columbia. Their sons were William Augustus Coleman, George Trezevant Coleman, and Samuel Rowan Coleman ("South Carolina").

William H. Coleman was a deputy sheriff for 18 years under Samuel W. Rowan and William J. Cathcart. He was then elected into office and served for twelve years from 1901 to 1912 until he voluntarily retired (Richland County Bond, 1900, 1905, 1909). Mr. Coleman announced his candidacy for sheriff of Richland County on August 26, 1900. He ran against two known politicians, Mr. C.W. Suber and Mr. Civil, Richland County's Coroner ("County Campaign," 1900). On August 29, 1900, The State Newspaper (pg. 8) printed the results of the primary. Coleman led with 854 votes to Civil's 711 votes and Suber's 230. In the second primary, Coleman led by a narrow margin with 1,362 votes to Civil's 1,308 ("Coleman," 1900). Suber had dropped out of the race. On September 15, 1900, Coleman won the election by only 47 votes ("Coleman").

Mr. Coleman's reputation as sheriff was not only acknowledged in Richland County but throughout the State ("South Carolina," 1920). He was known as a fearless and trustworthy sheriff who "discharged his duty at all hazards" ("South Carolina," Wallace, 1935, p.865). He also had the distinction that no prisoner escaped throughout his twelve years of service. In 1902, Richland County had two convictions of manslaughter, six assault and batteries (of aggravated nature or with intent to kill), and six burglaries (Bateman, 1915). After leaving office, he was appointed postmaster of Columbia in February, 1916 and served for the next three years until his death on January 27, 1919 ("South Carolina," Death Certificates, 1919).

John Calhoun McCain served as sheriff of Richland County from 1913 to 1920 (Richland County Bond, 1912, 1916). He was born July 29, 1865. He was the son of John Kelley McCain and Sarah Reynolds of Abbeville, South Carolina. His father was the son of a corporal in the Civil War and was wounded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Manassas and left on the battlefield for days. He had to drink water from a mud puddle and ate green apples to survive. After the war, he became a minister and married Sarah Reynolds. They had two boys, Dr. Arthur McCain, a surgeon in the Spanish American War and John Calhoun McCain. John Calhoun McCain was also known as "Cap" and married Harriet "Hattie" Arzenia Leitner on December 23, 1886. Their children were William Arthur McCain, Coroner of Richland County, Lucille McCain Mann, Sallie McCain Suydam, Sue

McCain Pendergrass, and Alice McCain Carmichael (Roberta McCain, personal communication, May 3, 2000).

Mr. McCain won the election for sheriff by 400 votes, defeating a Mr. Walker. The final tally was McCain 2,659 votes and Mr. Walker 2,283 votes ("Vote was," 1912). During Sheriff McCain's administration, the Richland County Sheriff's Department consisted of the sheriff, a chief deputy, and a jailer. Sheriff McCain died on June 14, 1923 (Roberta McCain, personal communication, May 3, 2000). John Calhoun McCain's son William Arthur McCain ran for sheriff of Richland County in 1921, but was defeated by T. Alex Heise. Sheriff T. Alex Heise then hired William A. McCain as the Department's first Identification (fingerprint) Officer, thus eliminating his competition (Roberta McCain, personal communication, May 3, 2000).

The next Sheriff of Richland County was T. Alex Heise (Scott, 1884). T. Alex Heise was elected sheriff of Richland County in 1921 (Richland County Bond, 1920, 1921, 1924). He increased the number of deputies from three to twelve to handle the increasing responsibility of the Department. Due to lack of equipment, deputies had to provide their own vehicles as well as weapons. Sheriff Heise held office for over three decades. He was unseated by Strother Swift Sligh in 1952, by a vote of 7,503 to 5,415. His loss was partly attributed to a dynamic campaign by Mr. Sligh and the fact that Sheriff Heise had been in office for 31 years. "No one can hold any office, much less the office of sheriff, that long without making enemies in the discharge of his duties." ("Sligh Triumphs," 1952)

Strother S. Sligh was a legend in his own time in Richland County. Born on August 7, 1900 to Solon Swift Sligh and Mary Charlotte Kinsler, he served four years as Chief of Police in Eau Claire and twenty-three years as an alcohol agent for the federal government during the Depression ("Sligh To," 1952). Mr. Sligh married Ruth Carolyn Proudfit and they had five children, Mrs. Ina Joana Little, Mrs. Robert L. Hall, Mrs. Ralph Gross, Mrs. Henry Gaddis, and Strother S. Sligh, Jr. ("Strother Swift," 1979).

Mr. Sligh became sheriff of Richland County in 1953 and served until 1964. As sheriff of Richland County, he continued his earlier interest and succeeded in catching and prosecuting individuals for making moonshine. Sligh's reputation for honesty and fairness was undisputed. "Sligh was a no-nonsense, honest lawman and a credit to the county. As long as citizens here talk about the old bootlegging days, car chases, and smoke screens, or think about honest lawmen that couldn't be bought, they will be talking about and remembering Strother S. Sligh ("Sheriff Sligh," 1979).

Under Sheriff Sligh, the Department purchased its first vehicle, a Dodge sedan. The deputies had radios but did not have the capability to transmit directly. Instead their radios transmitted a signal alerting the deputy to contact headquarters. Sheriff Sligh also created the first school for sheriff's deputies. He obtained textbooks and instructors from the Universities of North and South Carolina. The deputies were trained in law enforcement and constitutional law ("Strother Swift," 1979). By the time he retired from

office in 1964, the Department had 20 vehicles and 37 deputies (“Richland County Sheriff’s Department,” 1980).

Shep Griffith was elected sheriff of Richland County in 1964, took office in 1965, and served until 1968. The Sheriff – elect spoke of increasing the efficiency of the sheriff’s department prior to taking office. During his tenure, he increased the size of the department by adding seven new deputies for a total of 44. The ratio of deputy per citizen was about one to 3,000 and the 44 deputies had to police 122,000 citizens (“Griffith Calls,” 1964). Sheriff Griffith knew this was dangerously inadequate and placed one man to a cruiser to give a greater and quicker coverage. The Board of Administrators granted Sheriff Griffith \$13,000 to keep the old police cruisers. He gave these to the deputies stationed at their homes in Ballentine, Blythewood, and the lower end of the county who were on call 24-hours. Sheriff Griffith advocated that there was too little money in law enforcement and fought to advance the sheriff’s department (“Griffith Calls,” 1964). In 1965, he asked the Board of Administrators for a \$307,231 appropriation to operate the sheriffs department and to give the deputies a higher salary. The starting salary for a deputy in 1965 was \$3,874.00 per year. The department had a total of 16 cars and Sheriff Griffith asked for funds to buy a Paddy Wagon (“Sheriff Griffith.” 1965).

Frank Powell was born in Fairfield County, the son of Warren and Marie Broom Powell. He served in the Navy in World War II and in the Army in the Korean War. Frank Powell was the Columbia Magistrate of Richland County before going into law enforcement. He was hired by Sheriff Sligh in July 1956, as the county and state’s first juvenile officer employed by a law enforcement agency. He dedicated 33 years to law enforcement and received numerous awards and certificates. He received The Order of the Palmetto by Governor Carroll Campbell by Joint Resolution of the South Carolina House and Senate in December of 1988 (“Frank Powell,” 2001).

In 1969, Frank Powell was elected sheriff of Richland County and served until 1988. He inherited 44 deputies to police the 748 square miles of Richland County. Within the first year of his administration, Sheriff Powell formed the Narcotics Division with the County’s first Narcotics Officers (“Richland County Sheriff’s Department,” 1980). Deputies Sonny Clark and Richard Freeman were the first narcotics agents to be sent to Washington DC to attend school at the US Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, now known as the US Drug Enforcement Agency (Sonny Clark, personal communication, 2000).

Under Sheriff Powell’s leadership, the department began to expand and modernize. He loaned his personal walkie-talkie to the Department, increasing its communication capabilities (Sonny Clark, personal communication, 2000). Sheriff Powell was the first to hire women as deputies at Richland County Sheriff’s Department (“Longtime,” 2001). By 1980, the department employed 232 sworn personnel. The sheriff organized the agency into the following units: Uniform Patrol, Investigations, Special Services, and the Administrative Personnel. Sheriff Powell was also responsible for developing a number of innovated programs for the department such as Project 95 (a program for children, now called the Deputy Billy Show which airs on Saturday mornings on WIS), the

Juvenile and Narcotics Divisions, a Polygraph Examiner, Aircraft Section, Adopt-A-Senior Program, Felony Squad, and the Crime Prevention Unit. The department evolved into a professional organization, providing an effective level of service to the citizens of Richland County. Under Sheriff Powell's leadership, the department's minimum educational requirement to become a deputy sheriff was increased from a high school diploma to a bachelors degree from an accredited college or university ("Richland County," 1980). He died Sunday, January 7, 2001 ("Longtime," 2001).

The next sheriff was Allen F. Sloan who was born in 1946, the son of Frederick Epps Sloan and Marguerite Coleman Sloan. In 1968, he graduated with an Associate Degree in Business Administration from Palmer College. Sloan was hired by Richland County Sheriff's Department as a deputy in January 1970. A year later he was promoted to investigator, and in 1973 he formed the original "Deputy Billy" character on the television show for children. That same year he was the Jaycee's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. He left the Department in 1979, to serve as the Blythewood Magistrate and returned as the third highest-ranking official with the title Inspector. He was elected sheriff of Richland County on November 8, 1988 and served from 1989 to 1996. He was defeated by Leon Lott in the election of 1996. Leon Lott had been a Lieutenant in charge of the Narcotics Division at Richland County when Sheriff Sloan fired him. Despite being fired, Lott came back and won the election for sheriff of Richland County and still spoke highly of Sloan. Sheriff Sloan died at age 54 on January 25, 2001 ("Ex-Sheriff," 2001).

Leon Lott was born in Aiken on October 3, 1953 to Leon Lott Sr. and Madeline Lott. He was elected as sheriff in 1997 and continues to serve in the position. Sheriff Leon Lott reinforced professionalism and innovation in the Richland County Sheriff's Department. Known as a visionary leader since assuming command of the department, Sheriff Lott continually strived for excellence in both personnel and technological advancements in the criminal justice field. With determination similar to Sheriff Powell's, his predecessor of the 1980s, Sheriff Lott continued to move the department to both a higher standard of professionalism and modernization ("The Richland," 2000).

Sheriff Lott did not stop the quest for improving the department internally and externally. In 1999, he was one of only 48 students accepted internationally to attend Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government for the Senior Executives in State and Local Government course. The course consisted of instruction and research in areas such as problem solving, team building, the art of compromise, and effective leadership practices. Sheriff Lott stated, "The skills and knowledge I was able to absorb from the John F. Kennedy School of Government will certainly translate into positive changes within the Sheriff's Department. Although we have made great strides in the past three years, we are always looking for ways to better serve our citizens." ("The Richland," 2000).

The Richland County Sheriff's Department succeeded in becoming one of the largest, most technologically advanced sheriff's departments in South Carolina. Deputies were assigned their own patrol car and a walkie-talkie that transmitted not only to other Richland County officers, but had communication capabilities with Lexington County

Sheriff's Department, the Richland County Emergency Response Units, and the Fire Department. The Richland County Sheriff's Department fleet of vehicles consisted of mark Ford Crown Victorias, as well as unmarked Camaros, Jeeps, and various other vehicles used by the Narcotics Division in their vice operations. Each deputy was also provided body armor, a Glock .40 caliber automatic handgun, Cap-stun, an Asp (the new version of what was once called a night stick), and other personal equipment that assisted them in carrying out their law enforcement duties ("The Richland," 2000).

The Tactical Team of the department had a fully equipped Response Vehicle which carried the team, its equipment, and served as a communications command post. The Unit was the first in the nation to put in use the FN P-90 submachine gun that was specifically designed for tactical use. In addition, the Richland County Sheriff's Department led the way in the use of non-lethal force in resolving situations. The mission of the Tactical Unit was to respond and quell high risk situations such as barricaded suspects, hostage rescue, high risk warrant service, and crowd control. These officers were equipped and trained, and are required to maintain a good physical condition and a high degree of proficiency with the weapons and equipment. ("The Richland," 2000).

Under Sheriff Lott's leadership, the department expanded its responsibilities and incorporated not only typical law enforcement duties, but also specialized law enforcement activities. The deputies carried out routine patrol duties as well as specialized investigations and manned special response teams to enforce, protect, and serve the community ("The Richland," 2000).

In 2001, the Richland County Sheriff's Department consisted of a criminal investigative division (CID) which included the following units: Major Crimes, Sex Assaults, Youth Crimes, Victims Assistance, Burglary, Forgery/Motor Vehicle Theft, Forensic Science, Narcotics and Air Support. The department also had specialized divisions such as the Community Action Team (CAT), School Resource Officers (SROs), and Special Response Teams. The Special Response Teams included the Tactical Team, Dive Unit, the Bomb Unit, the K-9 Unit, and the Richland County Sheriff's Posse. With the specialized units the department had the capability of conducting air patrol, marine patrol, and mounted patrol. The department's Civil Process Division served all civil papers received from any court of record ("The Richland," 2000).

The Major Crimes Unit handled cases such as homicide, kidnapping, aggravated assault, suspicious death, grand larcenies, robberies, and carjackings. The Sex/Youth Crime Unit specialized in arresting offenders who had committed sexual assaults against men, women, and children. They also investigated physical abuse cases that included, but was not limited to, child abuse and elder abuse. The Burglary Unit investigated residential and commercial burglaries by identifying trends, developing suspects, and recovering stolen property ("The Richland," 2000).

The largest unit in Investigations was the Narcotics Unit. Narcotics agents of the Richland County Sheriff's Department focused their investigations on interdiction and seizure of illegal drugs, drug assets, and vice (the supplying of any illicit good or service

such as drugs and prostitution) investigations. They used the latest technologies and equipment to conduct surveillance and undercover operations throughout Richland County (“The Richland,” 2000). Research showed that a large percentage of offenders were under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs at the time of arrest. According to the US Department of Justice, sixty-seven percent of men and women arrested tested positive for an illicit drug at the time of their arrest (1999).

Sheriff Leon Lott created the Community Action Team, also known as CAT, in April of 1998. The CAT team consisted of deputies in marked Camaros. The team was charged with solving immediate local law enforcement problems and developing long-term solutions for the communities of Richland County. Sheriff Lott (2000) stated that the concept behind the CAT team was to “build bridges between citizens and law enforcement so that both groups had a sense of ownership in the areas in which they lived and worked. The CAT team eradicated problem areas (Cleaned up high crime areas and prevented crime before it happened), implemented solutions to improve the citizens’ quality of life, and educated the citizens on methods that they could utilize to maintain a safe standard of living” (as cited in “The Richland,” 2000).

The CAT team enlisted the aid of local neighborhoods who worked with the sheriff’s department to prevent crime. This concept of community-oriented policing was carried out by the CAT members who participated in community meetings and activities. They became well known to the community leaders, civic and religious groups, and other neighborhood organizations. The CAT team allowed the citizens and law enforcement officials to cooperate in keeping communities safe. This provided unity with law enforcement and the communities (“The Richland,” 2000). In 1999, the CAT team was recognized by the South Carolina Sheriff’s Association as one of the most innovative law enforcement programs in the state. Sheriff Lott (1998) defined Community Oriented Policing or “problem solving” policing as:

A holistic community approach to the resolution of crime in the community, through proactive crime prevention programs and responsive, aggressive enforcement of the law. The mission of the Sheriff’s Department is to address crime and the fear of crime within the community. This is done through collaborations with residents of each community and are intended to address specific degenerative community conditions, as well as fears expressed by that community. These strategies include the issues of safe schools, victims rights, illegal drug intervention, residential and commercial community safety education and responsive, aggressive law enforcement.

Another specialized unit within the department was the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program. The SRO Program provided local schools a variety of support services. The goals of the SRO program included maintaining a safe and secure learning environment on the school campus, providing a positive role model for the students and fostering mutual trust and respect between the officer and the student, and reducing crime associated with schools such as trespassing, drug offenses, possession of weapons, and

assaults. Each SRO was assigned to a school where they worked exclusively in “their” school during operating hours to include the evening hours during special events. They were available to the school staff and students on a 24-hour basis. The SROs were state certified law enforcement officers who served as deputies for the Richland County Sheriff’s Department. They taught courses on topics such as Law Related Education, D.A.R.E., conflict resolution, and peer pressure. The SROs provided counseling and advice for both staff and students (“The Richland,” 2000).

The specialized division known as the Special Response Team encompassed not only the Tactical Team, but also the Dive Unit, the Bomb Unit, the K-9 Unit, and the Richland County Sheriff’s Posse. The Dive Unit consisted of twelve certified divers who were equipped with the latest equipment, affording them not only diver-to-diver but also diver-to-shore communications. Their mission was to rescue, recover evidence, and support tactical teams when necessary. The Bomb Unit or Bomb Squad had six Bomb Technicians and support personnel. They responded to explosive threats in the Columbia metro area and all tactical calls. These officers obtained national accreditation from the US Department of Justice, the first in the Midlands to do so. Every Bomb Technician at the Richland County Sheriff’s Department were graduates of the FBI Hazardous Devices School at the Red Stone Arsenal (“The Richland,” 2000).

The K-9 Unit had both dual purpose dogs as well as specialized dogs. The dual-purpose dogs functioned as drug detection dogs and patrol dogs. They were typically German Shepherds, however, the department also had a Malinois (pronounced “Mal-in-wah”). The Labrador Retrievers and Bloodhounds were used strictly for drug detection and tracking. The Richland County K-9 Unit had a fifty percent apprehension rate, which is higher than the national average of thirty percent. Each duty dog resided with his or her handler and was treated as a partner to the deputy (“The Richland,” 2000).

The Sheriff’s Posse was formed in 1994 by a group of horsemen from the Lower Richland area for the purpose of assisting the Richland County Sheriff’s Department in searches. The Posse trained weekly in search techniques, first aid, public relations, tracking, wilderness survival, evidence handling, equine first aid, compass use and navigation, radio communications, rope-work and rappelling, as well as working with search aircraft and tracking dogs. The Posse members were volunteers and had several levels of membership to include probationary status, training level status, associate membership, and qualified mounted (“The Richland,” 2000).

The Richland County Sheriff’s Department provided the citizens with numerous programs such as the Safe and Sound Town, Project H.O.P.E. (Helping Our Precious Elderly), and the Citizen’s Academy. Sheriff Lott created The Safe and Sound Town, an interactive safety program that taught first graders how to “play safe and stay safe.” This program emphasized various areas of concern for child safety such as riding bicycles, walking and crossing streets and stopping at railroad crossings, riding on the school bus, potential exposure to harmful chemicals, gun safety, wearing helmets and seat belts, and in an emergency dialing 911. The Safe and Sound Town received the 1999 award for Innovations in South Carolina Law Enforcement (“The Richland,” 2000).

Project H.O.P.E. was for seniors who did not have needed assistance from family and friends. Volunteers of Project H.O.P.E. called and visited approximately 300 senior citizens and disabled citizens each month. They conducted safety checks of their homes and installed smoke detectors and replaced the batteries in them when needed. They also put up street numbers on their homes so emergency personnel could locate them. They helped the senior citizens identify services that were available to them to assist them in finding rides, supplying them with fans or heaters, or getting specialized counseling. Project H.O.P.E. was awarded the 1999 Health Promotion For Older South Carolinians Award (“The Richland,” 2000).

Through the Citizen Police Academy, the Richland County Sheriff’s Department provided the community with “an inside look at law enforcement.” The mission of the Citizen Police Academy was to “educate and inform the community; to provide a forum for police – community interaction; to identify community problems, needs and concerns; and to foster a partnership with the community that will solve problems and work toward creating a safer environment” (“The Richland,” 2000).

The Richland County Sheriff’s Department evolved and expanded tremendously from the one sheriff and one deputy operation. In 2000, the Richland County Sheriff’s Department had over 500 sworn law enforcement officers and countless other employees that assisted in the goals and operation of the department. The dedication of the department to the people of Richland County fostered positive interactions between the officer and community. Sheriff Leon Lott continued to build and strengthen the department through existing programs and developed additional programs as needed.

“We’ve moved very quickly with our successes – now we must maintain and expand the successes” – Sheriff Leon Lott (as cited in The Deputy, 1999).