

Why do small towns surround big towns? Here is one thing to think about. Cincinnati, Ohio, like other big towns, had grown so fast that slums had grown up as well. The thought behind building a private community (Mariemont) was simple -- Go out into the country and build something where "people of modest means" can live.

The following is taken from the web site of the Mariemont Preservation Foundation:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MARIEMONT

"Mariemont was envisioned by its founder, Mary Muhlenberg Emery, as a "National Exemplar" in practical town planning. Mrs. Emery was convinced, far ahead of her time, that congestion and poor housing were due to bad city planning, and that this problem could not be corrected easily without rebuilding an entire neighborhood. It could be changed, she felt, by constructing a community and its housing according to principles of town planning. Mariemont, named for Mrs. Emery's summer home in Rhode Island, was to illustrate the best architectural, engineering, and environmental concerns possible for this type of development.

Acquisition of property began in 1913, and the first spadeful of earth for Mariemont was turned by Mrs. Emery on April 23, 1923. Twenty-five of the country's leading architects were employed, working with the plan developed by John Nolen, the eminent town planner retained by the Mariemont Company to design and build this community on the 420 acres of gently rolling farmland. The first buildings were completed in 1924-25.

Management of the Village was conducted by the Mariemont Company, wholly owned by Mrs. Emery, until 1931, when it dissolved and passed its control to The Thomas J. Emery Memorial, a foundation formed by Mrs. Emery to carry on philanthropic works. The Village was incorporated under Ohio law in 1941. Mariemont officials are selected by the Town Meeting organization and Mariemont has the only elected Town Crier in the U.S.

Mariemont was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, July 24, 1979, in recognition of its unique history in our nation's cultural and natural heritage worthy of preservation."

The police in the private community of Mariemont, from its start until it was incorporated in 1941, derived their law enforcement authority as Hamilton County deputy sheriffs. In 1941, the community hired its first marshal (police chief). Mariemont was not the only area around Cincinnati that had a private police force. The Indian Hill Rangers were also Hamilton County special deputy sheriffs. When the Village of Indian Hill incorporated, it had its first municipal police department.

According to a 1967 book entitled “The Mariemont Story” published by Creative Writers & Publishers, Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio, the early history of police and fire protection in the community is as follows:

“Police and fire protection were important to the residents of the new town, so The Mariemont Company provided these obligations.

The Fire Station... was built on Oak Street, a central location for the Dale Park section. Modern fire equipment was purchased and manned by two full time firemen. These men were aided by volunteers who were employees of the Company...The Police Department, which shared the headquarters building with the Fire Department, was headed by a Chief and two Patrolmen. Captain Strieder was the first Chief and was in charge of the police and fire fighting activities.

On November 1st, 1935, Deputy Sheriff Chris Robisch, who was familiar with this part of Hamilton County and had been helpful in controlling traffic during school hours, was employed by the Memorial to take over the Police Department of the town. The Fire Department was then organized separately, but the joint headquarters was continued. Chief Robisch was elected Marshal at the first village election and was named Chief of Police for the Village by the newly elected council. He continued in this position until 1948.

The first Patrolmen were all sworn in as Deputy Sheriffs as Mariemont was not incorporated at that time. There was full cooperation between these Departments.



The most noticeable landmark in the village is a 100-foot tall bell tower. This bell tower has been a dominant item in the village seal. The bell tower was started in November 1929. It is made up of 23 bells, cast in Croydon, England. On numerous occasions, the sound of the bells were made over a local radio station. The radio broadcast reportedly was heard as far away as Massachusetts.”

I was told that at one time, a box of badges containing the title of constable had been thrown into a local river. Apparently, only one badge survived. There is no reference made to the job of a constable in any publication that I have found. You will notice in the

center of the seal that there is a tepee.

This tepee probably refers to the following quote from the book entitled “The Mariemont Story.” “INDIAN OCCUPATION - There is another story which should be told before we continue the building of a new town. It has been rather commonly known that an Indian burying ground and several small mounds had been discovered and explored several decades before Mariemont was even a dream ...

THREE VILLAGE SITES - Information found in “The Archeology of Hamilton County, Ohio” published in 1958, indicates that there must have been three distinct village sites scattered over the Mariemont location. Ten mounds, in addition to two circular earthworks and fortifications were found. They were called “Fort Ancient Sites,” and definitely ties into the pre-historic occupation of the entire southwestern part of Ohio ...**PEABODY MUSEUM** - Explorations were carried on intermittently under Dr. Metz’s supervision and under the auspices of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, from 1882 to 1911 ... total of 1,236 burials were exhumed and recorded in the Peabody Museum Report. It is estimated that there were in all about 1,350 burials. An extensive collection of skeletal remains and artifacts and more than 250 photographs are on display in the Peabody Museum.” This is what makes the center seal on the constable’s badge really significant.



Now we enter into the period of the Mariemont captain’s badge with the fire center. I obtained the badge from the first village marshal, Chris Robisch. He told me that he wore this badge until September 1945. He also told me that he was in charge of both the police and fire departments. Which badge was worn by the first private police chief of Mariemont is unknown. If you are wondering about a captain being the chief, I have found several chiefs in Hamilton County who have held the rank of captain. This captain’s rank had been changed to colonel by the 1960s. The captain’s rank probably depends on the amount of men in the department. The Cincinnati police chief held the rank of captain until the department reached battalion strength; at that time, he assumed the rank of colonel. The patrolman’s badge with the fire center is probably one of the two mentioned in the Mariemont History Book.



When Chief of Police Chris Robisch stopped using the captain's badge with the fire center, Mariemont continued to use the same basic design. The differences were that the title was changed from captain to chief, and the fire center was replaced by the seal of the state of Ohio. The first style of badge used by Chief Robisch (captain's badge with the fire center) continued to be the style that would lead Mariemont into the year 2000. This style is basically the same badge that is used by the Cincinnati Police Division. Many departments in Hamilton County also used this style. Most of the departments have changed to newer designs.

The oldest hat badge that has been found apparently dates back to the 1940s. It is the same design as the Hamilton County deputy sheriff coat badge worn by the Indian Hill Rangers in 1929. This is the first variation hat badge.

The coat badge to match the first variation hat badge is very similar to the design of the badge used today (2001). The main and most noticeable difference is the size of the seal. This is probably true of all police badges in this area -- the larger the seal, the older the badge. This badge probably dates to the mid-1940s, and replaces the badge with the fire center.



A large number of police agencies had auxiliary forces at one time or another. In major cities, they were found during World War I and World War II. Mariemont's auxiliary was most likely in the mid-1940s, the time of World War II. It is a simple badge with a number in the center. The word "auxilliary" on the badge is misspelled. My notes reflect that Chief Robisch organized the auxiliary in 1941 and disbanded it in 1945.