# Cincinnati Police Department History – 1875 to 1899

## The Greater Cincinnati Police Museum

### "Preserving the History of Law Enforcement in the Greater Cincinnati Area"

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| Cincinnati Police Department History – 1875 to 1899 | | | | |
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| 1875 | – | Snelbaker, Thomas E. | Superintendent replaced the police chief and appointed by mayor. Snelbaker had been secretary of the water works, 1 year, 3 months | 1 |
| 1875 | – | – | City composed of 24 square miles and patrolled by 89 day and 183 night officers | 5 |
| 1875 | – | – | Police Districts increased to ten | 5 |
| 1876 | March | Covington, S.F.; Jacob, Charles, Jr.; Ziegler, George; Brown, Charles; Enoch, Carson | Police Board reestablished by the legislature; members appointed by governor; City disputes and loses in Ohio Supreme Court | – |
| 1876 | – | – | Police Relief Association organized; elected by the force; distributed pecuniary relief to sick or disabled members and paid insurance benefits to friends of the deceased. | – |
| 1877 | – | Johnson, Capt. Jacob (Jake) | Superintendent, appointed, had been a policeman for a good while | 1 |

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| 1877 | — | Wood, Ira | Chief (17th); had been superintendent of the work house, died early in 1878 | 3, 4 |
| 1877 | — | — | Six changes in the board of police commissioners in a single year. | — |
| 1878 | 12-Sep | Armstrong, Edward C., Planner | Telephone introduced, two years after Alexander Graham Bell obtained his patent, contracted with Cincinnati Suburban Telegraph and Telephone, first police agency to do so | — |
| 1878 | — | Ziegler, George W. | Superintendent (5th); was a member of the Police Board and had been and continued to be a butcher. Later he held positions of sheriff and superintendent of the work house and kept his butcher market throughout; 2 years | 1 |
| 1879 | — | — | Telephone exchange replace dial system telegraph; call boxes and station on same system, serving entire department; first in US to do so | — |
| 1879 | — | — | Complement included Superintendent of Police, Inspector, clerk, 20 lieutenants, 20 station keepers, 300 patrolmen, court officers, sanitary force, and other employees. | 5 |
| 1879 | — | — | Expenditures to Pettibone Manufacturing Company included belts, etc. J.J. Tower Company supplied whistles. J.J. Sayer Company supplied badges. | 5 |
| 1879 | — | — | Inventory: 8 awnings, 53 belts for revolvers, 249 belts and tassels, 350 badges, 10 gongs (alarm), 3 pairs of handcuffs, 11 lanterns, 4 medicine cases, 330 whistles, 250 wreaths, Gatling gun, carriage and equipments, 9550 metallic cartridges, 10 Navy revolvers, 75 bullet molds, 54 cap boxes, and 1000 rounds of pistol cartridges. | 5 |
| 1879 | — | Jacob, Charles, Jr. | Superintendent, appointed | 4 |
| 1880 | 27-Feb | Wilson, Captain, Drill Instructor | Drill introduced to police under administration of Mayor Bishop, stating, “almost indispensable in dispersing a crowd or quelling riot.” | — |
| 1880 | — | — | Population — County — 313,374 | — |
| 1880 | — | Wappenstein, Charles | Superintendent (6th); 2 months | — |
| 1880 | — | Carson, Enoch T. | Superintendent for (7th); had been President of the Knight Templar and Masonic Mutual Aid Associations; 1 year, 7 months | 1 |
| 1881 | 5-Dec | Armstrong, Edward C., Superintendent of Police Telegraph | Patrol Wagons: purchased by Armstrong (City Council reimbursed him in 1883); provide assistance for men on the beats, carry reinforcements, transport prisoners, sick, and wounded, and aid fireman; 2nd in US | — |
| 1881 | — | — | Board of Police Commissioners were again abolished, the mayor taking over the management of the force | 3 |
| 1881 | — | Gessert, Jacob | Chief; 1 month, appointed, resigned; committed suicide | — |

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| 1881 | – | Reilly, Col. Michael F. | Chief; had been a sergeant in the U.S. Army. Patrolman in 1873, standing at 5th and Vine. Promoted to lieutenant, then captain. After resigning as chief, he became the head of the Merchant's Police Systems; 3 years, 2 months | 1 |
| 1882 | – | – | Arrests: 13,042: 8559 for offenses, 4046 safekeeping, 48 Lunacy, 750 Suspicion, | – |
| 1882 | 18-Jul | – | District 6 became uninhabitable and removal was made to temporary premises on Eastern Avenue, in turn which are "entirely unfit for the purpose." | – |
| 1882 | – | – | Complement – 346 | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Arrests: 12,544: 7713 for offenses, 4450 safekeeping, 41 Lunacy, 340 Suspicion | – |
| 1883 | 11-Feb | Hilton, Ptln. Joseph | While working in the flooded areas of Cincinnati, Patrolman Hilton's only child died at their flooded home in Covington, KY. | 1 |
| 1883 | 15-Feb | Macke, Spec Officer Ben | During the floods, Officer Macke, his wife, and his child were on the second floor of their house when was beginning to flood in the basement. Another person struck a match in the basement and and explosion destroyed the home and killed all those in it. | 1 |
| 1883 | Feb. | – | 1883 & 1884 Floods – No American city of its size had ever suffered from inundations as had Cincinnati in 1883, then again in February 1884. The encroachment included one-third of the city. Officers were subjected to frightful changes of temperature that marked both floods, and repeatedly drenched to the skin while performing their mission of duty and mercy. Officers kept vigilant watch, by boat, against crime and accident. Police stations were repeatedly filled with poor families rescued from their homes. The mayor ordered out the First Regiment, 400 strong, to aid police to patrol the stricken areas. | 1 |
| 1883 | – | – | Complement – 325, 1 superintendent, 1 inspector, 1 surgeon, 20 lieutenants, 15 sergeants, 4 clerks, 5 court officers, 9 detailed patrolmen, 90 day patrolmen, 159 night patrolmen, 20 station-house keepers, 26 vacancies | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Patrol Wagons: complement increased to 5 for $20,000; manned by 3 or 4 men with stretchers, tourniquets, and other surgical instruments | – |
| 1883 | – | Devine, W.H., Jr., Chief Operator | Call boxes: 100 in place. A contract with city and Suburban Telegraph Company was extended for service of the system. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | District stations ( 7 of 10 are City property) suffering from several years of neglect including roofs and sanitary problems | – |
| 1883 | – | – | District 4, 3rd and Mill Streets, considerably damaged by flood of 1883. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | District 10, occupy rented quarters in Cumminsville, which are "inadequate, expensive, and ought be vacated at once if for not other than sanitary reasons." | – |

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| 1883 | – | – | District 9 (21st Ward) is an old leasehold, inherited from the annexation of Storrs Township, and has an annual ground rent of only $75.00, but in a poor location. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Central Station, located in City Hall, is “the worst appointed and most unfit for a prison.” (The jail was moved from City Hall to Hamilton County Justice Center almost a century later). | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Budget: Cost of maintenance was $286,296.93, a $117,742.32 deficit. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Police Relief Fund death allowance was $300 insuring “at least a respectable burial. $2100 was paid to the families of seven members deceased and $4587.50 disbursed as sick relief. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | District locations: 1st in City Buildings on 9th Street, 2nd on Hammond Street, 3rd on Bremen Street, 4th on Third Street (Stone Estate), 5th at Oliver and Linn Streets, 6th on Fulton (abandoned), 7th in Walnut Hills, 8th in Corryville, 9th on Lower River | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Patrol House locations: No. 1 on Eighth near Plum (owned by J.C. Wagner), No. 2 at 8 McAllister Street (owned by J.W. Wilshire), No. 3 at 648 Race Street (owned by I.P. Strauss & Bro.), No. 4 at 545 West Sixth Street (owned by E.H.Walton), No. 5 at Olive | – |
| 1883 | – | – | National Extract of Officers: 171 born in US (3 colored), 84 in Ireland, 58 in Germany, 3 in England, 5 in Scotland, 1 in Nova Scotia, 1 in Italy, 1 in Wales. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Salaries: Superintendent $2500, Inspector $1500, Chief Clerk $1500, Assistant Clerk $1000, Lieutenant $900, Detectives $900, Station-Keepers $600, Patrolmen, Court Officers, and other employees $800 | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Inventory included: Awnings, belts, tassels, bibles, bath tubs, blackboards, headstands, coal, cups, cans, coal oil cans, dusters, fire keys, gongs, hatchets, hose, hand-cuffs, lanterns, ladders, looking-classes, lounges, maces, safes, shovels, slates, s | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Ordnance included: Gatling gun, 2,680 metallic cartridges, 84 Navy revolvers and belts, 75 bullet molds, 54 cap boxes, and 18 muskets. | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Felony Arrests: 166 Assault to Kill, 5 Assault to Rob, 14 Attempt Rape, 1 Abducting Child, 1 Bigamy, 7 cutting to wound, 147 Carrying Concealed Weapons, 4 Manslaughter, 23 Murder, 3 Rape, 50 Robbery, 61 Burglary, 649 Petit Larceny, 86 Grand Larceny, 10 F | – |
| 1883 | – | – | National Extract of Arrests: 8460 born in US (1012 colored), 1910 Ireland, 1808 Germany, 129 England, 33 France, 21 Russia, 47 Scotland, 4 Spain, 49 Canada, 14 Wales, 18 Poland, 3 Austria, 38 Italy, 5 Holland, 3 China, 3 Jamaica | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Misdemeanor Arrests: 973 Assault, 175 Abusing Family,8 Cruelty to Children, 1302 Disorderly Conduct, 1682 Drunk, 1 Exposing Person, 2 Bastardy, 19 Committing Nuisance, 42 Discharging Firearms, 1 Incest,17 House of Ill Fame, 27 Personal Violence of Office | – |

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| 1883 | – | – | Calls for Service – 2389 | – |
| 1883 | – | – | Injuries to and Illnesses of Officers: 3 Abscesses, 58 slight ailments, 1 asthma, 5 Bronchitis, 13 diarrhea, 3 Dysentery, 2 fractures, 5 gunshot wounds, 2 Remittent fever, 7 Rheumatism, 1 typhoid Fever, 2 Pleuro-pneumonia, 2 Pleurisy, 9 tonsillitis, 1 Pr | – |
| 1884 | 28-Mar | – | Court House Riots – On December, 24, 1883, William Berner, an 18-year-old German, and Joseph Palmer, a 19-year-old mulatto, beat with hammers and strangled their employer, William Kirk, and dumped his body on the outskirts of the city in some brush along the Mill Creek. A jury found them guilty of Murder in the 2nd Degree and he was sentenced to 20 years. Many were incensed that the death penalty was not levied and after a meeting in Music Hall on Elm Street, they stormed the jail at Court and Sycamore Streets. During a three-day siege, the militia was called in. During one of their volleys of shots, Patrol Wagon Driver Joe Sturm was struck by 5 balls and killed. Berner was never found because he had been removed before the crowd arrived on the first night. | 1, 5 |
| 1884 | – | – | Arrests: 12,543: 7561 for offenses, 4624 safekeeping, 113 Lunacy, 476 Suspicion | – |
| 1884 | – | – | Complement – 353 | – |
| 1885 | – | – | Arrests: 12,274: 7961 for offenses, 4235 safekeeping, 78 Lunacy, 517 Suspicion | – |
| 1885 | – | – | Board of Police Commissioners was again created, appointed by board of public works. This time they received compensation for their duties, $1500 per annum. | 1 |
| 1885 | – | – | Complement – 347 | – |
| 1885 | – | Hudson, Col. Edwin | Superintendent; 1 year | 3 |
| 1885 | – | Wappenstein, Charles | Chief of detectives, succeeded by Grannon, Capt. | 4 |
| 1885 | – | Dunn, James | Inspector, succeeded by Weaver, LT Thomas, then Mullen, Michael | 4 |
| 1886 | Mar | – | Legislature created a non-partisan police force, increasing the force from 300 to 400 men. | 1, 3 |
| 1886 | 30-Mar | Morgan, Robert J. (President); Topp, George R.; Dodds, Milo G.; Minor, Dr. Thomas C. | Civil Service Commission established in Cincinnati (1883 in the Federal government). All police affairs rest with the mayor and 4 police commissioners, not more than two of whom should belong to the same party and appointed by the governor. Insured once a policeman was appointed, he would not be discharged unless he behaved in conduct prejudicial to the police department | 4 |
| 1886 | 6-Apr | Armstrong, C.L., MD | Police Surgeon appointed; Walter A. Dun, MD, and A.B. Isham, M.D., assistants | – |

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| 1886 | – | – | Arrests: 12,903; 8466 for offenses, 3578 safekeeping, 43 Lunacy, 871 Suspicion, 26 fugitives, 38 held for other authorities | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Board of Examiners to conduct regular “mental and manual” examinations and to assure rigid physical requirements | 1 |
| 1886 | – | – | Board of Police Commissioners dismissed | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Complement – 344 | – |
| 1886 | – | Rittweger, Philip, Chief of Detectives | Detective Bureau made a distinct department | 3 |
| 1886 | – | – | Military drill under a drillmaster | – |
| 1886 | – | McDonough, Thomas | Mounted policemen on horseback begin replacing foot patrolmen on outlying beats; first in Walnut Hills, 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. | – |
| 1886 | – | Brendamour, A. C. | Police Gymnasium established and first instructor; including physical training | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Police Library opened in basement of City Hall | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Police Relief Fund taken over by the Board of Commissioners and $.50 deducted from pay each month. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Recruiting: Patrolman and substitutes 21 to 40 years w/ exceptions. Lieutenants 21 to 50. Min. ht. 5”7″, min wt by ht., min. chest measurement by ht. graded by power, speed, and endurance tested on a track | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Roll of Honor awarded for meritorious deeds, who have distinguished themselves by brave deeds, and a place on this list is much coveted. | – |
| 1886 | – | Moore, Col. Arthur G. | Superintendent (11th); 2 months; left to become the superintendent of the water works | 1 |
| 1886 | – | Deitsch, Col. Philip H | Superintendent (12th); 16 years, 7 months to 1903, died in office | 3 |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Dark blue overcoats, double breasted, short rolling plain collars, buttoned close to the neck; waste 2.5 inches below the natural waste; skirt, 4 inches below the knee-pan; pockets right breast outside, left breast inside, skirt both sides; | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Dark blue, single breasted vests, made without collars with seven police buttons to bottom up to within three inches of the neck. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: In pockets: Manual, fire card, and memorandum book. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Lieutenants, sergeants, and patrolmen dark blue pantaloons with a white welt in the outer seam. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Mounted police and patrol-wagon men like the U.S. cavalry jacket, single breasted, 9 small regulation buttons on breast. Mounted have cape. | – |

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| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Patrolmen blue cloth helmet, having in front a white metallic wreath, encircling silver figures indicating the officer’s number. Covers may be worn over the helmets in stormy weather. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Row of eight police buttons on each side, four buttons behind with the side edge, and three small police buttons on each cuff, except the Superintendent and Inspector may wear velvet collars and extra buttons on the cuffs. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Self cocking pistol hip pocket, hanging from belt: rosewood baton w/ red cord & tassel , cartridge-box on belt with six fixed charges, and fire, patrol-box, and release keys. Badge on left breast from which chain to whistle. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Sergeants and patrolmen dark blue, single-breasted, straight frock coats, buttoned to the throat, plain jacket collar, straight skirt, 9 police buttons on breast, two on each cuff and four behind; 2 inside breast pockets, cash pocket on right. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Sergeants blue cloth helmet with gold bullion wreath in front encircling gold bullion letters indicating their rank. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Station house keeper same as patrolmen | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Summer, blue flannel sack coat and pantaloons | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Superintendent, inspector, and lieutenants dark blue double-breasted frock coat, plain collar, six police buttons on each side, buttoned to the neck; skirt 1 inch above the center of knee-pan; pockets inside each breast and each side of skirt; | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Superintendent, inspector, and lieutenants on each shoulder gold bullion strap indicating their rank. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: Superintendent, inspector, and lieutenants shall wear a blue cloth cap, with a gold bullion wreath in front, encircling gold bullion letters indicating the rank of the officer. | – |
| 1886 | – | – | Uniforms: White gloves in the summer when on special duty, and dark gloves in he winter | – |
| 1886 | – | Crawford, Ralph A. | Chief of Detectives succeeding Rittweger | 4 |
| 1887 | – | – | Annual Parade established; show fitness and discipline of the department | – |
| 1887 | 1-Jul | – | Manual of Rules and Regulations established and issued | – |
| 1887 | – | – | Arrests: 15,244; 463 felony, 10,479 misdemeanor, 3636 safekeeping, 95 Lunacy, 888 Suspicion, 35 fugitives from justice, 54 held for other authorities | – |
| 1887 | – | – | Complement – 432 | – |

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| 1887 | – | Topp, George R.; Dodds, Milo G.; Minor, Dr. Thomas C.; Boyle, James | Civil Service Commission | 4 |
| 1887 | – | Dodds, Milo G.; Minor, Dr. Thomas C.; Boyle, James; Werner, Louis | Civil Service Commission | 4 |
| 1887 | – | Hazen, COL Lawrence | Chief of Detectives | 4 |
| 1888 | – | – | Arrests: 16,221; 533 felony, 12,245 misdemeanor, 2935 safekeeping, 108 Lunacy, 718 Suspicion, 66 fugitives from justice, 64 held for other authorities | – |
| 1888 | – | – | Calls For Service: Patrol Wagon calls, 10,605; General Messages 372,445; Officers on beats, 130,305; Total, 513,355 | – |
| 1888 | – | – | Complement – 465 | – |
| 1888 | – | – | School of Instruction established; formal training for all members in the station, presented from the Manual by the district lieutenant | – |
| 1888 | – | – | Telephone operating room divided into two reliefs; each 12 hours daily; operators include Harry N. Adams, Joseph Sullivan, Harry White, and Frank Nugent | – |
| 1889 | – | – | Arrests: 15,965; 516 felony, 11,659 misdemeanor, 2818 safekeeping, 87 Lunacy, 535 Suspicion, 18 fugitives from justice, 62 held for other authorities | – |
| 1889 | – | – | Complement – 472 | – |
| 1889 | – | – | Statute enacted closing saloons on Sundays. It was very unpopular among the saloon owners and patrons, but the mayor felt compelled to enforce it. During the next seven Sundays, 1950 arrests were made. The first to be prosecuted was convicted, sentenced to the work house, and released on an appeal that afternoon. After twelve more trials, all jury trials, some were convicted, some were not. The prosecutor decided to save the community the expense of more prosecutions and soon thereafter the mayor suspended the arrests. | 1 |
| 1890 | – | – | Arrests: 16,994; 576 felony, 13,184 misdemeanor, 2709 safekeeping, 87 Lunacy, 247 Suspicion, 23 fugitives from justice, 128 held for other authorities | – |
| 1890 | – | – | Complement – 471 | – |
| 1890 | – | – | Population – City – 296,908 | – |
| 1890 | – | – | Population – County – 374,573 | – |
| 1890 | – | – | – | – |

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| 1891 | — | — | Arrests: 16,217; 508 felony, 13,021 misdemeanor, 2027 safekeeping, 70 Lunacy, 398 Suspicion, 33 fugitives from justice, 160 held for other authorities | — |
| 1891 | — | — | Complement — 477 | — |
| 1892 | — | — | Arrests: 18,229; 582 felony, 14,958 misdemeanor, 1939 safekeeping, 56 Lunacy, 470 Suspicion, 23 fugitives from justice, 202 held for other authorities | — |
| 1892 | — | — | Bertillon Department established for the system of measurement of the human body. | — |
| 1892 | — | — | Complement — 482 | — |
| 1893 | — | — | Arrests: 18,633; 513 felony, 15,570 misdemeanor, 1757 safekeeping, 55 Lunacy, 331 Suspicion, 14 fugitives from justice, 209 held for other authorities | — |
| 1893 | — | — | Complement — 483 — 1 superintendent, 1 inspector, 2 surgeons, 22 lieutenants, 32 sergeants, 431 patrolmen, and 44 station house keepers, mounted patrolmen, patrol wagon men, court officers, etc. Patrol 24 Sq. Mi. | — |
| 1893 | — | — | Headquarters moved into City Hall, west wing. | — |
| 1894 | — | — | Arrests: 17,937; 518 felony, 14,766 misdemeanor, 1949 safekeeping, 53 Lunacy, 394 Suspicion, 19 fugitives from justice, 238 held for other authorities | — |
| 1894 | — | — | Complement — 483 | — |
| 1895 | — | — | Arrests: 14,205; 491 felony, 13,108 misdemeanor, 1937 safekeeping, 70 Lunacy, 271 Suspicion, 29 fugitives from justice, 450 held for other authorities | — |
| 1895 | — | — | Complement — 493 | — |
| 1896 | — | — | Complement — 495 | — |
| 1896 | — | — | Arrests: 14,205; 504 felony, 10,974 misdemeanor, 1924 safekeeping, 51 Lunacy, 297 Suspicion, 27 fugitives from justice, 428 held for other authorities | — |
| 1897 | — | — | Complement — 531 | — |
| 1897 | — | — | Arrests: 14,301; 532 felony, 10,789 misdemeanor, 2056 safekeeping, 62 Lunacy, 187 Suspicion, 13 fugitives from justice, 662 held for other authorities | — |
| 1898 | — | — | Arrests: 12,738; 484 felony, 9246 misdemeanor, 2319 safekeeping, 58 Lunacy, 379 Suspicion, 23 fugitives from justice, 199 held for other authorities | — |
| 1898 | — | — | Complement — 530 | — |
| 1899 | — | — | Complement — 531 | — |
| 1899 | — | — | Arrests: 12,860; 398 felony, 9442 misdemeanor, 2379 safekeeping, 71 Lunacy, 333 Suspicion, 12 fugitives from justice, 225 held for other authorities | — |

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| 1899 | – | – | Bicycle Squad formed to patrol outlying districts | |


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