The Invention of the Professional Municipal Police

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TThe following is a synopsis of a Doctoral dissertation authored by Celestine Estelle Anderson in 1979. The synopsis was prepared by University of Cincinnati Police Chief Eugene Ferrara (retired), Board Director of the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society

1787 – Northwest Ordinance established government for area North of Ohio River and East of the Mississippi River.

1788 – Settlers established the village of Losantiville (later named Cincinnati)

1788 – 1815

1788 – Settlers met and composed a code of law. Based on the Militia Act from Marietta, Ohio. US Army, militia, sheriff and constable positions instituted to provide safety for villagers. Constables and sheriffs were court officers. US Army to protect against Indian attacks. Male villagers 16-50 yoa were enrolled in the militia. Each man to provide their own firearms and equipment.

1789 – Construction of Fort Washington, struggle between military and civilian authorities over which would control

policing affairs. Military prevailed and took over police duties

1790 – Cincinanti designated as capital of the NW territory

1792 – Courthouse and jail constructed

1794 – Anthony Wayne's victory over Indians lessened the strength of military rule.

1800 – Restoration of civilian rule.

1802 – 1803 – Cincinnati incorporated as a township within the Northwest Territory

1803 – Ohio becomes a state. A police watch was established – it was more of an alarm system, calling for assistance from the other residents to address problems; mostly fires, but some criminal activities.

1815 – A well-regulated police agency was established with the town marshal as primary law enforcement officer. It was misdemeanor for by-standers to refuse to aid in the apprehension of offenders.

1815-1840

1819 – Cincinnati's population growth resulted in it's status as a city. Also saw an increase crime and disorder. City established a paid official watch. Expanded police activity in controlling mobs and riots, but individual citizens were still primarily responsible for their own individual safety.

1834 – City Charter established a tax for the purpose of supplying the night watch. This recognized the watch as a "police" force. Watchmen no longer appointed, but were elected.

1840-1855

Separate factions and massive influx of immigrants led to social unrest and riots. Riot control was the responsibility of City Marshal. Crime control was responsibility of police watch.

1842 – Continuing riots led to establishment of Citizen's Police Organization and volunteer Police Guards (reserve policemen). Day Watch was also established.

1850 – Cincinnati passed an ordinance that changed ward based watch to centrally controlled watch, creating the potential for the city's first police department.

1852 – State legislature, in response to riots in the major cities, granted municipal governments more authority.

1853 – Cincinnati established its first full-time police department. Thomas Luken was the first police chief. Uniforms and Rule Book symbolically marked the watch as a distinct and specialized public service. Instances of police corruption led to a disregard for police.

1855 – 1880 Police Reform

1855 – Official police reports were instituted. Police Detective position created.

1859 – City Marshal position eliminated

Ohio legislature passes legislation providing for a police commission

1862 – Advance of Confederate Army through Kentucky leads to Cincinnati Police Officers being deployed to Lexington, KY to intercept Morgan's Raiders. 120 of the 160 officers were sent, depleting the force left to police the city. This led to increases in disorder and riots.

1863 – Mayor Colonel Harris instituted strong military influence on police force.

1866 – Police Telegraph system was installed.

1872 – Ohio Legislature ruled that Police Commission members be elected, removing control from the local politicians. Policies changed almost yearly, causing confusion in the city. This, coupled with rapid population growth and annexation of neighborhoods placed much pressure on city resources.

1874 – City provided police with whistles to supplement the rapping of night sticks on buildings or pavement as a means of calling for assistance from nearby officers. Though handguns were legal, and some officers carried their own, the city did not issue them.

1876 – George Lindeman, Judge of the Police Court, introduced a plan for improving police performance. It proposed new standards for induction, issuance of a police manual outlining the primary procedures for completing police duties and training in the physical requirements of policing. In short, the police would have thorough training and a solid image; they would be professionals.

1877 – Police telegraph system replaced with telephones in police Call Boxes

The ‘Professional” Police Department

1880 – 1885 – Process of reorganization

1880 – By now the city had grown to include inhabitants outside the downtown area. There were 10 districts. Districts one through five were downtown and six through 10 were in outlying areas north of Liberty street. But the outlying areas had no jails which made it difficult for officers to transport

prisoners to the central police station downtown.

The police were still seen as closely tied to the politicians. As a result, discipline within and administration of the department was unstable. (between 1873 and 1886 there were ten different chiefs of police.)

The state legislature disbands city Police Commissions and puts control of the police department under the mayors.

1882 – a police superintendent suggested that regular station house lodgers (from 1866 to 1872 over 100,000 lodgers had been sheltered in police stations) be arrested and presented to the courts as vagrants and sentenced to the workhouse.

1884 – Two men, Joe Palmer and William Berner, are tried for murder in the death of Wiliam Kirk. Palmer is convicted of 1st degree murder, a capital offense while Berner is convicted of a lesser charge of manslaughter. A crowd gathered to extract Berner from the jail and hang him. The courthouse was burned to the ground. During the three day riot 54 were killed and the estimates of wounded was between 200 and 450.

After the riot of March 1884, another riot occurred in connection with the election in October of that year. U.S. Marshals and Cincinnati Police Officers engaged in a gun battle which resulted in the deaths of two policemen, a deputy marshal and a deputy sheriff, as well as an undetermined number of other citizens and policemen wounded.

1885 – The civil unrest and political corruption caused a wave of reform to take shape in the elections at both city and state levels. A storm of protest resulted in major reform efforts. A "Committee of one hundred" was appointed and began work to have an entire change in the police force of Cincinnati. The outcome of the struggle between the Police Board of Commissioners and

the Committee of One Hundred was that Governor Foraker dismissed the entire Board of Police Commissioners, which left Mayor Armor Smith in charge of the police department.

1886 – 1900 The implementation of higher standards

1886 – Ohio legislature passes a statute establishing a Non-partisan Board of Police Commissioners in the City. The law also provided for the establishment of an entirely new police force. New standards for appointment were required for policemen, including those already on the department. Each year the requirements for appointment grew in sophistication and testing became more demanding.

The entire police force was disbanded and new standards were put in place to hire police officers. Only 73 members of the old force qualified for reappointment.

1887 – Police Inspector George Hadley instituted military organizing of the police force, with stringent training and procedures. A new Police Manual was adopted.

1888 – The police commissioners appointed an “Official Instructor” to supervise courses taught at various stations and to assure that all officers were exposed to the same learning material.

1889 – The annual parade inspection of the police department featured a military honor of “stand to colors” to recognize the improvement of the demeanor and accomplishments of the department.

1890 – The Board of Police Commissioners advanced the requirements for attending “Schools of Instruction” to seven successive days following appointment, then twice a week for three months, and thereafter, once a month. The police library

contained over 1100 volumes.

Throughout the 1890s standards of conduct for police officers were made increasingly more stringent.

1900 – By the turn of the century, the Non-Partisan Board of Police Commissioners had won national recognition for its efforts, and after ten years in operation the work of the Board and the police force was perceived by the "Committee of One Hundred" as "equal in ability, character and service to any Police Force in the United States, and they have been practically divorced from politics…"