

April 6, 2005

CINCINNATI POLICE LANTERNS (oil)

Little is known about Cincinnati Police Lanterns. As I have found many police departments evolved at the same time. Police Equipment was purchased by all police agencies including firearms, batons and last but not least lanterns.

An Internet search on police lanterns. I found a little information at <http://www.frpd.org/history.htm> . This is the site for the Fall River, Massachusetts Police Department.

Fall River did not establish a night watch until forty-three years after its incorporation. At a town meeting held April 13, 1835, it was voted to "authorize an application of the Justice of the Peace to the Selectmen of said town to appoint or establish a night watch or street watch in said town." In May 1839, a committee recommended that a night watch "be established according to law" but no action was taken until the year after the fire, when six men were appointed in July 1844. Previous to this, the old town reports reveal that payments were made to Constables, health officers, and town prosecutors. The first Chief Constable was paid \$1.50 a day. The first night watch had quarters in rented rooms. The total expense from July to the next annual town meeting amounted to \$965.20. Lanterns cost \$5.95 and rattles \$6.38.

From the documentation of Fall River it is safe to assume that The Cincinnati Police used similar lanterns at the same time period. I have found no documentation indicating when battery powered flashlights were first used by police.



W. E. WRIGHTINGTON
First uniformed patrolman in
the City of Fall River.

This author has located two styles of Cincinnati Police Lanterns. The first style was meant to be carried by hand and the second type was meant to be carried on the officer's gun belt.

The taller of the two in the photo is what I refer to as the first style that was meant to be carried by the officer.





The first style lantern has a sliding piece of metal that would block the light from the lens and actually “turn off the light” until the metal piece was moved to permit the light to be shown through the lens. There is what appears to be an inventory or serial number stamped on this sliding piece of metal. The number 140 is at the bottom of the stamped in Cinti Police Dept identification.



The second style was meant to be carried on the officer's gun belt. The number 48 is stamped in above the Cin Po Dpt on the top of the lantern.



Both lanterns showing the height of each.



A side view of the later style lantern (on the left) again comparing height with ruler between the two lanterns.



Fuel container and wick from the early lantern. This container is essentially unscrewed from the lantern base.



The second style lantern showing the inside where the fuel container sits. The fuel container can be lifted out.

A small bit of information was found at <http://www.kidsnyc.com/firemantour.php> and is shown below

Prowlers/Rattle Watch

Rattle watches were formed after Peter Stuyvesant created the first Fire Ordinance. Four fire wardens were first appointed, 2 English and two Dutchmen. The Prowlers were NYC's first firemen/police (watchmen roamed NYC till 1844). Holding green lanterns and hourglasses, eight men watched for trouble from dusk till dawn in 1657. 10 codes were cranked from large rattles (similar to New Year noisemakers). Shortly afterwards the Prowlers were increased to 50 firemen. In 1697 a few years after the English took over NYC, the Night Watch started with 4 men with bells, who announced the time and weather besides searching for fires.

□ Tangents: N.Y.P.D. eight-point hat; Rattle Watchman; Roman precinct system; Adrian Geyser; Peter Stuyvesant; Bucket brigades; Martin Krieger, Adrian Geyser, Thomas Hall and George Woolsey

I did an Internet search and found a site named lanteren.com . I sent an email with photos of the Cincinnati lanterns. This is the response I received.

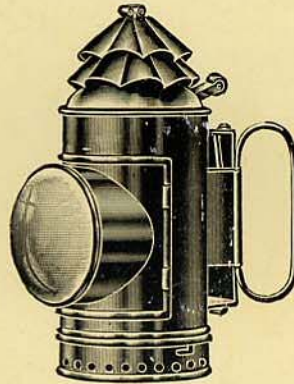
Dear Pat,

The "slide knob" blinder style of police flash lights were introduced by Dietz in the 1870's, and produced until around 1886 when they were "modernized" with a thumb wheel operated blinder, (see attachment.) Dietz ceased production of their police flashlights around 1931; however, other manufacturers may have continued production into the early 1940's.

Here is a link for the April 13, 1886 patent used by Dietz for the "thumb wheel" version police lantern: 339846

If your browser does not retrieve the images from the U.S. Patent Office files properly, go to <http://www.alternatiff.com/install/> for a plug-in that will solve the problem.

Best Regards,
Woody Kirkman
www.lanternnet.com



DIETZ "POLICE" LANTERN

FOR SIGNAL OIL

DIETZ "Police" Lantern is a practical "Flash" or "Dark" Lantern that is particularly useful because signal oil fuel permits its use in some places where kerosene is prohibited. It provides a never failing light. The flash mechanism is a slide of simple construction that operates behind the bull's-eye lens by backward and forward movements of the thumb of the hand holding the lantern. The bull's-eye lens magnifies and projects the light. A spring clip is provided for attaching the lamp to the belt.

SPECIFICATIONS

Height Over All	8 Inches	Fount Capacity	16 Hours
Volume of Reflected Light	3 C. Power	Steel Ratchet Burner	No. 601
Size of Wick	$\frac{5}{8}$ Inch	Size of Bull's-eye Lens	3 Inches
Oil Used	"Signal"	Quantity in One Case	Two Dozen

STYLES OF FINISH

Black Japan Only

Prices, Weights and Measurements are given in a Separate Price List



1888 CINCINNATI POLICE INVENTORY - 160 LANTERNS, NO INDICATION OF MAKER.

Report of the Clerk.

1888

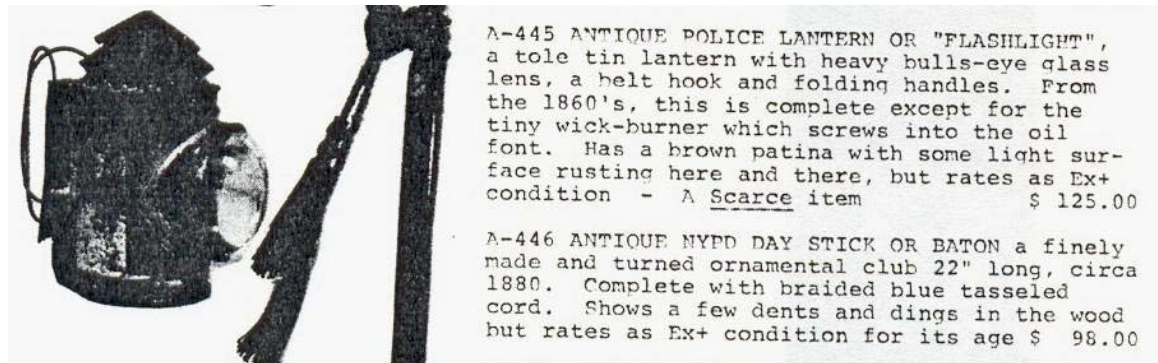
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STATEMENT No. 8.

*Inventory of Articles on Hand at the Various Station- and Patrol-Houses
December 31, 1888, Property of the City.*

Alarm-charts.....	11	Hatchets.....	5
Awnings.....	13	Hat-racks.....	4
Axes.....	10	Hay, tons.....	10
Badges, Lieutenants'.....	21	Hay-forks.....	9
Badges, regular.....	500	Horses.....	43
Badges, private.....	500	Hose, feet.....	965
Badges, special.....	675	Hose-reels.....	3
Bandages, rolls.....	36	Inkstands.....	23
Bandages, rubber, etc.....	18	Keys, cell.....	31
Baskets, waste.....	20	Keys, fire.....	550
Baskets, sawdust.....	9	Keys, patrol-box.....	2,000
Bath-tubs.....	2	Keys, release.....	500
Batons, dress.....	650	Ladders, step.....	11
Batons, night.....	500	Lamps.....	22
Baton-racks.....	16	Lamp-shades.....	51
Bedsteads.....	2	Lanterns.....	160
Belts.....	490	Lantern-globes.....	40
Bibles.....	2	Letter-presses and stands.....	3
Blackboards.....	13	Lint, packages.....	14
Blankets, horse.....	35	Manuals.....	920
Blankets.....	9	Mats, rubber.....	5
Boilers for stoves.....	12	Mats, wire.....	9
Book-cases.....	5	Medicine-chests.....	10
Books, account.....	110	Memorandum-books.....	210
Boots, rubber, pairs.....	11	Mirrors.....	21
Bridles.....	14	Mops.....	35
Brooms.....	54	Oats, bushels.....	700
Brushes, dandruff.....	41	Patrol-boxes.....	167
Brushes, horse.....	33	Rakes.....	10
Brushes, scrub.....	66	Revolvers.....	480
Brushes, metallic.....	26	Report-holders.....	10
Buckets, soil.....	135	Rogues' Gallery.....	2
Buckets, water.....	72	Rogues' Gallery stands.....	13
Buckets, coal.....	40	Rope, feet.....	815
Buggies.....	3	Saddles.....	15
Cans, coal-oil.....	20	Safes.....	12
Cans, sprinkling.....	4	Scales.....	2
Cap-boxes.....	400	Shovels, all kinds.....	24
Chairs.....	247	Slates.....	14
Chamois-skins.....	46	Soap, white, boxes.....	2
Chest of tools.....	1	Soap, common, boxes.....	1
City ordinances.....	16	Sponges, pounds.....	75
Clocks.....	20	Stools.....	11
Coal, bushels.....	1,850	Stoves.....	87
Cups, tin.....	140	Tables.....	28
Currycombs.....	43	Tassels.....	500
Cuspidors.....	82	Tin boxes.....	500
Cutting-machine.....	1	Umbrellas for wagons.....	9
Desks.....	29	Wagon, patrol, and equipments.....	9
Directories.....	14	Wagon, Detention 'bus.....	1
Duplex calls.....	550	Wagon, prison van.....	1
Dusters.....	39	Wagons, repair.....	2
Dust-pans.....	26	Wagon-jacks.....	10
Electric trip and attachments.....	9	Wardrobes.....	23
Furnaces.....	3	Wash-stands.....	5
Gas-chimneys.....	78	Water-coolers.....	20
Gatling gun.....	1	Whips.....	14
Gongs.....	14	Window-blinds.....	26
Grain-riddles.....	10	Wreaths.....	500
Hand-cuffs, pairs.....	25	Wreaths, Lieutenants' and Sergeants'.....	52
Harness, sets.....	27	Wrenches.....	10

In the middle 1970's many police articles were sold by company named Jacques Noel Jacobsen, Jr. Collectors Antiquities, Staten Island, New York. A search of their catalogues produced one lantern that had been advertised for sale.



The email from Woody Kirkman, lanterns.net, sums it up pretty well. The Cincinnati Police Lanterns with the "slide knob" blinder style were made from the 1870's, and produced until around 1886. The only mystery that is left may be—How long did the Cincinnati Police use the lanterns?

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