

PRIVATE POLICE IN CINCINNATI, OHIO

Historically, the roles of private police officers that have served the citizens of the City of Cincinnati have been well documented. In the 1901 Cincinnati Municipal Guide, two such private police officers' records were made public:

John J. Scheck: "The clever officer who has won thousands of friends among those who visit the library. During the past nine years (1892-1901), Mr. Scheck, the subject of this sketch, has been connected with the Public Library of Cincinnati as a guardian of the peace . . . His record has indeed been one of which he may justly feel proud. He has been faithful in the discharge of his duties, and his uniform politeness and courtesy has won him a host of friends and well-wishes. About five years ago, Officer Scheck demonstrated his bravery by assisting officers Jennings and Wessel to capture Bill Gorman, alias Copper Smith, one of the most dangerous criminals in the country."

Daniel T. Cronan: "Capable Private Officer at Fifth and Vine streets who is employed by the Cincinnati Street Railway Company. No Cincinnati is better or more favorably known than Daniel T. Cronan, the clever and efficient private officer who guards life and property at Fifth and Vine streets in the interest of the Cincinnati Traction Company. He has been of assistance to regular officers at various periods in his career, and is highly respected by the blue coats. He is a credit to his calling and an honor to his company."

Here is a brief history of the known badges:



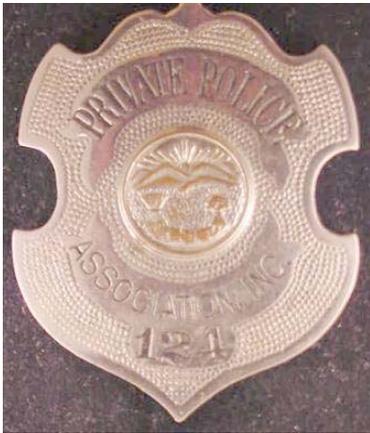
Badge No. 1. This is the first style hat badge. This style is commonly known as a wreath because of its shape. This is the same shape as the badge worn by members of the Cincinnati Police Division and the Cincinnati Park Police before the turn of the 1900s. The guards at the Workhouse also wore this.



Badge No. 2. Called a Five-Point Star, this style was issued to anyone who applied for and was approved for a private police commission. These badges were issued from the late 1800s until approximately 1960. The badges read "Private Police" and had a badge number. Cincinnati city ordinance provided for the private officer to put up a bond for the safe return of the badge. The number assigned by the City of Cincinnati to the city star badge was the number used on the Cincinnati Private Police Association badge.



Badge No. 3. This style badge was issued in the early 1900s. The badge reads “Private Police Association Inc.” The number on this badge is 194. It is an early number compared with the numbers being used on the badges today. There was a Cincinnati-issued star badge with the same number carried by this private police officer. The E. C. Shaw Company of Cincinnati, Ohio made this badge.



Badge No. 4. This style was issued circa 1940. The company that manufactured badge number 2 had gone out of business. The Greg Wright Company of Cincinnati, Ohio made this badge. This style was the closest available to the prior issue badge that could be found. Both styles resemble the Cincinnati police badge, which had been in use since 1904. Badge style numbers 3 and 4 would have been used by officers until the adoption of the eagle top shield.



Badge No. 5. This style was issued in the 1950s. In the ribbon coming out of the eagle’s mouth is the word “Cincinnati.” On the top legend over the seal is the word “Private.” On the bottom line under the Ohio state seal are the words “Police Ass’n.” The badge number was stamped into a panel at the very bottom of the badge.



Badge No. 6. This is the current style badge. By 1963, this style of badge had been adopted. The number on this badge is 1039.



Badge No. 7. This is the current style hat badge. It has cross batons (nightsticks) on either side of the number disk. It has a bold eagle at the top and the word “Police” at the bottom. Cincinnati workhouse guards, Cincinnati Park police, Cincinnati General Hospital police and the University of Cincinnati police also used this style of badge.

The Cincinnati Private Police Association has its own web page; the url is: <http://www.fortunecity.com/business/executive/461/page201.htm>

The opening paragraph is quite interesting. It reads as follows:

“The Cincinnati Private Police was established in 1914 as the Private Police Association Company. In its beginning, we were formed to assist the Cincinnati Police Division with alternative manpower needs. Even today, the Cincinnati Private Police is the only private organization with fully empowered Private Police Officers. In Cincinnati, per Municipal Code #887, private police officers have the same powers as city police officers while enforcing criminal laws and ordinances. Cincinnati, Ohio to our knowledge is the only city that still has private police officers with full powers.”