

“Policing and the Rise of the Modern Surveillance State”

Student Name:

Student Number:

Professor:

Course Code: 3751y

Date:

Over a thousand years ago, Anglo-Saxon Kings ruled over England and expected to keep a good order and maintain the peace. If the law was broken and the offender caught by the general public, justice would often be swift and violent, and notions of policing and the judiciary were conceived quite differently than they are today. In time it became a duty of every free citizen to take turn as constable.¹ This situation was similar all over Europe, exemplified in Rembrandt's famous painting of 1642 *The Night Watch*. The position of constable in England was unpaid, similar in certain respects to the Auxiliary police as a form of civil service today. These constables were expected to fulfill duties that were not always pleasant or safe. Constables had little chance to do their job properly due to being uneducated, and their lack of professional training and knowledge was clearly present in some situations.² They were also outnumbered, thus instilling in them a fear of crowds and riots, which often led to police officers complying with citizens demands in order to simply protect themselves from potential danger.³ In 1663, the government began to employ the watchmen to walk and guard the streets of London at night.⁴ These watchmen had a nickname: Charlies, a nickname whose origins can be traced to Charles II, who started the paid duties.⁵ The need for more constables was evident with the Industrial revolution in the 18th century. Citizens from rural areas would flood into urban places in the hopes of finding work, and this congestion of people made cities like London a very difficult place to safeguard, with public riots often taking very violent turns. Citizens unable to find work and sustain themselves were forced to

¹ Clive Emsley, Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker, "Crime and Justice - Policing in London", Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 11 June 2013)

² Ibid.

³ Reynolds, Elaine. *Before the Bobbies: The Night Watch and Police reform in Metropolitan London, 1720- 1830* . Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

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