



The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England

Haia Shpayer-Makov

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The figure of the detective has long excited the imagination of the wider public, and the English police detective has been a special focus of attention in both print and visual media. Yet, while much has been written in the last three decades about the history of uniformed policemen in England, no similar work has focused on police detectives. The Ascent of the Detective redresses this by exploring the diverse and often arcane world of English police

detectives during the formative period of their profession, from 1842 until the First World War, with special emphasis on the famed detective branch established at Scotland Yard.

The book starts by illuminating the detectives' socioeconomic background, how and why they became detectives, their working conditions, the differences between them and uniformed policemen, and their relations with the wider community. It then goes on to trace the factors that shaped their changing public image, from the embodiment of 'un-English' values to plebeian knights in armour, investigating the complex and symbiotic exchange between detectives and journalists, and analysing their image as it unfolded in the press, in literature, and in their own memoirs.

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