

Nightwatchmans clock by Sims, Watford



An interesting Night Watchman's clock made by Sims, Watford, dated c.1880.

The night watchman would have depressed the lever on the top of the clock to show that he had visited a location. This in turn depresses a pin on the outer chapter of the dial, readable over the next 12-hour period through the gap surrounding the dial. Multiple pins may be depressed, one each time he visits. With the initial design of these clocks, a canny watchman would leave the lever depressed, thus stopping the clock as it caught on the next pin a half hour later. Late improved designs such as this mechanism overcame this problem by incorporating a pivoted section on the plunger, so that if the plunger was jammed down, it would pivot out of the way and flick back to its correct position without affecting the pins. After the night shift, the person overseeing the watchman would be able to see the times when the night watchman had patrolled the area of this clock. After 11½ hours, an internal "ramp" forces the pins back up.

The bezel is locked by padlock through the hinged latch, giving only the watchman's superior access to the movement, for timesetting and winding of the clock.

The eight day single fusee movement has a half-hourly passing strike on a bell.

The silvered dial with Roman numerals is inscribed 'Sims, Watford', on a rectangular base.

Height 14" (36cm)

Width 9" (23 cm)

Depth 7" (17cms)

Overhauled and guaranteed for 3 years.