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## The New York State Troopers

GRAY RIDERS BREAK ALL PREVIOUS RECORDS

By Ralph E. Williams

A record of ninety and eight-tenths convictions for all arrests made during a year is one to be envied by any police department and when a detailed account shows that one hundred per cent convictions were obtained for many crimes and felonies, it is believed that a real record has been established by the New York State Police.

In 1925, this organization made 25,734 arrests with 23,364 convictions; 1,666 cases pending when the records closed and only 704 discharged cases shown.

There were 3,219,813 miles of road patrolled, a long long trail which would reach to the moon and back six times. Besides making all these arrests, the Troopers made 15,903 investigations in which no arrests followed, recovered 531 automobiles, recovered property to the value of \$615,811.86, collected

finances aggregating \$401,030.20 and killed 219 sheep-killing dogs.

That the "Knights of the Road" have not all disappeared or gone to Florida to enter the real estate business is shown by the fact that 1,420 tramps were arrested during the year's time and that of these 1,408 were convicted. Of 27 persons caught riding trains illegally, all were convicted. Sixteen men, tired of the routine life in the Army or Navy and who took "French leave," all were caught by the Troopers and returned to Federal authorities.

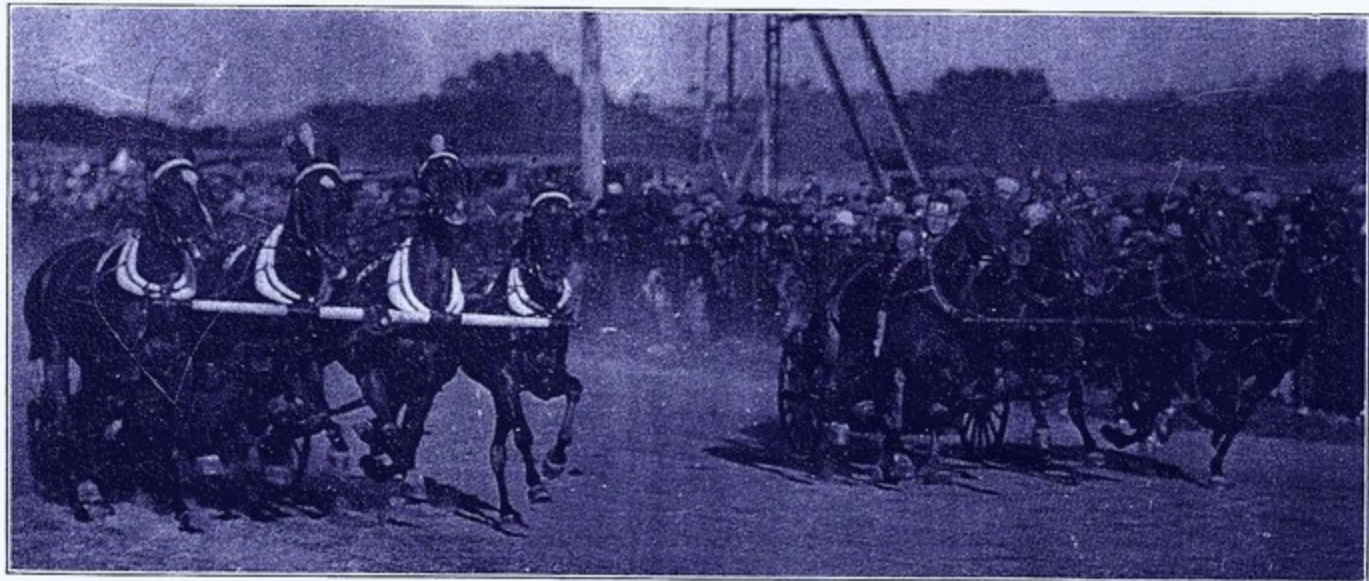
But plain figures never can tell of the real work done by the "Gray Riders," that wonderfully efficient body of 468 officers and men, only eight years old.

Tales of the ordinary, every-day work of these men read like novels of adventure,

thrilling enough to please the most excitement-hungry boy.

Headquarters of the Troopers are at Albany, the state capital, and besides the force there stationed, six troops with seventy-eight officers and men each are located respectively in Batavia, Malone, Sidney, Oneida, Troy and White Plains.

Troop "G" of Troy, with barracks on the outskirts of the city, is a typical body of the Troopers, covering a cosmopolitan territory in the east-central section of the state. In its territory are included several cities ranging from Albany, with a population of 117,820 to Mechanicville, one of the smallest cities in the state with a population of only 8,514. A large section of the Adirondacks, a bit of the Catskills and other minor mountain ranges with woodlands and farm country go



Sgt. Frank Zeh and Trooper Edward Draisey in Roman Chariot Race at Cobleskill, N. Y.



Champlain Divisions of the Barge Canal System, New York State's great water trail, join in and pass across this territory while several trunk lines of railroad systems criss-cross the area.

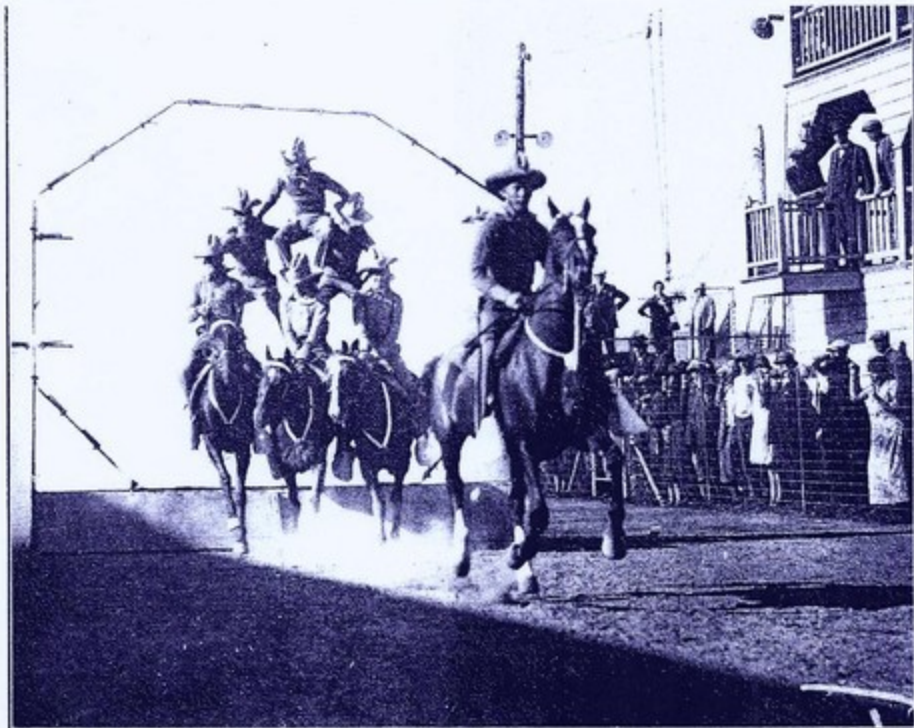
Down from the Northland through the territory of Troop "G", disappearing to the South along the Hudson River, runs a narrow ribbon of concrete and macadam known throughout the entire nation as "The Bootleg Trail."

The Troop is under command of Captain John M. Keeley and Lieutenants Harold J. Nagell and Tremain M. Hughes. It is composed as each of the other five Troops and like them will be augmented January 1 by the addition of one lieutenant, three sergeants, three corporals and ten privates when the Troopers take over the duties of the "Brownies" as the State Motor Vehicle Inspectors are disbanded. Major John A. Warner, Superintendent of the New York State Police, then will share with the Commissioner of the Motor Vehicle Bureau the power to suspend or revoke automobile drivers licenses.

The 102 men to be added to the force will permit of a thorough patrol of the highways.

Troop "G" was initiated into active service by a trolley car employees' strike in 1921 which spread through the cities of Troy, Albany, Cohoes, Rensselaer and Watervliet and through large villages like Waterford and Green Island. With headquarters in Troy, the seat of the greatest disorders, the Troop so conducted itself, that when the clouds blew away and a settlement was made, although it had been a prime factor in keeping the peace and order in three counties affected by the strike, the Boys in Gray settled down in the midst of the former combative area in peace and harmony with all.

Never since has the Troop been called into mass action but the life is by no means humdrum. There are stolen cars to recover, outlying sections to be patrolled, forests to be guarded from the destructive fire set by careless tourist or hunter, game laws to be enforced, speedsters to be slowed down and



Rough Riders of N. Y. Constabulary force pyramiding through hoop of fire and then over hurdle of fire.

bootleggers and hi-jackers to be driven from the long, long trail.

But it's not all fun along the roadway and the Troopers do not win every battle as is testified to by the heroic death of Trooper Roy A. Donovan of Troop "G", who, in the early morning of October 8, 1923, was shot to death while in pursuit of hi-jackers along the "Bootleg Trail" as was told in a previous issue of this magazine. He "got his man" also before he died and it was not his fault

that a jury in the county where crime was so mingled with politics and business, that the Governor removed Sheriff and District Attorney from office, should fail to convict.

Winter-time is work-time with the Troopers for there are starving families to be fed in the back-lands, game animals and birds to be kept from dying of starvation, guard kept over outlying settlements from criminals who know neither time nor season, and these brought to justice when caught.

Minus the dog-teams, the story of Troopers Andrew J. Lawrence and R. M. Roblee of Troop "G" parallels in many ways the adventures of their red-coated brethren of the North, the "Mounties" of Canada.

On February 4 of this year, Ernest Blanchard, a forty-two year old trapper and hermit of the Adirondacks came out of the woods into the little village of Indian Lake to replenish his supply of tea, flour and sugar. There he saw and became enamoured of pretty little seventeen-year old Marie Pearson.

When milder methods failed to win the affections of the maiden, he resorted to cave-man tactics and a charge of rape was laid against him by the girl through her guardian. The alleged crime committed, Blanchard hurriedly shouldered his pack and returned to the depths of the woods.

A hue and cry was set up and District Attorney A. P. Palmertier of Hamilton County immediately appealed to the State Police for assistance in tracking down the fugitive.

Captain Keeley of Troop "G" assigned Troopers Lawrence and Roblee to the task of finding Blanchard, partly from the fact that both were capable men and the further reason that each of them had, since early childhood, hunted, fished and tramped over the mountains and lakes of the region in which the wanted man was thought to be. Both were natives of that section of the State.

Each carrying a pack-basket containing the barest necessities for provisions topped with a pair of folded purple-bordered gray blankets, dressed in regulation winter uniform and armed with revolver and rifle, the two



Crack riders of "G" Troop, exhibiting at Fonda, (N. Y.), Fair



their task.

Plunging into the woods, now far different from their summer aspect, the two men became as completely shut off from civilization as if they had been transported to the wilds of Labrador. Subsisting upon rabbits they shot and the meagre supplies they carried with them, added to now and then as they found opportunity to attain to some outlying farm-house, they tramped for six weeks over several hundred miles of territory in the Central Adirondacks.

Trail after trail was followed but all led either to the camp of some innocent trapper or to a beaten pathway where it was lost in the maze of other tracks.

Not in the least discouraged and thoroughly confident of eventually "getting their man," the two Troopers continued their search over mountain and lake.

Blanchard was known to have a trap-line thirty-six miles long and the Troopers sought to intercept him as he passed along this line of march. Although the trapper was not supposed to know he was being pursued, he seemed to evade the arm of the law in an uncanny manner.

#### Obtain First Clue

Wednesday afternoon, however, on the 17th of March, the Troopers came upon a fresh set of snow-shoe tracks leading in the general direction of a hut which they knew was occasionally used by trappers for overnight stops. They set out along the new trail but night overtook them when they still were some five miles from their goal. After a supper of tea and canned meat on hard bread, the Troopers rolled themselves in their blankets and slept beneath the sheltering boughs of low-hanging spruces with the stars as their night-lamps and the hoots of owls as their lullaby.

#### "Get Their Man"

Long before daylight they arose and started on their way again without waiting for breakfast. They approached the cabin as the first light of dawn was touching the tips of the tallest pines. Cautiously they crept to the door of the building to which led the snow-shoe tracks they were following. A brawny shoulder heaved against the door which swung inward to reveal the interior of a one-roomed cabin, a fire smouldering in a rusty box-stove, a rifle leaning against the wall and the huge trapper swinging one leg over the edge of the rude bunk as he at-



Lieut. Tremain M. Hughes, head of "G" Troop's Rough Riding Squad.

tempted to gain the rifle after being so unceremoniously aroused. A sudden leap and the click of hand-cuffs and the prize was won.

The Troopers cooked breakfast for the three of them and then started for Lake Pleasant where Blanchard was jailed.

Upon arrival at the county seat, the Troopers transacted their legal affairs, reported to Troop "G" Barracks by telephone and then sought a confectioners where they "mowed away" a plate of ice cream apiece. Their next visit was to a barber shop for bath, shave and hair-cut and then, looking more

turned to Troy ready for the next job.

#### Life Not All a Bed of Roses

The Troopers have their sorrows and Troop "G" is in mourning for Trooper "Andy" Lawrence, one of the heroes of the above adventure who lost his life in the line of duty some six months later through an accident.

On September 12 he had been called upon to seek out a stolen automobile thought to be in the vicinity of Hudson, Columbia County. Mounted on his motorcycle, he was entering that city when, as he sped along a street under repair, an automobile darted around a curve ahead of him, forced him into the ditch and dashed away toward the North. The Trooper's cycle overturned crushing him beneath and shattering the left leg above the knee. He retained consciousness and hailed a passing motorist who took him to the Hudson Hospital. There the leg was amputated and the fight for life begun. For five days he lingered battling against the "Grim Reaper" as the poison from his wound slowly seeped its way through his system. Comrades were in constant attendance and everything medical science could do was performed but there was no hope and he died September 17.

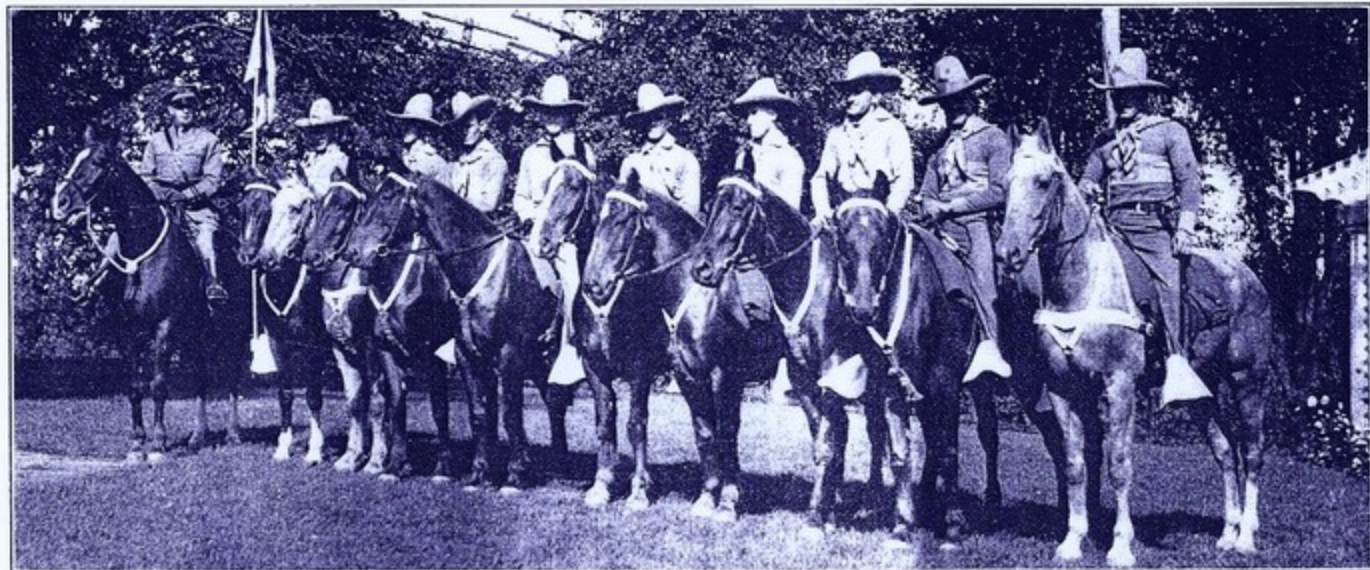
"Andy" was one of the most popular men in the Troop. He made friends wherever he went by his geniality and kindness. He was born in Edinburg, Saratoga County, June 19 1892, but spent the greater part of his life in Gloversville, a nearby city. He served with "H" Company, 105th Infantry which helped break the Hindenburg line during the World War, after following the colors in the same outfit along the Mexican border in 1916.

He was a member of Valentia Lodge No. 362, F. and A. M., of Kinderhook and Gloversville Lodge, No. 222, B. P. O. E., of Gloversville. A wife and two little children survived him.

#### Troop Mates Pay Last Respects

One last visit was paid the hospital by his comrades who took the body to the Gloversville home.

On Monday afternoon, September 20, an imposing procession left the little building where services had been held and wound its way to St. James Lutheran Church where the body in its silver-gray, flag-draped casket was placed before the altar where a simple solemn service was conducted by his pastor Rev. W. W. Barkley. After friends and loved



Troop "G" Rough Riding Team: Left to Right: Capt. J. M. Keeley, Trooper Draisey, Corpl. Jaros, Troopers Fitzpatrick, Miller, Rose, Reynolds, Bonczyk, Kyack and Lieut. Hughes.



Gerald D. Vaine of Albany, trooper in U company of Troop, has been promoted to the rank of corporal to succeed Corporal James Johnson, announced Captain John M. Keeley. Corporal Johnson, who served with the 105th infantry as sergeant during the World War, has left the Troopers to take a federal government position.

Corporal Francis Canfield has resigned from Troop "B", State Police, and left for his home at Johnstown, N. Y. Corporal Canfield was on duty at Loon Lake for some time.

Louis W. Davis of Kingston, has been appointed a member of the New York State Police force again.

Davis was a former State Trooper. During 1919 he was a member of Troop "K" stationed at White Plains and was directly under then Captain but now Major John A. Warner.

A possible future heavyweight boxing king has been taken under the wing of Dan Hickey, Paul Berlenbach's manager, in the person of Lloyd G. Clark, former State Trooper attached to the Bay Shire zone headquarters and well known along the entire south shore. Clark resigned from the State Police service on Oct. 8th, and is already in training under the watchful eye of Trainer McCormick, of the Hickey management.

Trooper Gay, of Troop "K", who has been located in Montgomery for some time, has been transferred to Monroe, where his headquarters will be in the future. At the same time Sergeant Grimes, who has been located at Haverstraw, with Trooper Faulkner, was transferred to Montgomery and will make his headquarters at the Empire House. Sergeant Grimes is one of the best men of the State Police force, and the section around Montgomery can be congratulated in securing so good a man in charge here. At the same time Corporal Robinson, who was the first man attached to Montgomery this spring, was transferred from White Plains to Monroe, where he will be stationed in the future.

Sergeant C. E. Gilbert, of Troop "K", is to open a sub-station on the Middletown-Goshen state road, because of the heavy traffic, and the three-way width which encourages recklessness. At present 14 Troopers are now permanently quartered in Orange county, and Sergeant Gilbert believes they can be made most effective by permanently quartering small units in important sections.

Sergeant William Ford, of Troop "D", formerly of North Syracuse, has been given charge of the New Hartford sub-station of the New York State Police, it was announced.

Sergeant Ford, formerly in charge of the sub-station at North Syracuse, has seen many years in the service. He succeeds Sergeant R. W. Morris, who went to Geneva.

Herkimer—Announcements have been received in this village of the marriage of Corporal Solvay Perry of the State Police, Troop "D", who was stationed in Herkimer several months ago. Corporal Perry took as his bride Miss Helen Reed of Clifton Springs. Ralph Excell of Penn Yan was best man. Corporal Perry has been connected with the New York State Police for several years and has a fine service record.

"How to Protect Chickens from Thieves" was the topic discussed by the Chemung County Poultry Association at the Farm Bureau offices recently.

Sergeant Charles Roche of Troop "C", told owners of a poultry house what to do when they discovered a thief on the premises.

Trooper Edward Keely of Troop "D", was appointed Corporal to fill a vacancy left by Corporal Walter Gray who resigned Sept. 8th.

Sergeant Henry Wise and Sergeant Frank Bittinger have resigned from Troop "D" to enter into partnership with Dr. Ball who runs a riding academy at Manlius, N. Y. Sergeant Wise was the Troop blacksmith.

Troopers Mosher, Dossert, Farmer and Neil have also resigned from Troop "D".

Trooper Elsworth Williams of the North Syracuse sub-station has been called to Oneida Barracks after being stationed there since April. He will be succeeded by Trooper Harold Ballard.

This is Trooper Ballard's first assignment, having been in charge of the show horses. He has been in the service one year.



Capt. Stephen McGrath, Troop "D", N. Y.

#### HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Mercury with his winged feet had nothing on Troop "D" with its 68 men who covered 63,000 miles during the month of September. Under the genial leadership of Capt. John McGrath, here is what the Troop accomplished in the short space of one month:

They made over four hundred arrests and convicted 365. Of this 233 were for breaking the motor highway laws, sixteen were discharged and 29 cases are pending in court.

There were 1,938 miles traveled by mounted patrol, 34,803 miles by automobile, while by motorcycle 24,452 miles were covered; train, 1,439; foot, 20; and boat, 10 miles.

Stolen and lost articles, to the value of \$4,106.75 were recovered by the troopers during the month and \$2,490 was collected in courts for fines.



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