

NYSP.txt

Cpl. H. C. Blanding, Troop "A", 1936 to 1946.

Served at the following stations: Castile- 1937, Wanakah- 1937-1939-1946, Angola- 1937, Churchville- 1938, Pittsford- 1938, East Avon- 1938, Friendship- 1938-39, Batavia- 1939, Lewiston- 1940, Clarence- 1940, Westfield- 1940, Sheridan- 1941.

Mostly motorcycle duty in summer, average 15,000 miles, April thru October.

WW-2 Veteran of the Naval Service. 7th Invasion Fleet, Philippines Liberation, Iwo Jima, Okinawa operations.

Same old story, all exams in Albany, NY, \$900. a year with \$200. increments. Police School at Hotel Troy. Never completely unpack your bag because you won't be staying long, you might get acquainted with somebody.

Autos were the old open, 4 door phaetons with hot water heater and side curtains. There were only a couple models of Harleys and we used the 74 cubic inch, no windshields or other frills unless you bought them yourself.

Duty 24 hours a day for a month then a 3 day pass.

Some of the good - bad things I remember are: Working the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation at all hours of the day and night when the troopers were the only law and most of them did not think kindly of us...The detail of cycle troopers traveling to Thousand Islands Bridge as security for President Roosevelt during dedication of the new bridge....The long exhausting hours of duty at the Syracuse State fair where we were confined to a barracks for the few hours we were off duty....Escorting the Byrd Snow Cruiser through western New York. It completely covered a two lane road, what a monstrosity.

Probably one of my most useful accomplishments was the investigation and successful completion of one of the first convictions under the new criminal negligence with a motor vehicle law. A drunken driver hit a car head on near the Village of Eden, which contained a family returning from Christmas shopping in Buffalo. Two children were killed and others badly injured. The drunken driver, Francis O'Shaughnessy was represented by Senator Walter Mahoney and used every trick possible to avoid appearing in court.. We had 25 witnesses who were subpoenaed several times to appear in court and the defendant would be absent, sick or some other excuse. On the last occasion the Judge ordered me to take county Coroner Dr. DeDominicis to Rochester to a hospital where the defendant was supposed to be and bring him back to Buffalo. We located him in the hospital and the Medical Examiner gave him a quick check over and ordered him to get dressed and we took him back to Buffalo and put him in jail where he was available for trial. He was convicted and sentenced to five years, one of the first such convictions under the new law.

Al, this is a lot of rambling on. It's hard to pick out important things. As you know there was something new doing every day, some real exciting and others not. You might say "never a dull moment".

If you find anything of value, pick and choose, you won't hurt my feelings..

Howard

NEW YORK STATE POLICE

Joined Troop "A" New York State Police - Fall of 1936

Capt. Winfield W. Robinson -- 1st Sgt. Jos W. Brandstetter

New York State School for police - Troy, NY - January 1937

STATIONS

Castile - Winter of 1936 - 37 - Sgt. Chas Z. Mc Donald - Auto

Wanakah - Spring of 1937 - Summer 1939 - Spring 1946 - Cycle

Lieut. Lawrence C. Nelson - Sgt. Arthur L. Rich

Angola - Summer - Fall - Winter 1937 - Sgt. Chas. R. Stanton - Cycle

Churchville - Spring - Summer 1938 - Cpl. Donald S. Girven - Cycle

Pittsford - Summer - 1938 - Sgt. W. L. Ireland - Cycle

East Avon - Fall 1938 - Lieut G. D. Vaine - Cpl. T. F. Martin - Cycle

Friendship - Winter 1938-39 - Lieut W. J. George - Sgt. C. E. Stanton - Auto

Batavia - Spring 1939- Auto

Lewiston - Spring 1940 - Sgt. H. G. Southworth - Cycle

Clarence - Summer 1940 - Cycle

Westfield - Summer 1940 - Cycle

Sheridan - Summer 1941 - Outpost - Cycle

Jan. 16th, 1946 Return to State Police from Military Leave of Absence.

Promoted to Corporal at this time.

Jan 21st - Feb. 2nd, 1946 - Refresher Course for returned veterans.

May 1st, 1946 Start G.I. Leave of Absence

1936 -- 1938

Trooper exams were conducted in Albany only, also physical exam which comes later. Candidates must be at least 5' 10", weight in proportion, high school education and of course clean record.

Trooper enlists for two years. Pay is \$900.00 to start, with \$200.00 per year increments, until top pay of \$1900.00 is attained after five years.

State Police School was conducted at the Hotel Troy, Troy, NY and lasted for six weeks. Although schooling gave the recruit the basics and an understanding of the law, the real training was obtained by being assigned to work with a Sergeant or a senior trooper for several months prior to being assigned a patrol or station of your own. Many of the new troopers started out on motorcycle patrols which, over the years, accounted for many injured troopers until the motorcycles were abandoned in favor of cars only.

Sergeants were mostly permanently stationed and in many cases the troopers working with them lived with the sergeant and their families like boarders.

We ate all our meals in restaurants except when we were quartered at Troop Headquarters in Batavia when the state ran out of money.

During this time a few horses were still maintained at troop headquarters for crowd control, fairs, etc. This gave the recruits something to do while still

at the barracks, such as cleaning horses and stables while at the same time learning lots of things from the (Stable Sergeant) Tpr. Guy Hamm, an old timer. At this time State Police automobiles were phaetons, which was in effect a 4 door, open car with convertible roof and side curtains. They were great in the summertime when it was not raining, but in the winter time they were mighty cold with the wind blowing through the side curtains and the hot water heater, which was typical in those days, of very little value as far as heat was concerned. Many back roads were never plowed so consequently much time was spent shoveling snow and putting on tire chains.

Duty was 24 hours each and every day for a month, after which a 3 day pass was granted. In the meantime no civilian clothes or personal automobiles.

Usually troopers were stationed a considerable distance from their homes.

Station change could occur at a moments notice and changes were frequent.

No weekends or holidays off during summer months.

Vacation is one month sometime during the winter.

Troop Captains have complete authority to discipline as they see fit and even terminate you with no further recourse. Pack your bags and leave.

The following message, dispatched to all precincts on 5-15-34 is a good example of troop policy:

"This marriage racket business in Troop "A" is starting up again. A request has come in this morning for a ten day leave of absence in June for the foolish purpose of getting married. All members of the troop had a good long vacation the past winter and early spring with full pay and they certainly have had all the time off duty they are entitled to. This is going to be a very busy summer with little off duty leaves and it certainly is a poor time to think about getting married. Such leaves are very unfair to other members of the troop as it means that somebody has to put in extra hours to make up for the simple one who is going through matrimony. The proper time for these weddings will be when the annual vacations come on next November.

Anyone who insists on a leave of absence this summer can easily get the time off by presenting their resignation, which I will be most happy and delighted to approve. This order to be placed upon all bulletin boards."

Authority Capt. W. W. Robinson

In the early 1940's, State Assemblyman Leo Lawrence made the following statement" If they (Troopers) want an eight hour day, let them join a municipal police force. If they don't like their jobs, let them get out."

Trooper Roman J. Laurence worked diligently for years, mostly alone, to better working conditions in the State Police and eventually was dismissed for his efforts. However he was responsible for the establishment of the Police Benevolent Assoc. The reason for his dismissal was: A Navy Captain left his cap in a restaurant near Auburn, NY and asked the troopers to recover it. Tpr Laurence found the cap and sent it to the Captain, giving his home as return address and not indicating that he was a trooper. The Captain sent a \$5.00 check to Mr. Laurence whose wife presumed it to be a contribution to the newly formed P.B.A. and deposited it to that account. This was "accepting a gratuity for performance of duty"

Winter uniforms included a full length sheep skin coat and seal fur hat. Spurs were worn at all times as part of the uniform. Firearm was a Colt New Service .45 caliber revolver. Every shot from this gun must be accounted for on a Special Report. Original orders by Captain Chandler were "Never pull your gun from the holster unless you intend to use it and if you do pull it from the holster you better use it." (1917)

Summer uniform included a Stetson hat which was also worn while riding motorcycle patrol at high speeds with no windshield.

Cycle patrols started early in the spring and lasted until late fall. An average summers mileage would be around 15,000 miles. On "Outposts" a trooper would live in a civilian home somewhere out in the country with a "STATE POLICE" sign in the front yard and police the area during the summer months, supervised by the Zone Lieutenant.

Without modern radio equipment, Troopers were located by accommodating telephone operators who were familiar with the various stops and check points troopers frequented, and friends at these various stopping points were great at taking messages and helping to locate the trooper in an emergency.

With only a motorcycle a trooper would have to depend on local constables and police for automobile transportation when necessary, for example moving prisoners.

Trooper car patrols were frequently quite a distance away.

After arrest, prisoners were taken immediately before a Justice of the Peace where minor violations were handled at once and sentence imposed. Major cases were referred to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation at Batavia and Investigators were dispatched to the scene. Except for major felonies, investigations were handled by the trooper.

During these years Troop "A" consisted of roughly 100 men. Due to the system of frequent transfers you probably were able to work with at least 90% of your fellow troopers in a very few years, and were familiar with all of them. This was a very close knit organization held together through telephone, teletype and personal contact in the field, not unlike the military service.

During this period in time, N.Y. State Troopers were highly respected by everyone, the camaraderie was great and we were proud to wear the uniform.

The reputation the troopers established during the Auburn Prison Uprising, the Milk Strike and the Steel strike in Lackawanna made everyone respect the big night-sticks carried and used so efficiently by the old troopers, usually from the saddle on a big horse. This saved all us young troopers lots of trouble because when troopers arrived on the scene, trouble stopped.