

HISTORY OF THE ILLINOIS STATE POLICE
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State Police Merit Board

The following history of the State Police was compiled through research in the Statutes establishing the State Police and with the help of old time and former State Police Officers James T. Rosenberg of Joliet, Terrence S. Martin of Utica, Illinois, former Captain Herman Nofs, retired, former Assistant Superintendent of State Police Harry Trautsch, retired, and Superintendent William H. Morris.

Prior to 1921 there was no statewide organization charged with the duties of enforcing the laws of the State. These laws were enforced by sheriffs of the Counties and police officers and constables of the Cities and Villages.

ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGHWAY PATROL

Governor Len Small was elected in 1921. He advocated a highway building program to "take Illinois out of the mud." In that year the Legislature passed a law empowering the Department of Public Works and Buildings to make a sufficient number of appointments of State Highway Patrol Officers to enforce the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Laws.

Traditionally the sheriffs of Illinois have been opposed to any state police organization, seeking always to curtail their powers and fearing an encroachment on their jurisdiction, with the possibility of reducing them to process servers. This feeling on the part of the sheriffs became evident in the enactment of the law giving the State Highway Police Patrol Officers their powers. This statute provided:

"It shall be the duty of each officer to patrol the public highways and to make arrests for violation of the provisions of this Act (Motor Vehicle). In the exercise of these duties, but only so far, and for no other purpose, the State Highway Patrol Officers shall have the same power and authority that peace officers have; it not being the intention of this Act to invest said Highway Patrol Officers with any power or authority as officers of the law other than above expressly provided."

It further provided for equipping them with weighing devices and that they should stop and weigh trucks.

Pursuant to the above referred to law, the first State Police Organization was formed on April 1, 1922. It consisted of a Commanding Officer and eight men. The Commanding Officer was referred to as the Chief of Police and was John Stack of Kankakee, Illinois. The State was divided into five areas known as the Northern, or Chicago Area, Peoria Area, Kankakee-Champaign Area, Danville Area, and the Southern Illinois Area. The assignments were as follows:

Northern or Chicago Area

Terry Martin, LaSalle

Peoria Area	R. H. Musick, Eureka James J. McGuire, Peoria
Kankakee-Champaign Area	J. Arnie Baker, Kankakee Ed Bricker, Watseka
Danville Area	S. H. Wilkin, Coles County
Southern Area	Steve Waters Jr., Granite City J. D. Siebert, Staunton

During this first year of operation additional men were added to the Force so that it then totaled fourteen officers.

By 1923 the Division of Highways in building its new roads realized that over-loaded trucks were breaking up the cement slabs nearly as fast as the highways were being completed. During 1922 the number of State Highway Patrol Officers was increased until the organization consisted of 1 Chief of Police and 20 men. A report of their accomplishments for the year 1922 shows that 898 speeders were warned, 925 trucks were weighed, of which 213 were found to be overweight, and 420 arrests were made.

ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE POLICE

During the 1923 session of the Legislature Governor Small wanted to increase the number of State Highway Police. The use of the words "highway police" conjured in the minds of "labor" interests a state police force which would be used against them. A compromise was effected which placated labor by establishing another and separate organization known as the "Illinois State Highway Maintenance Police." The 1921 law was not repealed, but a new law was added to the books which provided that the Director of Public Works and Buildings was to appoint not to exceed 100 persons as State Highway Maintenance Police. The law set up certain qualifications which made persons eligible and effected the appointment. The most important were:

- a. Appointments without reference to civil service.
- b. A citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Illinois.
- c. Possession of mental and physical qualifications required by the United States Army, possession of such qualifications to be determined by an examination.
- d. Preference to be given to those who had served in the Army or Navy if they possessed the other basic qualifications.

The powers and duties of the State Highway Maintenance Police were practically the same as they are today, with the exception that certain of the Motor Vehicle Laws which we now have were not then in force. The officers had general police powers throughout the State and were not limited as were the State Highway Patrol Officers. The Department of Public Works and Buildings was authorized to purchase appropriate uniforms, motorcycles and equipment which was necessary and issue a badge or star bearing the words "Illinois State Highway Maintenance Police." The salaries were to be determined by the Director of Public Works and Buildings, but not to exceed \$150 a month. The

State, under the law, was to be divided into districts and the police officers were to inspect highways and report the conditions thereof to the Superintendent of Highways. Thus, there was in theory two police organizations under the Division of Highways: those appointed under the 1921 law and those appointed under the 1923 law. The Director of the Department of Public Works and Buildings, however, merged them into one organization as State Highway Maintenance Police.

In the early summer of 1923 the First State Police Training School was held at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. This training school included the original 8 men together with 17 additional men, making the total complement of the Force and the men at the school 25. The school lasted three days and dealt with their powers and duties as officers, methods of communication and form of their reports. Up to this time the men had what they referred to as "makeshift" uniforms, usually parts of their World War I army uniforms. One man, for instance, had his army puttees, army pants and shirt, and then wore a civilian cap. Other men were somewhat similar equipped, but there was no uniformity. At this training school there were issued for the first time uniforms which were patterned after the police uniforms of the day, except they were in Army Khaki. They consisted of high top shoes, leather puttees, britches similar to riding britches, a single breasted, four button reefer or coat, a stiff visored cap, somewhat similar in design to those worn by army officers in World War I. The men were equipped with army surplus Harley Davidson motorcycles. Some had sidecars, others did not. All had acetylene torch headlights which had to be lit with matches for driving at night.

In order to become a police officer one had to have a political sponsor. Under the Highway Maintenance Police the State was divided into 12 districts, with Chief of Police John Stack having his headquarters at his home in Kankakee, Illinois. Mrs. Stack was his office force. He was furnished a Dodge touring car and was the Force's only supervising officer. One of the reasons some of the men with motorcycles were equipped with sidecars was so that they could carry around scales to weigh trucks. Each day they were supposed to mail a card to the Chief of Police on which they listed the hours they worked, the number of warnings given, and the number of arrests made.

By 1924 the size of the Force had been increased to 41 men. The greatest number were assigned to Cook County. This number totalled 8. There were 21 patrols covered by the 41 men. The patrols and the number of men assigned to them were as follows:

<u>Territory</u>	<u>Number of Men Assigned</u>
Route #4, East St. Louis to Carlinville	3
Route #3, East St. Louis to Alton	
Route #11, East St. Louis to Effingham	2
Route #1, Paris to South of Marshall	1
Route #11, Indiana State Line to Effingham	

Route #10, Bement to Indiana State Line	2
Route #1, Paris to Danville	
Route #10, Springfield to Bement	2
Route #10, Springfield to Jacksonville	2
Route #4, Springfield to Carlinville	
Route #24, Springfield to Pekin	1
Route #1, Danville to Beecher	2
Route #17, Route 1 & 17 Junction to Kankakee, Pavement east and west of Hoopeston on Route #9	
Route #4, Bloomington to Wilmington Pavement east and west of Dwight on Route #17	2
Route #1, Chicago to Beecher	3
Route #22, Indiana State Line to Joliet All pavement, south of Chicago under State maintenance in Cook and Will Counties from Indiana Line to Route #4	
Route #22, Pavement west of Joliet	2
Route #4, City limits of Chicago to Wilmington	
Route #7, Joliet to Bureau Junction	3
Route #23, Ottawa to Streator	
Route #27, Bureau Junction to Peoria	2
Route #24, Peoria to Pekin	
Route #7, Rock Island to Bureau Junction Pavement on Route #28 between Sheffield and Galesburg	2
Route #11, DeKalb to Fulton	2
Pavement on Route #23 north and south of DeKalb	
Route #6, Chicago to DeKalb	2
DesPlaines River Road and Higgins Road	1
Route #28, Galesburg to Sheffield Gap between Kewanee and Galesburg	1

Route #5, City Limits of Chicago to Elgin	2
Route #22, Elgin to Aurora	
Route #18, Chicago to Aurora	2
From Glenview to city limits of Chicago on Waukegan Road	2
From city limits of Chicago to Wheeling on Milwaukee Avenue	
Waukegan Road from Glenview to Wisconsin State Line	2
Also all other short State roads in their territory	
Route #15, Belleville to Ashley	1
Route #5 from Elgin to Freeport or as far as pavement goes west. Rockford to South Beloit	2

Patrols were determined by what roads were paved.

In 1925 there were established supervisory officers in each of the 12 districts. This officer was a Sergeant. He was issued a car. The rest of the men continued to have motorcycles. Since motorcycles were used throughout the entire year it was originally felt that a sidecar not only provided a means for carrying portable weighing scales, but made it possible to operate a motorcycle on icy pavements during the winter months. The only motorcycle garage was located in Kankakee and all motorcycles needing repairs were taken there.

With the authorized employment of 100 men the activities of the Department increased, as can be seen from the following totals for the years 1923, 1924 and 1925:

	<u>1923</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1925</u>
Speeders warned	9,000	11,732	
Trucks weighed	3,658	5,575	7,510
Arrests for overweight		884	1,014
Arrests for speeding	1,028	614	590

In 1925 the Force consisted of 1 Chief of Police, 12 Sergeants, 78 Officers and 4 mechanics. The District Headquarters were in the Sergeants' homes. About 1927 there was an upgrading of the equipment. The Chief of Police was assigned a Chrysler 70 Sedan and all the Sergeants were assigned Chrysler 70 Coupes.

In 1929 Louis L. Emmerson was elected Governor. With the change in administration the Chief of Police was replaced by Walter Moody whose headquarters were then estab-

lished in the Centennial Building in Springfield. Al Carr was appointed the Assistant Chief of Police. There was a headquarters staff of clerical employees and a Desk Sergeant. The Legislature in 1929 repealed that portion of the law which fixed salaries for State Police Officers, increased the size of the Force to 300 men and changed the residency requirements from that of being a resident of the State to the present residence requirement of "2 years immediately prior to appointment." The number of Districts was increased to 13. District Headquarters were established in rented buildings and a clerk assigned to each Headquarters. The equipment assigned to the men now became both a motorcycle and an automobile. Officers were assigned partners and were furnished Model A Ford Coupes. The Sergeants were assigned Studebaker Sedans. The cars were used by patrolmen during bad weather and winter months. Weather permitting, they rode motorcycles at other times. Each car was furnished with a riot gun and the District Headquarters began its first arsenal with a Thompson sub-machine gun. The telephone was the only means of communication with officers other than by mail. A more complete system of reports was devised and the old postcard method discarded. Reports were filed in District Headquarters.

In 1933 Governor Henry Horner was elected and there was an almost complete change of personnel in the State Highway Maintenance Police. Of the 300 men, only 5 were retained from the previous administration. Chief Moody and Assistant Chief Carr were released and the Desk Sergeant at the Springfield Headquarters was appointed the Acting Chief of Police. There were no screening examinations. The only qualification for appointment, in actuality, was a political sponsor. Under the Horner Administration many far-reaching reforms were inaugurated, many of which continue today.

In 1935 the Legislature passed a law by which the Department of Public Works and Buildings were authorized to appoint State Highway Maintenance Police in a number not to exceed 350. This increased the Force by 50 men. The qualifications were somewhat changed to provide that persons must possess the physical and mental qualifications required of Privates in the United States Army and such others as the Director of Public Works and Buildings required. Preference was given to persons who had served honorably in the Army or Navy and to those who had previously been employed as State Highway Patrol Officers.

About 1935 District Headquarters were built in several of the districts; first aid, weapons and marksmanship training were required for all personnel. A tailor shop was installed for the fitting and repairing of uniforms. Construction of radio towers and equipment at District Headquarters buildings were started. The Illinois State Police radio system began operation on June 1, 1936. The original system consisted of seven base stations equipped with 1,000 watt amplitude modulated (AM) radiotelephone transmitters operating on a frequency of 1610 Kc. employing one-way blind dispatching to 187 police cars and 325 motorcycles equipped with receivers only. All stations were operated and maintained by professional communication engineers and technicians. During the first full year of operation 218,941 messages were transmitted. Messages were repeated three times in the hope that the officer would hear them.

Officers, for the first time, began attending short courses of police training offered by the FBI and Northwestern Traffic Institute. A new Chief of Police, Walter Williams,

was appointed in 1935 and L. M. Taylor was appointed Assistant Chief.

In 1937 the ranks of Captain and Lieutenant were approved. A Lieutenant was placed in command of a district. He also was assisted by three Sergeants. A system of battalions was inaugurated. A battalion consisted of 2 districts with a Captain in charge of a battalion.

In 1938 the engineers and technicians in the State Police Radio Laboratory designed and constructed seven 500 watt radiotelegraph (CW) transmitters for point-to-point and interstate communications. This made Illinois the first State Police system having full radiotelephone and radiotelegraph coverage. Because there were no mobile transmitters available, the Radio Laboratory designed and constructed an experimental 40 watt mobile transmitter. The first experimental unit was so successful that authority was granted to construct six additional units to be installed in key command cars. Two-way communication between car and station thus became a reality in 1943.

In 1939 the Legislature finally repealed the 1921 law establishing an Illinois State Highway Patrol. Over the years many an argument had developed in the Legislature and law enforcement circles over the actual jurisdiction of the State Highway Maintenance Police. Many contended that their powers in accordance with the 1921 law were limited to police activities on the highway. There was a rearrangement of district boundary lines and a new district was established so that there were then 14 districts covering the same areas as today.

In 1941 Governor Dwight Green was elected. Another complete change of State Police personnel occurred. The Legislature established a Department of Public Safety, removing from the Department of Public Works and Buildings the State Highway Maintenance Police and placing them under the Director of the Department of Public Safety. In this year the law for the first time established the position of Superintendent of Highway Police. Under the Green Administration an Ex-Officio Merit Board was established for the purpose of screening applicants, establishing standards of police qualifications, and providing training for police candidates. In 1941, for the first time, a full course State Police Training School was established and all new personnel were required to attend before being assigned to districts. A physical examination was given applicants and a background investigation of sorts was made of them. The overall administrative operation remained the same under the Green Administration except that there was established the position of Assistant Superintendent who was, in theory, over Battalion Captains, in some instances having specific battalions assigned to him.

In 1941 the men were still riding motorcycles. Most of the motorcycles were without sidecars. It was shortly thereafter that the motorcycles were slowly discontinued and all personnel assigned automobiles. By 1945 there were only 2 or 3 motorcycles assigned to each District. They were used to escort parades, funerals and other public occasions.

Up to 1941 the uniforms had consisted of the same type which were originally used by the State Police Officers, including the britches and leather puttees. Under the Green Administration the uniform design was changed to provide for trousers rather than

britches and the police cap with a stiff visor was somewhat modified. The cars at the beginning of the Green Administration were black and green, the body being green, the top and trunk being black. There was a decal of the State of Illinois on the side indicating the car was one operated by the Illinois State Highway Maintenance Police. The present black and white squad cars were not adopted until 1951.

The law establishing the Illinois State Highway Maintenance Police was amended in 1945 to provide for a force of 500 men. This was an increase of 150. Governor Green was able to get this increase through the Legislature by having the law provide that the additional 150 men should be honorably discharged veterans of World War II.

In 1947 the law established salaries for State Police Officers as follows:

Patrolmen	\$225-\$265
Sergeants	\$245-\$275
Lieutenants	\$275-\$310
Captains	\$305-\$345

By 1948 all motorcycles were abandoned and all mobile units were equipped with frequency modulated (FM) transmitters for talk-back to the base station and FM base stations were installed in the remaining State Police District Headquarters.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MERIT SYSTEM

In 1949 Governor Adlai E. Stevenson took office. One of his campaign pledges was to place the State Police under a merit system. A merit system was established by the 1949 session of the Legislature. This system was the result of a political compromise. The Democrats newly coming to power wanted to establish a 500 man political police force to replace the Republicans. They then were interested in establishing a merit system. The Republicans were in control of the Senate, the Democrats in control of the House. Before a merit law was passed some 90 Democrats were hired and screened through a temporary merit board appointed by the Governor. This Merit Board consisted of Charles Kneier, a professor of political science at the University of Illinois, Walter F. Anderson, the head of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Virgil Petersen, head of the Chicago Crime Commission. These individuals screened the applicants, giving physical examinations, establishing standards, requiring background investigations and graduation from a State Police Training School. The merit system was passed after 90 Democrats were on the Force. The law as passed provided for the establishment of the State Police Merit Board in its present form and further provided that no more than 150 Republicans could be discharged from the Force; that the Board should select and certify for promotion in a fashion to insure by 1951 that there was parity of Republicans and Democrats in each of the ranks. Thereafter persons should be selected on the basis of merit without regard to political affiliation.

Parity was reached by January 1, 1951, and while the Act provided that no more than 150 Republicans could be discharged in order to reach parity, it was never necessary

to discharge this many. Abnormal attrition rates with respect to the holdover officers was so great that before parity was accomplished, it was necessary to recruit 16 Republican applicants.

The Merit System as applied to the State Police provided that the Governor with the consent of the Senate, should appoint a three man Board to be known as the State Police Merit Board. Each member was to serve for six years, with the original appointments being for 2, 4 and 6 years in order that there might be staggered terms and continuity of Board policy. No more than 2 members of the Board could belong to the same political party. The Board has three functions. 1) Establish standards, recruit and certify for appointment those persons whom the Superintendent would appoint to the State Police Force; 2) Establish standards and methods for promotion and certify to the Superintendent those persons who are eligible for promotion; 3) Act as a hearing board to hear all charges preferred by the Superintendent against officers, seeking their suspension for more than 30 days, their demotion or discharge.

The first State Police Merit Board consisted of Dave Cummings, an automotive parts distributor and businessman of Peoria, as Chairman, Charles Kneier of the Political Science Department of the University of Illinois, and Henry A. Gardner, an attorney from Chicago, Illinois.

VEHICLE INVESTIGATION SECTION

Patrolling of the highways turned up a number of stolen motor vehicles. Tracing of the cars and the investigation attendant to handling stolen motor vehicles became so time consuming that it was necessary in 1951 to establish a unit of State Police Officers, with one man assigned to each District, who devoted their time to handling of stolen motor vehicles. This Section makes investigations concerning lost, stolen, abandoned and/or unclaimed motor vehicles. This Section makes investigations concerning lost, stolen, abandoned and/or unclaimed motor vehicles, and hit and run type accidents where the initial investigation does not readily identify the person leaving the accident.

There was issued to all officers prior to 1954 a full length heavy Khaki winter overcoat which was cumbersome in getting in and out of an automobile. In 1954 there was another uniform redesigning. Jacket length brown reefers were issued in place of winter overcoats. A thin brown stripe was placed along the side of the trousers and the present campaign hats were adopted in place of the old police caps. These hats have since been copied by several state and local police agencies.

In 1953 the Legislature removed from the State Police Merit Act any reference to parity provision as a requirement for appointment.

In 1955 the Legislature amended the Law to provide for a Police Force of 600 men, and established the ranks of police officers above that of a Trooper to Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain and Assistant Superintendent or Major. Salaries at that time were:

Patrolmen	\$230-\$360
Sergeants	\$252-\$400
Lieutenants	\$276-\$420
Captains	\$300-460

In 1956 Major William H. Morris was appointed Superintendent, being the first career officer to serve as Illinois State Police Superintendent.

NAME AGAIN CHANGED

In 1957 the Act was again amended by the Legislature at Governor Stratton's request to increase the Force to 1100 men and to further provide that the State Police should, by contract, provide State Police Officers for the Illinois Tollway Commission up to 100 men, so that the total Force would then number 1200 men. This Act of the Legislature also changed the name to Illinois State Highway Police.

The increase in police activity with the increase in the size of the Force can best be illustrated by the fact that District #15, or the men assigned to the Tollway System in 1962, made 12,671 arrests and issued 4,461 warning tickets.

In 1958 the rank of Corporal was established as the next grade above that of Trooper.

CRIME SECTION

While the State Police Force was primarily established to patrol the highways and enforce the traffic laws, the increase in state population also caused an increase in crime. The Sheriffs' office in many localities of the State were understaffed, undermanned and undertrained. They were, therefore, unable to cope with many of the crime problems confronting them and began calling upon State Police Officers to assist them. In order to meet this need, the State Police Force, in 1960, established a Detective Section under the direction of a Captain. This section first had 8 men assigned to it. The men operated in plain clothes and in unmarked police cars. They were assigned only to investigate major crimes and only investigated these crimes as a cooperative measure with local law enforcement authorities. They initiated and conducted no investigations unless a request was received for their help from local enforcement agencies such as Sheriffs, Chiefs of Police, or States Attorneys. The demands upon the personnel for investigations of this kind have increased to such an extent that it has been necessary to assign additional men to the Crime Section Branch so that by 1963 there was a total of 32 men assigned.

In 1962 a former FBI agent was employed to head the Detective Section in a civilian capacity in order to set up proper investigative files, procedures and afford necessary supervision and training to officers assigned to this branch, the police officers so assigned being called "Agents."