

RETIRED, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN EDWARD HOLOHEAN

By Albina Fraser
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Troopers didn't always patrol the state in blue and gold cars or rein in criminals with the help of sophisticated radio equipment.

Edward Holohean remembers when the patrols were done on horseback, the work shifts lasted a whole season, and a pocketful of nickels for the telephone was as valuable as any present-day two-way radio.

For instance: Holohean, 81, a retired state trooper, recalls an event in January, 58 years ago, when he was a new member of Troop G barracks in Troy.

On that day in 1928 Holohean was assigned to ride his horse from the Troy barracks to Wells for winter patrol duties. Joining him was Trooper J.J. Lutz.

The 80-mile trip took five days, with night stops for eating and sleeping - and to feed and rest the horses - at farms set up as regular stops.

After spending the winter months patrolling the summer homes around Wells and Speculator, the two troopers returned overland to the Troy barracks.

The troopers were to travel on horseback to their destination for effect - to show residents that troopers were on duty.

In those early days of the State Police, Holohean said, troopers served 24-hour duty days, were paid \$900 a year, and were issued all the items of their uniforms except underwear, but including their .45 caliber revolvers.

A native of Kingston, Holohean joined the State Police in Albany in 1927 when he was 23 years old. Before that he served with the National Guard and New York Central Police from 1921 until 1926.

Assigned to Troop G, he was a member of the mounted constabulary, a unit formed in 1918, and was one of the first members of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). He also was a member of one of two "rough rider" mounted teams, and is the sole survivor of his seven-member team.

The rough riders traveled on horseback to area fairs in Schenectady, Cobleskill and the Catskills during the three summers of their existence. Here they demonstrated their trick-riding abilities, balancing on their shoulders on the backs of the horses, doing flips to sit backward in the saddle, and jumping from one side of a horse to the other.



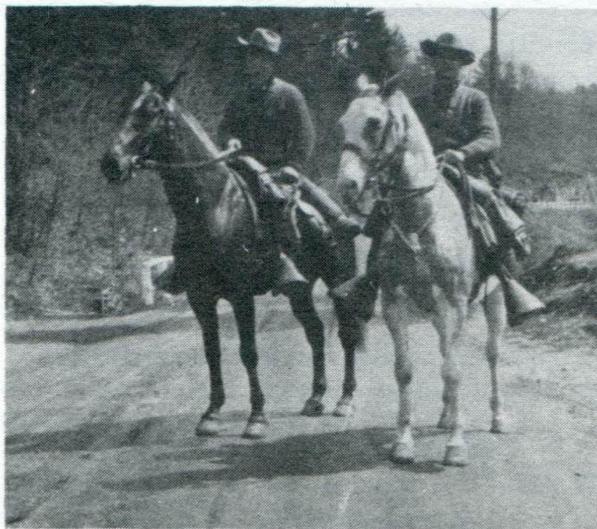
Edward Holohean today

The trick-riding teams were disbanded to perform traffic duty when more and more cars began using the roads. Holohean spent the following eight years on traffic duty, riding his motorcycle in the summer and horse in the winter.

The retired trooper was one of the first to have a radio, which was in its testing stages at the time.

He had a one-way receiver which alerted him to contact the base by a loud buzzing noise. He said he had to carry a pocketful of nickels, which he had to provide himself, to telephone the barracks. He said that immediately on hearing the buzz he would head for the nearest pay phone to notify headquarters of his location.

Holohean recalls escorting on his



On patrol in 1928

motorcycle such notables as Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was governor at the time; Admiral Richard Byrd, and Charles Lindbergh.

Following his retirement from the State Police in 1953 after serving 25 years, Holohean started his second career as chief of security at the Saratoga Harness Track. He worked there for 20 years, retiring in 1973.

One of his most memorable accomplishments was when he served as chairman of a Polio Vaccine Program in 1955. Nearly 4,700 children in schools within Saratoga County were inoculated. He set up and recruited two nurses and two doctors and other personnel for the clinics held in each school.

Holohean said it was a tremendous job made easier by five very dedicated women. For his role in this endeavor, he was given a commendation from Basil O'Connor, national chairman of the March of Dimes.

Holohean also served as chairman of the county and Saratoga Springs March of Dimes campaigns, was involved in PTA and the Boy Scouts, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus. He served as president of Saratoga Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and the Former Troopers Association of the Capital District.

Holohean is married and the father of three children. Despite two steel hip replacements, Holohean still loves to ride horses.