

## Borough of Wyomissing

*As the Borough of Wyomissing celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of quality professional policing service in the Borough of Wyomissing, it was recognized that to know and understand where the police department and policing in general is leading it was imperative to know where we have been. Therefore, the following is a timeline of policing in the Borough of Wyomissing from the inception in 1914 to present day as compiled through interviews, firsthand accounts, and Annual Reports of both the Borough of Wyomissing and the Chiefs of Police. These interesting statistics and comments that have been reported through the years are now included in this year-by-year breakdown. This timeline is not all inclusive, but rather "highlights" by documenting law enforcement duties and all that have defined law enforcement and policing in the Borough of Wyomissing since 1914.*

### 1914

The concept of policing in the Borough of Wyomissing was born in August by the Town Council (now Borough Council) which recognized the need for a professional police force to service the residents and businesses of the new and growing municipality. A request was made to the Pennsylvania State Constabulary (known later as the Pennsylvania State Police). The following is the memo request sent August 5, 1914:

BOROUGH OF WYOMISSING, PA.  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY.

Aug. 5th., 1914.

Supt. John C. Groome,  
State Police Force,  
Harrisburg, Penna.

Dear Sir:--

By direction of Borough Council of Wyomissing, Pa.,

I hereby make application to have a detachment of the State Constabulary stationed at this Borough as the citizens of Wyomissing are very desirous of having protection against tramps and persons that are a menace to the law and order of the community, which the presence of the State Constabulary insures.

Trusting you can act favorably on this request I remain,

Very Respectfully Yours,

Secretary of Boro. Council.

The memo request was later formalized as a Resolution on August 27, 1914, which read as follows:

*“WHER(E)AS, This community is without adequate police protection, and is centrally located in the County of Berks,*

*THEREFORE*

*Be It Resolved:*

*That we, The Borough Council of Wyomissing respectfully request HON. JOHN G. GROOME, of Harrisburg, Superintendent of the State Police, to locate a detail of State Police in the Borough of Wyomissing, Berks County, and*

*Be It Resolved,*

*That a certified copy of the foregoing Resolution be transmitted by the Secretary of Borough Council, to said JOHN C. GROOME, Superintendent of the State Police aforesaid.”*

The Resolution passed unanimously.

### **1915**

The exact written response is unknown; however, it was noted as received by Major Groome of the Pennsylvania State Constabulary, which was read during the monthly Town Council meeting on June 24, 1915. A second resolution was approved unanimously, which read as the following:

*“WHER(E)AS, the Boro(ugh) of Wyomissing and immediate vicinity us (is) without police protection of any nature,*

*And whereas the said Boro is transverse by a main line Railroad, which is a highway for tramps, vagrants, and undesirable(s) characters, therefore request Maj. John C. Groome, Supt. of State Police, to locate a detail of State Police in the said Boro of Wyomissing. “*

### **1916**

In March, the Law Committee, which was headed by J. Fred Hartgen, the Town Solicitor (known later as Borough Solicitor), was to research the “appoint(ing) of borough police found in Act 1897 and the Borough Code of 1915.” A traffic ordinance was introduced in a draft form provided by The State Department of Highway.

### **1917**

An agreement was made for stall space at the borough stables, formerly at 18 State Hill Road, for horses to be boarded for the Pennsylvania State Constabulary for \$7 a month. The agreement was for the Borough to “provide straw and receive the manure.”

**1918**

In January, the salary for the constable was set at \$25 per month. The Borough was notified in May that the Pennsylvania State Constabulary would be moving to “Spring Valley.”

**1919**

In March, the Town Council appointed E.E. Goldman as the High Constable for the Borough of Wyomissing.



Uniform Badge of the “High Constable” worn into the mid 1940’s.