

1930

Officer George A. Dobler was suspended and dismissed. Officer L.B. Talley was hired and later dismissed. The Law Committee was expanded and renamed the Law and Police Committee. Officer Charles F. Hahn was promoted to the first rank of Sergeant in June. The dog law was hand delivered to all borough homes for public awareness. The traffic lights are "on" for 6 ½ hours each day, except Sunday. The cell at the police department was divided for multiple prisoners. There was "strike duty" for demonstrations at the Berkshire Knitting Mills in December. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) became the clearinghouse for the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program.

1931

Two "riot" style shotguns were purchased. September witnessed additional strike demonstrations and special meetings, such as the excerpt minutes of one meeting at the Peoples Trust Company Bank, 800 Penn Avenue:

After discussing the various phases of the strike situation, the census of opinion was that in view of the fact that the industries' welfare was jeopardized by the continuous inroads of strangers from New York, Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut and further that Council having the welfare of the industries at heart, felt that some action should be taken so as to afford good protection at the present and at the same time take such legislative measures and to try if possible to prevent another gathering. Mr. Law reported that he has done everything possible to give the industries their protection and that the Sheriff and State Police are ready to cooperate at very short notice with the Borough Policemen. Attorney Price reported that the Borough Council should appreciate the efforts of Mr. Law for he was doing all that was possible. Mr. Wade suggested that due to the fact that our Policemen are not getting sufficient rest, that the Burgess should employ temporary policemen. Mr. Price suggested that Mr. Bertolet should draw up such legislation as he would recommend so as to enable the Borough Policemen to combat this situation in a more efficient manner. Mr. Price volunteered to see Mr. Moss, Deputy State Attorney, as to what could be done in order to keep persons from other states from interfering with the peace and tranquility of the Borough. Mr. Wade and Killmer moved that Mr. Law employ temporary additional policemen and get necessary equipment and pay them at the rate of \$4.25 to \$5.00 per day and place them at such time and places as he may deem necessary. Motion carried.

Special meetings of the Town Council produced a resolution, which was sent to Governor Gifford Pinchot requesting assistance:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Borough of Wyomissing that an appeal be made to His Excellency, Gifford Pinchot, Governor of the State of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Penna., for police protection to supplement the Borough Police Force in preserving order in the Borough, necessitated by the presence of upward of 3,000 textile strikers from outside this State, who are disturbing the peace of the Borough.

1932

In July, the exploration of the Berkshire Heights annexation was "indefinitely abandoned."

1933

The police department's annual report listed all victims by name of robberies and vehicle thefts. Two special police officers were hired for the "industrial strike" in August and dismissed afterwards in September. "Special" police officers were also used to patrol the playgrounds. In July, several "milk thefts" were reported. Officer Walter D. Anderson resigned.

1934

"20 Years of Service"

A new patrol vehicle, a five-passenger four-door Dodge sedan, cost \$845, but after trade-in was only \$627.33. A heater and siren were purchased for the patrol vehicle later in 1934. Sergeant Charles F. Hahn resigned, but not before Borough Council received a petition signed by 115 residents encouraging the resignation "not be accepted." Officer Raymond E. Dissinger was promoted to Sergeant. A short wave radio was installed in Town Hall. A spotlight was added to the patrol car. In June, Bell Telephone Company executed a contract for \$8.55 per month to connect the telephone lines from Wyomissing Town Hall to City Hall in Reading so when a Wyomissing police officer was not in Town Hall an operator from City Hall would answer. Standardized forms were purchased from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In July, Officer Benjamin J. Widson was hired as a police officer and the Acting Chief of Police for \$1400 per month after the position was vacated by Chief William J. "Dutch" Griffith due to illness. Officers Eldridge J. "Red" Eyrich and Harry F. Bare were hired as "special police officers." A nine (9) and a ten (10) year old boy were apprehended for burglarizing the Pretzel Bakery at 956 Hill Avenue. In August a person of "unsound mind" was returned to his home. Stickers were purchased and distributed to residents to become acquainted with the police and fire departments.

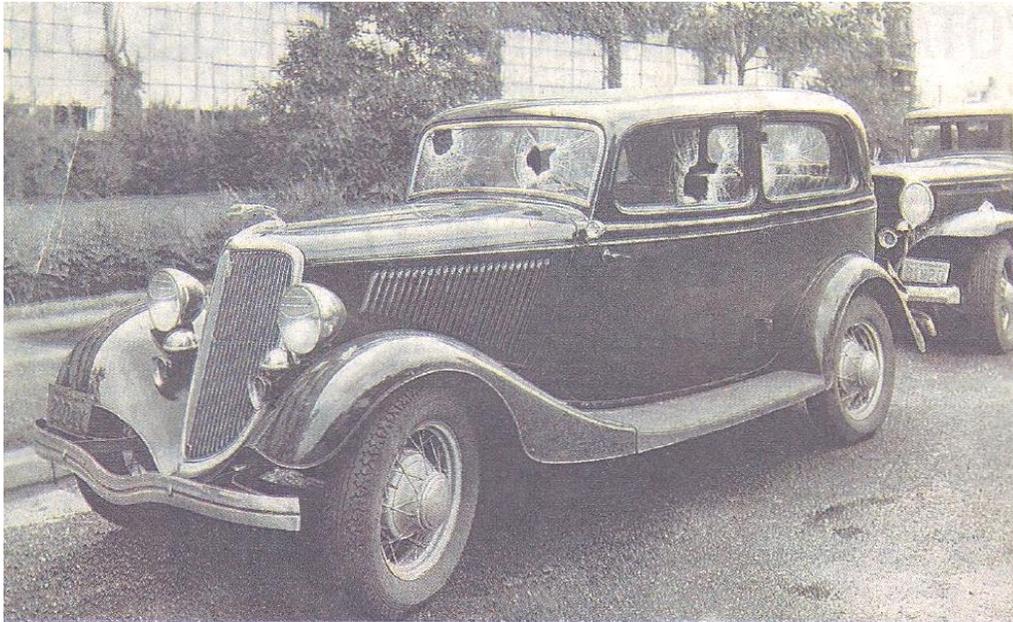
Calls for Service	Arrests (include Borough Ordinances)	Traffic Violations	Traffic Accidents	Miles Patrolled
281	115	N/R	11	Average of 2918 per Month
Stolen Property Recovered	Police Pension Balance	Complement of Officers	UCR Clearance Rate v. National	
N/R	None	4	N/R	

1935

There were four (4) borough police officers. There was one traffic citation for “passing a trolley,” which was later dismissed. Trolley traffic on Penn Avenue was causing traffic jams during the shift changes of the Wyomissing industries. The Dog Impound Report was completed yearly, with “37 impounded, 9 dogs killed, 24 were returned to owner, 4 were non-residents, and 4 were released to their non-owners”. There were 19 incidents classified as an “annoyance of children.” A proper police badge for the Chief of Police was purchased. The “police booth” was removed from Gehret Store at Reading Boulevard and Penn Avenue. Compensation of \$0.25 was added to the Chief of Police’s salary and less for the officers. A rifle was confiscated for a shooting in the 900 block of Penn Avenue, which nearly struck a resident.

1936

In 1936, the expense for maintaining 1.5 patrol cars for the year was \$788.41. The need for a police clerk was discussed as well as the need for additional space for the police department in Town Hall. In October, a special meeting was held to address “police protection for emergency purposes” in preparation of the anticipated strike at the Berkshire Knitting Mills over management refusing to unionize the workers. During the initial onset of the strike, a twenty-five (25) year old employee, M. Earl Schlegel, died after being struck by a brick while driving in the gate at Eighth and Hill Avenues on the municipal line between the Boroughs of West Reading and Wyomissing. Two (2) horses were acquired from the Reading Country Club for the Chiefs of Police of both West Reading and Wyomissing. Additionally, there was a request to use the Borough of Wyomissing Hills Police Department radio equipped patrol vehicle from October through December. During a scuffle there were minor injuries from “missiles in the air at police.” The Chief Burgess George O. Goddard reported, “never in the entire scuffle did they (police officers) resort to their sticks or sidearms, which (in) fact in our humble estimation was the salvation of the entire affair.” The police department dealt with a strike at the Berkshire Knitting Mills with assistance from neighboring West Reading and Wyomissing Hills Police Departments and the Pennsylvania State Police and their Mounted Unit. These assisting officers were made “special police officers” by the Borough of Wyomissing. Police officers were assisted by the Berkshire Knitting Mills security guards. The Pennsylvania State Police withdrew from their “set up” in the strike zone by November, except for extra patrols during the Berkshire Knitting Mill’s shift changes. During a November meeting, officials from the Boroughs of West Reading, Wyomissing, and Wyomissing Hills, reached the consensus that stated, “better protection can be afforded each Borough where jurisdiction lines do not interfere.”



COURTESY OF WYOMISSING BOROUGH

Damage from the Berkshire Knitting Mill riots of 1936.

1937

Chief Burgess George O. Goddard presented the following salary adjustment motion:

May I most honorably request an advancement in pay for each branch of the Police service. That our men may be in a position to meet the living conditions of the present day, and be compensated on a more equal basis in comparison to our neighboring borough West Reading.

I recommend that our Chief of Police be paid the sum of \$40.00 per week; The Sergeant \$36.00; and the Patrolmen \$33.00.

Motion approved.

The Borough of Wyomissing Hills Police Department patrol vehicle was used through June in 1937, no reason was reported, but most likely for the strike situation. However, in March, the personal cars of Chief Benjamin J. Widson and Officer Eldridge J. "Red" Eyrich were used after the Wyomissing Hills car "was demolished." "Speed Traps" were instituted in April after a year of threatening to enforce the laws governing speeding by automobiles on Penn Avenue in the 50 MPH area. The "speed traps" were advertised in a local motor magazine and the daily newspaper. All officers were on duty from 5:00 AM through 10:30 PM five days a week for the Berkshire Knitting Mills strike demonstrations. These strike demonstrations were conducted by approximately thirty (30) demonstrators daily. Chief Benjamin J. Widson requested an ordinance be drafted to deal with "vendors- house to house canvas(s)ers." Twenty (20) and sixteen (16) arrests were made during September and October, respectively. The police

department requested “authority to purchase the necessary equipment for permanent registrations of the citizens and children of the entire community, this record to be in loose leaf form and act as a census of the community...equipment to cost \$69,” which was approved. Officer Floyd E. Groff was hired.

1938

In January, Chief Burgess George O. Goddard and Chief Benjamin J. Widson testified before the National Labor Relation Board (NLRB) about the strikes at the Berkshire Knitting Mills. The “sanitary condition of our department maintained by Emanuel H. Bohn is indeed commendable. The Borough lock up has been inspected weekly by the State Police for over a period of three months, and we have always been credited with Class Triple A.” The first Welcome Packet was organized “listing the rules and routine of customs of the community and at the same time extending a welcome to those who come.”

1939

In 1939, “officers performed 520 hours of dismounted patrolling in the built up sections of the Borough approximately 1560 miles.” Traffic direction at the schools accounted for 1200 hours with an additional 788 hours in the area of the Textile and Berkshire Knitting Mills. During June, two boys were found swimming after closing hours at the pool and were each fined \$1.