

PENNSYLVANIA'S UNIQUE CONSTABULARY

ONLY AGENCY OF THE LAW EQUAL TO THE TASK OF BREAKING UP THE MURDEROUS BLACK HAND ORGANIZATION

ONLY in Pennsylvania has a means been found of curtailing the murderous activities of that terrible organization, which, under the name of "Black Hand," has been committing outrages all over the United States.

While the entire police force of the city of New York is powerless to prevent the almost daily murders that mark the work of the Black Hand in the metropolis, while Postal Inspector Cortelyou is striving to find means by which the Postmaster-General's department can prevent Uncle Sam from innocently acting as the agent who carries dread threats, and while special laws are being enacted in some states and legislation may be introduced into Congress at the next session, the Keystone State, through its own normal police machinery, is steadily stamping out every vestige of this Italian outlawry.

The work is being done through the State Constabulary, an organization unique in the United States.

It consists of four troops, each made up of a captain, lieutenant, five sergeants and 50 men. The force, under the command of Captain John C. Groome, has been most carefully made up of picked men, and there are many noted athletes, rough riders and men who made reputations in the short-lived Spanish-American War, included in the number.

This organization is entirely separate from any local police organization, and takes precedence in authority anywhere it goes.

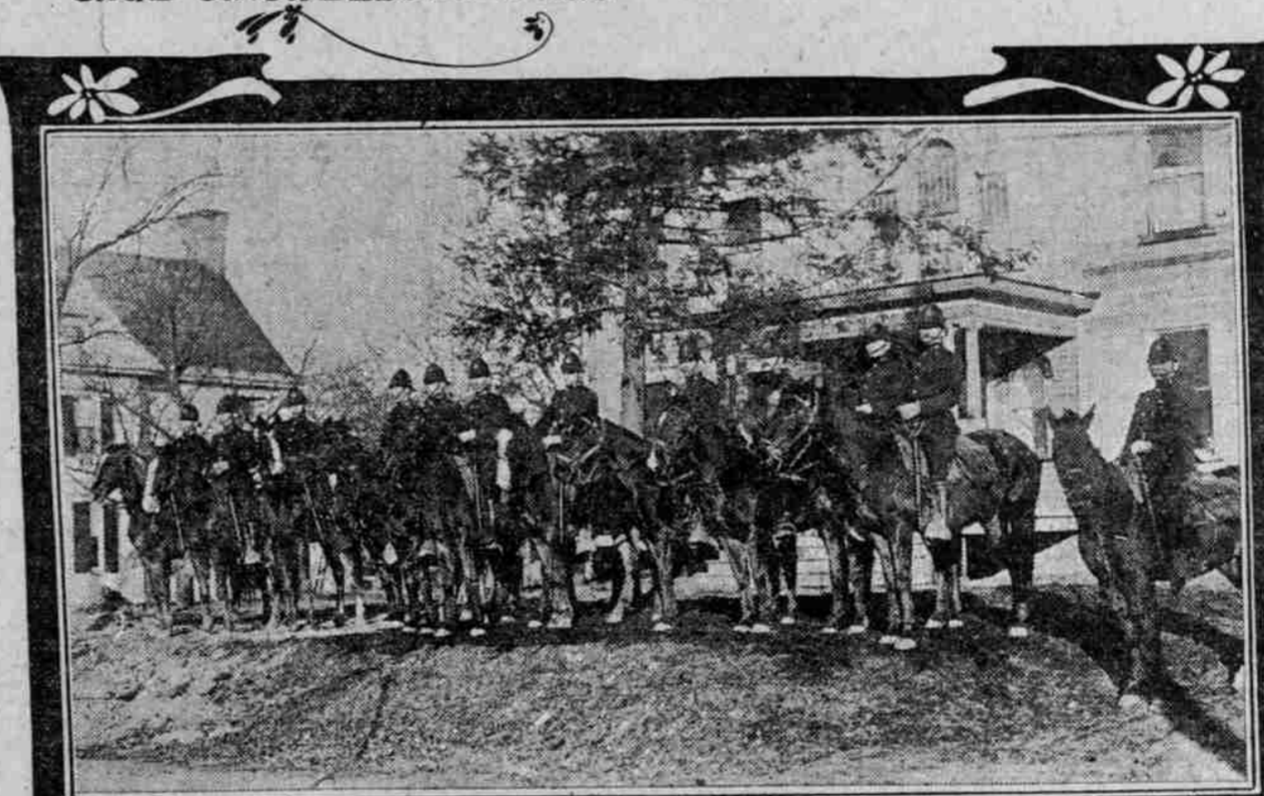
The superintendent, Captain Groome, can compel local authorities to give aid



STATE CONSTABLES AT DRILL



TROOP C OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONSTABULARY



PENNSYLVANIA STATE CONSTABULARY ASSEMBLING FOR DUTY AFTER A CALL TO A SCENE OF DISORDER

to his men, though usually he prefers to work alone. The original intention in creating the state constabulary was to have available at all times a well equipped force that could be moved quickly from the place where turbulence and disorder too great for the strength of the local authorities, necessitated outside help. Particularly was it expected that the state constabulary would have its work out in the coal regions, where thousands of foreigners, unfamiliar with American institutions, and in many cases out of sympathy with them, were too strong to be handled by city and town police or county sheriffs, but in its two years of existence the new body has done such valuable work that it is welcomed everywhere in times of disorder.

Undoubtedly the best of achievements has been the recent triumph over the Black Hand.

No less a person than Secretary Cortelyou is authority for the statement that the breeding ground of this dread Italian organization in this country is the anthracite coal district of Pennsylvania. Certain it is that in the district whose biggest cities are Wilkesbarre and Scranton its first serious outrages are noted.

The Black Hand stood as the successor or partner of the Mafia and Camorra, and was but another outcropping of the custom which more in Italy than any other country seems to force criminals into oath-bound unions.

The motive which actuates all these companies of assassins is the desire for blackmail. Blackmail causes them to abduct children of rich men. Blackmail inspires the threats they hang over the poor who can only yield small tributes, blackmail is the motive for which they commit arson, murder, torture, and defy the police powers of state and nation.

In Pennsylvania the first display of the power of the Black Hand was disclosed in a curious system by which a whole company of miners was made to pay tribute. Into a company of workmen went a trusted member of the organization. No one knew his connection with the Black Hand. After a time he communicated to one of his new acquaintances that he had received a message which said that unless he gave up one dollar of his next week's wages his child would be murdered. He craftily spread the idea that not less than a dozen members of the Black Hand were working in the mine, and that every miner who declined to pay or who dared to expose the blackmailers was spotted and would be dealt with to the limit.

Such men as refuse to contribute are handled with gloves. They get an announcement that because of their refusal the tax on them has been increased to \$50 or \$100 apiece. In unmistakable terms the letter makes clear that the price of a second refusal will be assassination. Nor has there been any hesitancy in carrying out the final threat.

Thus a condition of panic was spread, and by the time the Black Hand collector was ready to appear the entire company willingly purchased its immunity by giving up the dollar.

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Italians in New York have actually been terrorized for the last 12 months by a few of their dastardly countrymen. Crime has succeeded crime. In the county of Westchester, alone, according to police authorities, more than \$30,000 was paid in blackmail in one month.

Murders are of daily occurrence. There are said to be more than 50 bands at work in the metropolis and the cities nearby. To one of these bands alone is credited not less than 50 murders. Men, women and children have been shot down in the streets of New York, and but scant justice has been brought to the criminals because of the difficulty of securing evidence.

Those innocent Italians who see the shooting are so much in terror of the organization that they decline to go on the stand as witnesses or give the detectives any help. In fact, they flee the country, returning to Italy, rather than incur the risks of assisting the state in breaking up the murderous order.



EMBRYO DISCIPLES OF THE BLACK HAND SUNNING THEMSELVES IN A NEAPOLITAN STREET

use of the easily concealed and noiseless dagger, and a fourth employs a razor, then after the murder is accomplished breaks the slender blade, and leaves half on the breast of the victim as a warning.

Almost every member of the Black Hand has a criminal record, which qualifies him to join. He is bound by the most terrific oaths never to forsake his comrades or to expose them to the police.

Some 30 years ago Pennsylvania had to deal with a similar organization of assassins, and the wonderful work by which it was broken up always stands as a model for the police authorities of the country over.

The Molly Maguires held the entire coal region in terror, they wrecked trains, carried on a system of the most ferocious blackmail, fired buildings, had an organized system of murder, while local authorities were powerless.

In its State Constabulary it possessed an organization of well-equipped, fearless men, who could work among the desperate Italians with a safety not possible to local authorities.

The State Constabulary went into the very hotbed of the Black Hand. It investigated every case of attempted blackmail. It protected those who had

courage to report to the police threats made against them. It gathered evidence that culminated in the arrest and conviction of 13 leading Black Hand conspirators at Wilkesbarre.

These convictions while they have not ended the reign of terror inspired among Italians by this ferocious organization, have, nevertheless, dealt the Black Hand an awful blow, and have shown that the proper kind of forces can deal with one of the most

perilous forms of lawbreakers. Captain Groome and his men will keep up the fight, and shift quickly from place to place whenever the enemy becomes active.

Other states, impressed by the success of the Pennsylvania State Constabulary, are contemplating the organization of similar bodies, if not permanent, at least till the murdering Italians have been brought under control.

"That is pretty good all by itself. Do you notice the cumulative touches? The week before the gas lines were merely examined. This week they are cleaned. Also last week a washer was put in the hand air pump, and this week in goes a plunger. Several little springs are put in and the gas tank frame is fastened. I believe they had to fasten the gas tank to hold the 61 gallons of gasoline that went in to the bill. That is in itself one of the best things in the whole lot.

"You notice that the car was on live storage one quarter month. That means for three-quarters of a month it was on dead storage in the repair shop. In spite of that for one-quarter of a month sixty-one gallons of gasoline were necessary.

"That means some useful extended driving which the car did not get, because I didn't use it at all that month. However, if you say anything about it, they can produce slips to show that the tank was filled so and so often and that you owe for what they say. And you cannot go behind the returns at all.

"The unfortunate steering housing is not through with its troubles yet, as you can see by a bill which comes in only a few days afterward. This bill says:

1 1/2 hours labor patching steering housing, taking motion out of driving shaft, fastening gas tank frame, repairing blow-off from steering shaft, putting in new hand air pump plunger, adjusting foot and emergency brakes, putting release spring on foot brake, cleaning water and gas lines, tightening rear wheels. \$ 8.63

and make sure that you cannot get it out and then let it lie there idle and charge time all the same.

"I have known all sorts of bills to be made up just on this basis. For instance here is one:

1 1/2 hours labor putting catch on door under front seat. \$1.15
1 brass covered catch. 1.00
6 bolts. .18 \$2.31

"Isn't that a work of art? One and a half hours to put a catch under a seat that would take the average man who never was educated as a mechanic about 20 minutes. And notice the artful touch with which the bill is rounded out. Six bolts to show that there was some work involved in putting them in.

"All the bills made out have some little joker in them like that. They all have the appearance of wishing to show you exactly what you are getting. They leave out nothing, not even a 2-cent item. For instance, note how complete the following bill is:

1 1/2 hours labor repairing catch on steering housing and examining links on front and rear spring, examining gas line and connections, putting new washer in hand air pump and grinding poppet and intercepting valves, examining driving shaft, greasing, fastening steering housing to frame, repairing body, repacking power and pumps. \$13.18

Following parts used: 1 Footpacking. .02
6 Spring yokes. 2.40
1 1/2-inch nut. .02
1 hand air pump. 10
1 washer. .05
1 long power air pump spring. 60
1 short power air pump spring. 60 \$17.82

"I believe that bill comes pretty near to being the champion. You see, most of that bill was taken up with examining things. The expert repair man actually went to all the trouble of looking at several of the parts of the car before he put in two springs and a washer.

"You'll notice he repaired the body of the car, but if he did, what did he use in repairing it? These garage keepers aren't in the game for their health, and it is not exactly clear what he used to repair the car.

"He may have used that foot of packing for which an item of 2 cents is set down with religious care. Or it might be that one lone nut three-eighths of an inch in size for which 3 cents also is charged.

"After that bill on July 25, with all the practically limitless repairs it suggests, you'd hardly expect that six days later another would come detailing that this had happened:

1 1/2 hours labor testing water regulator, taking motion out of driving shaft, fastening gas tank frame, repairing blow-off from steering shaft, putting in new hand air pump plunger, adjusting foot and emergency brakes, putting release spring on foot brake, cleaning water and gas lines, tightening rear wheels. \$ 8.63

Following parts used: 1 D engine brake drum. 3.50
1 toggle cross. 2.50
1 brake shaft hand lever dog. 1.45
1 brake shaft quadrant. 1.40
1 throttle rod end. .50
1 power air pump check valve. 75
61 gallons gasoline—16 pints extra. 17.85
1/4 month live storage. 5.00 22.65

Total. \$40.44

"That is pretty good all by itself. Do you notice the cumulative touches? The week before the gas lines were merely examined. This week they are cleaned. Also last week a washer was put in the hand air pump, and this week in goes a plunger.

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"That means some useful extended driving which the car did not get, because I didn't use it at all that month. However, if you say anything about it, they can produce slips to show that the tank was filled so and so often and that you owe for what they say. And you cannot go behind the returns at all.

"The unfortunate steering housing is not through with its troubles yet, as you can see by a bill which comes in only a few days afterward. This bill says:

1 1/2 hours labor patching steering housing, taking motion out of driving shaft, fastening gas tank frame, repairing blow-off from steering shaft, putting in new hand air pump plunger, adjusting foot and emergency brakes, putting release spring on foot brake, cleaning water and gas lines, tightening rear wheels. \$ 8.63

Following parts used: 2 gas tank cap washers. .60
1 main surplus steering pin. .05
1 "A" front wheel lock washer. .05
1 short power air pump spring. .60
1 front wheel lock washer. .12
2 tire valve plungers. .10
10 1/2-inch machine bolts. .20
2 5/16-inch machine bolts. .02
1 1/2-inch machine bolt nut. .10
2 front wheel steering rod ends. 1.30

Total. \$12.83

"That is the system they play. They send in the bills piecemeal, at any time that they think you will have forgotten the foregoing bill, apparently. There may seem to be repetitions, but there is nothing that they cannot explain away.

"And why shouldn't they be able to make it all clear? The garage man is honest and even if he does appear to be throwing it into a man, charging him for 61 gallons of gasoline, on which a car could run some hundred odd miles, when the car was not out of the garage, if the slips can be produced to show that the car used that much, it used that much, didn't it?"

How the Garage Man Pads Bills

Victim Tells of Items You Discover When Your Auto Is Repaired.

"A GREAT deal has been written and said about the ways of the garage keeper," said a man who once owned an automobile to a New York Sun reporter. "And it is a truth often expressed that the first cost of a car is not the greatest.

"That is all the more true if the car wasn't new when you got it. The car I had dated back a couple of seasons and when I had a chance to sell it early this year, losing only a little on the original purchase price, I took the chance right away. The car needed a little overhauling. In fact, I never saw a car that didn't if the garage man was allowed to go over it.

"In connection with that overhauling I noticed some funny things—for one, the varying price paid for labor. In the last month's assortment of bills there are four distinct charges for time put in on the car.

"The first item is for 1 1/2 hours' work, for which the charge is \$3.56. If my figures are right, that is at the rate of 74.98 cents an hour. Very well. "Take the first item on the next bill. That is 1 1/2 hours for work on the car. The sum is \$13.18, a fatal combination, especially as the bill is rendered on a Friday. The rate by the hour is 70.45 cents. So much for that one.

The charge is \$1.13. That rate is 75.33 cents an hour.

"On another day it is alleged that the men in the garage put in 1 1/2 hours on the car. The rate figured on the price of \$8.63 in the bill is 75.04 cents an hour.

"Now, inasmuch as my understanding is that the real charge is 75 cents an hour, neither more nor less, how is it that the garage man can charge sums varying from 70.45 cents to 75.33 cents and still not be cheating himself or his employees? Those cents and mills may appear to be trifling things, but I want to tell you that when the garage man gets in his work they will mount up.

"The moment it is taken down the owner cannot get it for his use. That means the car is dead to him. It becomes a source of profit to the repair department.

"A man goes around and fiddles with it for a few moments and then goes away. All the time the hours of labor mount up. Eventually some one gets grumpy enough to finish up your car and you get it back with a bill as long as your arm.

"If you kick about the length of time the car has been held up because of trifling repairs you are told that there are so many cars in the shops that yours has to wait its turn. But, as a matter of fact, no matter how busy they may be, they will take your car down