

...NEW...

Constitution and By-Laws

—OF—

THE MONROE HORSE RANGER COMPANY



MONROE, OHIO

THE MONROE HORSE RANGER COMPANY

“This organization shall be known and designated as “The Monroe Horse Ranger Co. of Monroe”, duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, this second day of April, AD. 1901, and filed in the office of the Secretary of State in the city of Columbus, State of Ohio, and re-corded in Volume 85, page 144 of the records of incorporation at Columbus, Ohio.”

So reads the first section of the Constitution of the organization that was the Horse Rangers. The statutes of Ohio under which it was organized were passed and took effect March 21, 1887. These stated that any number of persons, not less than fifteen, a majority of whom were residents of the State of Ohio, are hereby authorized to become incorporated for the purpose of apprehending and convicting horse-thieves and other felons. After incorporation they could draw up a constitution, elect officers, members could be sworn, etc. These members then had the power and authority, when a felony had been committed, to pursue and arrest, without warrant, any person or persons, whom they believe or have reasonable cause to believe is guilty of the offense, and arrest and detail such alleged criminal or criminals in any County in the State to which they may have fled and return such accused person or persons to any officer of the County in which the offense was committed, and there detain such accused person or persons until legal warrant can be obtained for his or their arrest.

The members could also be assessed for expenses of the company, could be indemnified for losses caused by horse-thieves or other felons, and expend monies, as deemed necessary in the pursuit and arrest and procuring the conviction of felons.

Upon the apprehension and conviction of any such horse-thief or other felon...the Commissioners of the County in which the criminal (crime) was committed may reimburse the association in any sum, not exceeding one hundred dollars, for necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for by law, incurred in the apprehension and conviction of such criminal.

The area covered by the Monroe Horse Ranger Company extended from Blue Ball to the Canal, south to the Mason Road, east to what is now Route 741 and back to Blue Ball.

Members were required to register their marks (brands) with the company and their property was searched for, if lost, strayed or stolen, without cost to the member. Non members had to pay a fee. Ladies could belong, by paying the dues and fees of membership, but they were excused from patrolling!

Members were fined if they did not attend meetings, except for serious illness, illness in the family) or unavoidable absence from town. During meetings they were to maintain a respectful silence, under penalty of a public reprimand. When speaking, shall arise and respectfully address the chair.. shall confine themselves to the question in debate, and avoid all personalities, indecorous and sarcastic language, as well as any reflection upon the Company, Councils or members. (other such rules were given in the by-laws).

Any member who refused to go on duty or neglected to go when called was fined \$1.00 for the first time, double the second time and expelled from the Company for the third offense.

The registering of members horses required, was to be made in writing, giving the description, showing their age, color, height, gait, and saddle, collar, or other marks and blemishes.

All officers and members sent in pursuit of lost or stolen property belonging to members, would be allowed \$1.00 per day and traveling expenses: and for each horse and buggy furnished the additional sum of \$0.50 per day would be allowed.

Property of firms would not be protected, unless all members of said firm were members of the Company.

A reward of \$25.00 to be paid by the Company to any person outside the company for the arrest and conviction of a thief who has taken property belonging to any member of the Company. The Captain had up to \$100.00, for immediate use, if necessary, for the capture and conviction of theft committed on any of its members.

Having read the by-laws and constitution and approved of them, the members then took an obligation and pledge which ended with, “and all this we promise upon our most sacred honor as members of veracity”.

Cars were later used instead of horse and buggy, and this type of ranger group or one like it was in use until the State Highway Patrol was organized.

Some notes on officers and activities: names will only be given once as the same men served in various offices at various times over the years and were sometimes kept on for several years in the same office. The first meetings were in the C.M. Hiteshue ‘Hall’, (Church Street, just east of the present Meekers Garage). Later met in Grismer’s Hall’ (gray house next to Rigg’s). They wanted to buy a desk, but as the K. of P. also used the hall and needed a desk, and the hail would not accommodate two desks, the Horse Rangers bought the desk and the K. of P. shared it. The desk cost \$12.75 and the railroad freight was \$1.25. They also bought four officers badges and twelve Minute Man badges at a total cost of \$15.00. Several years later they bought six dozen chairs at \$6.50 per dozen. They insured their property for three years for \$3.00.

This is where the notes stop, whether the Rangers of Monroe continued and the books are gone or whether the rest of the notes are missing I don’t know, but the men who held the law and order, outside of town, in their keeping.