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HISTORY OF THE FORD AND DETECTIVE BUREAU'S USE OF
MOTOR VEHICLES IN THE
CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT.

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In 1917, Ford cars were first used in the Police Department. Forty-two Ford touring cars were first purchased and distributed to the different districts. They were manned by four men in citizens dress. There was no mark of any kind on the car to show that it was a police car, except a gong. These cars were held at the district stations and responded to all alarms.

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In 1921, fifty new touring cars were purchased. In 1923 fifty additional touring cars were purchased. These cars were manned by three men in uniform and toured the district reporting to the district station every half hour.

In 1925, one hundred Ford roadsters were purchased. These cars were marked and lettered on sides and top, making them easily identified from upper windows as well as from sidewalk and street. They were equipped with electric lights, a gong, and cushion tires replaced pneumatic tires. These cars were manned by two men in uniform, trained in the care and driving of a Ford auto in the Police School.

The Police Ford equipment and Ford school are under the supervision of a Captain of Police who has organized an efficient branch of service by selecting the men best qualified for this class of work.

Ford crews report over the police telephone every twenty minutes. The territory in large districts where a small number of officers are available is now covered more thoroughly and frequently. The feeling of doubt as to a Ford being suited to police work has been removed. The repeated requests from all Commanding Officers for additional Fords in their respective districts prove the efficiency of this type of patrol service.

Seven Ford sedans and coupes are in use at the Detective Bureau and Auto Detail. The Auto Detail has one car equipped with acetylene and oxygen unit complete for immediate use in tracing changed or removed number on stolen autos. The Bureau of Identification has a Ford sedan to carry photographers and experts on finger prints, etc., to and from the scene of important crimes.

At the present time a request is before the City Council for forty touring cars and sixty roadsters. This will give the Department a total of two hundred and ten Fords. This will make an average of about six cars per district and, with the squad cars from the Detective Bureau, the policing of the City of Chicago will compare favorably with any city in the United States.

During the year 1920 there was one squad car assigned to the Detective Bureau manned by five men who worked shifts of twelve hours as a tour of duty. Their only equipment was the regulation police revolver carried as prescribed for the individual police officer. The territory assigned was the entire City of Chicago. The number of men assigned to the Detective Bureau at this time totaled only 175.

During the years 1921 and 1922 five cars were added to the Detective Bureau, making a total of six, three to cover the

south side of the city, one to cover the north side of the city, one to cover the northwest side of the city and one to cover the west side. A shot gun was added as equipment to each squad and the number of men increased to 200.

In December 1923, seventeen zone squads were created and Wm. H. Schoemaker, appointed as Temporary Captain of Police, placed in charge. Each of these zone squads was assigned to two police districts of the city and as equipment was provided with a shot gun. The number of men was increased to approximately 475. In the summer of 1924 three more squads were organized for zone work and one squad for taxicab work and the man power brought up to 525 men. Each squad was provided with two regulation shot guns, a set of torches for illuminating purposes at night -- tear bombs and flash lights.

On May 28, 1926, ten additional zone squads were organized making a total of 30 squads and increasing the total number of men at the Detective Bureau to 675.

At present every car operated as a zone squad car is a high powered Cadillac car kept in good condition. The City is divided into zones and a squad assigned to each zone for each eight hours of duty. The squad car is used by each of the three shifts, giving twenty-four hours service each day. These squads are an important factor in the suppression and prevention of crime and give twenty-four hours service and protection with a minimum investment.