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This Month in Police History: Sixty-Six Year Anniversary of Trooper's Murder in Trumbull  
February 18, 2019

This month marks the sixty-sixth (66<sup>th</sup>) anniversary of the murder of Connecticut State Police Trooper Ernest J. Morse on the Merritt Parkway in Trumbull. His death, on Friday, February 13, 1953, led to the conviction and execution of the man responsible, and the honorary naming of a Trumbull road in the trooper's memory many years later.

Trooper Morse was patrolling the Merritt Parkway in New Haven on that date in 1953 and pursued a black sedan that was speeding toward New York. At the time, he was unaware that the car was stolen out of Massachusetts and the driver, 20-year old John Donahue, was a criminal parolee who had been recently incarcerated near Boston.

When Morse finally stopped the fleeing vehicle on the highway in Trumbull, Donahue drew a German-made pistol and shot Trooper Morse in the abdomen, leaving him wounded on the roadway. A carload of sailors stopped to assist Morse, and used his police radio to call for help and relay a partial license number that the trooper provided.

Morse later died at Bridgeport Hospital. He was 31 years old, with a distinguished service record. State Police Commissioner Edward Hickey commended him earlier in his career for his part in delivering a baby while on the way to the hospital.

Donahue abandoned the black sedan in Stratford and stole another vehicle. Roadblocks had already been set-up throughout the area and the suspect was spotted crossing the Mianus River Bridge in Greenwich. After sustaining heavy gunfire from police, Donahue crashed his car and was apprehended. He confessed to the murder at the Westport State Police barracks and was held without bond at the local town court in Trumbull.

John B. Donahue was convicted of First Degree Murder and was sentenced to death. He was executed on July 18, 1955 for the murder of Trooper Ernest Morse.

Today, State Route 108 in Trumbull, also known as Nichols Avenue, has been named "**Trooper Ernest Morse Memorial Highway**" in honor of the state trooper.

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