

Two Die At Crossing; Cycle Policeman Hurt

Toledo Times Nov 16, 1948

Michigan Couple Killed Near Airport; Mud Hen Pitcher's Car Involved In Collision

A Lansing, Mich., man and his wife were killed last night by a Pennsylvania railroad passenger train near the Municipal Airport.

In a separate accident a Toledo policeman was critically injured, police reported, by an automobile operated by James Bilbrey, 24, Mud Hens and St. Louis Browns baseball pitcher.

The train-automobile crash victims were identified tentatively by State Highway Patrolmen James Fullenkamp and J. J. Szabo as Mr. and Mrs. Charles Keekbush.

Motorcycle Patrolman Albert Fadell, 29, of 1234 Colton St., suffered a fractured skull, thigh and shoulder and internal injuries when his motorcycle struck the ball player's automobile at Beacon and Canton Sts., according to Patrolmen William Callahan and Ronald Ludwikowski.

Bond of \$1,000 Set

After questioning the baseball pitcher, the officers placed a charge of failure to make a safety stop, causing an accident, against him. Mr. Bilbrey was treated for body bruises in St. Vincent's Hospital while Patrolman Fadell was taken to Mercy Hospital.

The ball player's bond was set at \$1,000 by Municipal Judge Stanley A. Grzezinski.

Mr. Bilbrey told the officers he was driving east on Beacon St., coming from his home in Vineyard Acres Trailer Camp, Sylvania, and that he was struck by the motorcycle, which was going north on Canton St.

Patrolman Fadell was unconscious and was unable to give police a statement.

Cause Undetermined

The cause of the train crash at the Pennsylvania railroad and Ayers Rd. likewise was not determined definitely, state officers said. The automobile was cut in two by a train, which was approaching Toledo from Mansfield at a 60-mile-an-hour speed, the state officers said they were told by Engineer Clement Straub, of 822 McKinley Ave. The couple's bodies were crushed, the officer stated.

Letters found on the man, who was presumed to be driving, were addressed to Charles Keekbush, Lansing, Mich. The license on the car, Michigan state police notified the officers, was issued to Mrs. Colette Keekbush. The Michigan police said they learned that such a couple was driving in the Toledo area last night.

The man's body was thrown 120 feet on one side of the track and the woman's 195 feet to the other side, the patrolmen said.

Injured Officer Still Is Critical

Toledo Times Nov 17 1948

Bail For Ball Player In Accident Reduced

The condition of Motorcycle Patrolman Albert Fadel, 29, injured critically Monday night in a collision with an automobile operated by James Bilbrey, 24, a former Mud Hen pitcher, remained unchanged last night in Mercy Hospital.

Suffering internal injuries, a fractured skull, thigh and shoulder, Patrolman Fadel was kept constantly under an oxygen tent, nurses said.

Mr. Bilbrey, a bartender at the Gaiety Night Club during the off-season for baseball, was charged with failing to make a Canton St. safety stop on Beacon St. and causing an accident. The former Mud Hen admitted, according to police, that he failed to stop but said he was prevented from seeing the warning sign by an illegally parked automobile at the corner. This car also kept him from having a view of Canton St. traffic, he said. The policeman's motorcycle struck Mr. Bilbrey's car.

Mr. Bilbrey yesterday was granted a continuance of the case to Dec. 21. His original bond of \$1,000 was reduced by Municipal Judge Edgard W. Norris to \$500, which he obtained. He was released yesterday afternoon from the Safety Bldg. jail.

Collision Injuries Cause Death Of City Patrolman

Ex-Mud Hen Pitcher Held; Cycle Officer Ran Into Auto

The most dangerous police assignment, the motorcycle squad, claimed its seventh life yesterday when Patrolman Albert Fadell, 29, died in Mercy Hospital of a fractured skull and internal injuries suffered in a collision Monday night at Canton and Beacon Sts.

Patrolman Fadell, married and father of two children, had been a police officer only since Feb. 1947, when he left the U.S. Army.

Because of his service with both the military and the police division, there will be a funeral guard of honor from the American Legion Police Post under Commander Edward G. Miller and a motorcycle escort headed by Police Lieut. Carl Wiener of the motorcycle squad.

Official Records

The toll the motorcycle squad has taken appears in official memorial records kept by Detective Lieut. Fred Gockerman and the private police historical files of Police Sergt. Vincent Kwapich.

Of 24 policemen killed in line of duty, five were killed in street accidents with their motorcycles while two others were shot to death in battles with burglars and bandits.

An eighth, Walter Kruse, was wounded on his motorcycle in a fight with the notorious Archie Dennison gang in 1920 and while he survived, he was forced to retire, dying 14 years later of a condition developed from his wounds.

Others who died of injuries in traffic were Patrolman George Zapf, Sept. 23, 1919; Patrolman Harry O'Neill, Nov. 8, 1936, and Patrolman Fred Disel, May 6, 1944. Patrolman Oscar Bruhl, hurt in 1916, eventually succumbed in 1922 to complications resulting from his injuries.

Killed in battles with criminals were Patrolmen C. W. McGuire, Dec. 22, 1921, and Patrolman Albert (Nig) Schultz, 1914.

The official pension records show also that men widely known in police work were forced to retire eventually because of serious injuries suffered while motorcycle policemen. They include Detective Capt. Arthur Eggert, George Norcross, Earl Champion, Earl Rawlings, Howard Pribe, William Coghlin, Wayne Thomas, Frank Armstrong and Frank Schiffman.

Still Handicapped

On the force today are dozens of men, still handicapped by injuries received while motorcycle men. They include Superintendent Paul Fakehany of the Bureau of Identification; Detective Capt. George Eckerman, Captain Paul Wiesenberg, Bureau of Identification; Police Alarm Operators Stephen Nowicki and Francis Venia; Turnkey Ken Jameson, Patrolman Cloyce Kirk, Traffic Bureau; City Council Sergeant-at-Arms Leo Wonderly, William Myers of the police property rooms and dozens of others. In fact Superintendent Fakehany says in the 36-year history of the squad, excluding current members, only retired Detective Lieut. James Ford escaped serious injury as a squad member.

Material Witness

Patrolman Fadell's death yesterday caused Coroner Paul Hohly to order James Bilbrey, 24-year-old former Mud Hen pitcher, to be held as a material witness for an inquest. It was his car, police charged, that failed to make a safety stop at Canton St., causing the officer's motorcycle to strike his automobile. He was released on \$500 bond.

Surviving besides Patrolman Fadell's wife, Phyllis, and her children, Karen Jo and Mary Judith, are his mother, Mrs. Mary Thomas; brothers George M. and Dr. Edward J. Fadell, and sister, Mrs. James Long.

Services will be tomorrow at 11 a.m. in the Coyle Mortuary and at 11:30 a.m. in Rosary Cathedral. There will be Fraternal Order of Police services tonight at 8 in the mortuary. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery.