

DALE GOODRICH OBITUARY

*Transcribed from the Vernal Express, August 4, 1948 edition
By Rhonda Thacker Holton*

4 VERNAL YOUTHS KILLED, 1 INJURED IN CHAIN OF MISHAPS SATURDAY NIGHT

Fatalities Are Uintah County's First Recorded This Year.

Death rode Uintah County highways Saturday night for the first time this year, as four Vernal youths met death in a series of accidents in Naples.

Killed were: Dale Goodrich, 17; Grant McCoy Preece, 23; Harold D. R. (Rip) Odekirk, 22 and Myrtle Victoria Givens, 15.

Phylis Ostberg, 15, a passenger in a car driven by Mr. Preece was injured seriously and taken to Salt Lake City for treatment. She was reported in "good condition" in St. Mark's Hospital Wednesday.

The chain of events which lead to the death of the four Vernal youths was started off at 11:25 p.m. Saturday. A car driven by Dallis Goodrich, brother of Dale Goodrich, was traveling north on Highway 40 four miles east of Vernal when a second automobile, driven by Lorin Richens, 17, swung out to pass. According to State Trooper Sammy Hatch, the Richens vehicle went out of control, plunged through a guard rail and came to rest in a borrow pit 190 feet from where it left the highway.

FIRST FATALITY

The driver of the first machine told officers that he stopped his car and his brother, Dale, jumped out of the car and started toward the Richens machine to give aid. He was struck and killed by a southbound automobile driven by Mr. Preece.

Apparently traveling at high speed, the Preece sedan hurled Dale Goodrich, 105 feet, glanced off the guard rail three times and rolled into the same borrow pit as the first automobile. Trooper Hatch said "Eight of the heavy wood guard rails were shorn off, it was reported."

Mr. Odekirk and Miss Givens, passengers in the Preece car, were killed instantly in the terrific impact. Mr. Preece, thrown 57 feet from the car he was driving, died in the Uintah Basin Hospital Sunday at 3 a.m. Mr. Odekirk and Miss Ostberg, fourth passenger in the Preece car were also thrown from the vehicle. Miss Odekirk suffered a brain concussion, fractures of her jaw and left ankle and lacerations, investigating officers said.

FIVE ESCAPE INJURY

Driver of the last vehicle to overturn, Mr. Richens, and his four passengers were uninjured in the accident. Passengers included three brothers, Max, Ray and Orin Hunting and Marvin Merrell.

Mr. Preece's 1946 Chevrolet sedan was demolished. Hundreds of persons since the accident have crowded around the vehicle which was brought into Vernal.

SURVIVORS

Grant McCoy Preece was born March 12, 1925, in Vernal, a son of Karl B. and Lella McCoy Preece. He was a graduate of Uintah High School and had served two years in the army during World War II. An active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, he was secretary of the First Quorum of Elders of Vernal First Ward.

While in the service he saw action with the 43rd division in the Asiatic and Pacific theatres where he received a purple heart for injuries received in the Phillipines. At the time of his death he was working for the Hudson Engineering Co. at Rangely.

He is survived by his parents and the following brothers and sisters: Earl Reed Preece, Phoenix; Charles and Bruce Preece, Vernal; Lella Ruth Preece, Salt Lake City.

Harold D. R. (Rip) Odekirk was also born at Vernal, October 26, 1926, a son of Wilford LeRoy and Delores Sabey Odekirk. He attended school at Vernal and Bingham. His father died in 1941.

FIVE ESCAPE INJURY

Also commended for bravery, Mr. Odekirk served in the navy for nearly two years mostly in the Pacific theater. He assisted in the invasion of Okimawa. He was employed by Hudson Engineering Co.

Survivors include his mother and two sisters, Jane and Nadine Odekirk.

Dale Goodrich was born April 4, 1932, in Vernal, a son of Lyle and Oral Iva Anderson Goodrich. He lived in Vernal all of his life. He was a teacher in Naples LDS Ward and was a member of the ward softball team.

He is survived by his parents and the following brothers and sisters: Dallis, Robert, Lois, Carolyn and Sharon Ann Goodrich, all of Naples.

Myrtle Victoria Givens, a daughter of James A. and Myrtle Wheeler Givens, was born January 27, 1933 in Duchesne. The family moved to Mt. Emmons where they lived 13 years before coming to Vernal three years ago. She had completed the ninth grade at Uintah High School. She was also a member of the LDS Church.

Surviving besides her parents are the following brothers and sisters: Lawrence, James, George L., LaOna and Chloe Givens, all of Vernal and Vurie, an enlistee in the army.

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rites conducted for Vernal Traffic Victims

Funeral services for three Vernal youths who were killed in a traffic accident Saturday night on Highway 40 near Naples were conducted Wednesday.

Double rites for Grant McCoy Preece, 23 and Harold D. R. (Rip) Odekirk, 22 were conducted at 10 a.m. in Vernal First LDS Ward by William B. Wallis, bishop, assisted by Phil Watkins, bishop of Vernal Second Ward.

Services for Dale Goodrich, 17, were conducted at 2 p.m. in Vernal First Ward by J. Ross Merrell, bishop of Naples Ward.

Funeral for Myrtle Victoria Givens, 15, fourth victim in the same accident, was to be conducted Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Maeser Ward Chapel by M. Jophnson, bishop of Glines Ward.

Burial of all victims was in the Vernal Memorial Park.

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