

NEWS ITEM: Three persons are dead and one is in serious condition as the result of one of the most tragic automobile accidents that has ever happened near Wheatland. The crash occurred on the highway north of Wheatland at 12:55 Monday morning near the Frank Dearing farm.

Gale "Willie" Wilson, who was staying at the home of his father-in-law, who lives on the Dearing place, was awakened by the crash and drove to the scene to help the victims. He was unaware of the 33, 000 high voltage line which had torn loose in the crash and in attempting to step over it, was killed instantly.

Miss Dorothy Stegman, 21, of Scottsbluff, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chris Stegman, died instantly when she was struck by a bridge railing as it passed through the car.

Miss Juanita Richardson, 21, sister of Slim Richarson of Wheatland and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.B. Richardson, also of Scottsbluff, died at the Wheatland hospital Tuesday as the result of injuries. One leg was completely severed in the accident, the other so badly crushed that amputation would have been necessary if she had recovered from other injuries.

The four young people were en route to Wheatland for a picnic. Investigators of the accident say Green, who was driving the car, failed to make the turn onto the bridge. His car struck the left railing with such force as to drive two heavy railings completely through the car, which then smashed into a large power transmission line pole. The pole did not break off, but broke a cross arm allowing one wire to drop to the ground. The car plunged into a stream fifteen feet below and landed on it's top half submerged in water. The high voltage power line which was fatal to Gale Wilson when he attempted to help the victims, was thrown out of service as far east as Gering, Nebraska. Floyd Ensworth, city electrician, was called to the scene to remove the body from the high tension wires.

Henry Green, of Scottsbluff, driver of the car, suffered a broken leg in two places, a lacerated left ear, and a fractured skull. He is still in serious in the local hospital. Johnnie Copens, of Alliance, was released from the hospital Tuesday afternoon after receiving treatment for severe cuts and bruises.

An inquest was ordered by Judge P.A. Shope, who represented County Coroner C. Stewart Dennis. Wilson's body was taken to the Copley funeral home and the bodies of Misses Stegman and Richardson were taken to the Watson and Dennis funeral home and later transferred to Scottsbluff.

Relatives of the deceased and injured arrived here Monday morning. Johnnie Copens of Alliance was taken to his home by his parents Tuesday afternoon.

The Ford V-8 driven by the crash victims was completely demolished.

Funeral services for Gale Wilson were held in Wheatland, Thursday, September 8, from the Methodist church.