

PATROLMAN JOHN FRANKLIN WIMBISH
Winston-Salem Journal/Twin City Sentinel
original newspaper articles
Winston-Salem Police Department scrapbook



Staff Photo by Carl Wiegold

One policeman was killed, another critically injured in this wreck on Old Lexington Road.

Local Officer Killed, Another Hurt As Police Car Overturns on Curve

By Barron Mills
Journal Reporter

A Winston-Salem policeman was killed and a fellow officer injured yesterday when a police car overturned on a curve on the Old Lexington Road.

Patrolman John Franklin Wimbish, 25, of 1214 Jefferson Avenue was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident.

Patrolman Robert D. Peddycord, 24, of 620 Walnut Street was termed in "fair condition" at City Hospital. Attendants said he suffered a broken hand, broken elbow, laceration of the scalp and a dislocated wrist. He was still in semi-conscious condition late last night.

The investigating officer, State Highway Patrolman E. W. Mabe, said last night that thus far he had been unable to determine either the cause of the accident



JOHN F. WIMBISH

or which officer was driving at the time.

Only minutes before the accident, Patrolman Mabe said, he had radioed the State Highway Patrol Radio Station at Salisbury to alert Winston-Salem police for a speeding motorist in a "green car." The car, which eluded Patrolman Mabe in a chase, was headed toward Winston-Salem on the Old Salisbury Road, Mabe said.

It is highly probable, Patrolman Mabe said, that the Winston-Salem police car in which officers Wimbish and Peddycord were patrolling began chasing the speeding "green car."

To substantiate that theory, Patrolman Mabe said that several persons a short distance from the accident scene saw a "green car" traveling at a high rate of speed in front of the police car.

See Twin—Page 5-A, Col. 2

11-2-52

Twin City Policeman Killed When Patrol Car Overturns

Continued from Page 1-A

There were no witnesses to the actual accident, Mabe added.

According to the state highway patrolman the police car clipped off a road sign marking the "dead end" of Sunset Drive (Thomas Quarry Road) and then traveled approximately 435 feet before it landed upright on its four wheels. This was nine-tenths of a mile outside the city limits.

Indications were that the police car overturned at least two times, Mabe said. The vehicle was regarded as a total loss.

Both policemen were thrown clear of the wreckage. Wimbish's body was found 24 feet from the car in a dirt driveway. Apparently, Mabe said, the tumbling vehicle crushed Wimbish's body.

Peddycord was found 17 feet from the wreckage in a roadside ditch.

Patrolman Mabe established the time of the accident as approximately 4:50 p.m. Wimbish's wristwatch, he said, stopped at 4:51 p.m.

In relating the events leading up to the accident Patrolman Mabe said that at approximately 4:40 p.m. he received a radio message to aid in apprehending a drunken driver who was proceeding toward Winston-Salem from Davidson County.

Proceeding on the assignment, Mabe said, he noticed Wimbish and Peddycord parked in their patrol car at the intersection of the Old Lexington Road and Devonshire Street. It was the last time that he saw the patrol car until he received a message informing him of the wreck, he added.

Mabe said that in answering the drunken driver call he was "met by a green car traveling at a high rate of speed and I turned around and proceeded toward Winston-Salem and didn't get within sight of it (the car)."

After losing sight of the speeder, Mabe said that he returned to the intersection of Old Lexington Road and Sunset Drive and checked the pavement for skid marks that might indicate that the speeder had turned off.

The state patrolman said that he turned off on Sunset Drive, circled the area and then parked his patrol car on the side of Old Lexington Road "just a few



ROBERT D. PEDDYCORD

hundred feet away from where the accident occurred."

"I sat there just a few minutes and thought that I heard something in the motor. I turned the radio down and then got a report of the accident at Sunset (Drive)," he added.

Patrolman Mabe said late last night that he had not completed his investigation of the accident.

Wimbish, a 25-year-old Navy veteran, joined the Police Department as a member of the patrol division on Sept. 1, 1948.

Of the death Police Chief James I. Waller said:

"All of us in the Police Department feel a deep loss in the death of Patrolman John Franklin Wimbish—a fine young officer."

"Patrolman Wimbish was known for his integrity, loyalty, conscientiousness and devotion to duty. We will all miss him."

"Patrolman Wimbish gave his life in the service of his community."

A life-long resident of Winston-Salem, Patrolman Wimbish of E. D. and Ollie Mitchell Wimbish. He attended James A. Gray High School and served in was born July 24, 1927, a son the U. S. Navy in 1945 and 1946. He was discharged as a seaman first class.

He was a member of Central Terrace Methodist Church.