

PROBE COPTER FAILURE THAT KILLED BALDY

Aid for Victims' Kin Pours In

The cause of the helicopter crash which cost the lives of Patrolman Leonard Baldy, W-G-N's traffic voice from the sky, and his pilot, H. George Ferry, was pinpointed Tuesday as official and personal condolences and financial aid poured in for the two victims' families.

Preliminary investigation fixed the cause as failure originating in parts of the copter's main rotor control head.

Rotor Wing Breaks

One of the copter's two main lifting rotor wings broke away in flight, probably as a result of a part failure seconds earlier. The machine, a Bell 47H three-place copter, plunged and burned late Monday on the Chicago & North Western railway right of way near Hubbard street and Milwaukee avenue.

Civil aeronautics board experts who took charge of a multiple inquiry into the crash, said that neither Baldy nor his pilot had any chance to save themselves or control the aircraft after the failure occurred.

"A Freak Accident"

"This must be considered a freak accident, quite unusual and without similarity to other helicopter accidents," an official CAB statement said in part.

An examination of the helicopter wreckage disclosed that the rotor blade section which broke away had been torn out at its roots. The hub of this blade still remained in the jaws of the rotating gimbel, which is at the top of the power mast.

This confirmed opinions of experts that the rotor failure was secondary to an earlier breakage in the head. The blade itself was of a mixed type. The spar was a steel tube with wood laminations of spruce, balsa, and stainless steel. This type has been the most widely used, safety agents said, ruling out metal fatigue in the blade itself.

Pilot Decapitated

Coroner Walter E. McCarron said that Ferry had been decapitated and hurled out of the helicopter, but that Baldy's body remained in the plastic and aluminum cabin. The coroner said that a jury of flying experts will be convened for the inquest, for which no date has been set.

Meanwhile, Ward L. Quaal, vice president and general manager of WGN, Inc., announced that the traffic program from the air would be resumed at 7:05 a. m. Monday. Four daily bulletins will be broadcast as usual from a helicopter. Quaal said the policeman who will succeed Baldy has not been named.

Mayor Daley and Police Supt. O. W. Wilson expressed shock at the tragedy, and praised Baldy's contributions to traffic safety. Wilson ruled officially that Baldy died in line of duty, which insures full police pension rights for his widow.

Set Scholarship Fund

Quaal and Hal C. Conners, general manager of Helicopter Airlift company, owner of the copter, said that a \$5,000 scholarship fund would be established for each of the three children of Baldy and the three children of Ferry.

Norman E. Hempel, chief accountant for the police pension fund, said Baldy's widow, Marguerite, will get \$200 a month plus \$50 a month for their children, Raymond, 9, Judith Marie, 7, and Timothy, 2.

In 24 years, when Baldy would have reached the age of 57, Mrs. Baldy will receive the regular police pension, an amount not yet determined, Hempel said.

Insured by Copter Firm

Mrs. Baldy also will benefit from a substantial insurance policy carried on her husband by the Helicopter Airlift company under terms of its contract with WGN, Inc.

She also will receive a \$500 check from the Mayor's Youth Foundation a sum always paid to survivors of policemen killed in line of duty, and \$15,000 from a city council fund which normally is placed in trust for a widow until the children come of age.

Baldy's estate also receives \$2,125 from the Chicago Policemen's Benefit association. The officer's \$10,000 a year salary from WGN, Inc., was donated by him to the

widows' and orphans' fund of the P. B. A.

Mass Set Friday

Ferry is survived by his wife, Gloria, two sons, Gregg, 12, and Grant, 10, and a daughter, Gloria Jo, 5, all of 1816 Mannheim rd., Des Plaines.

Mass for Baldy will be said at 10:30 a. m. Friday in St. Juliana's church, 7142 Osceola av.

The wake will begin at 4 p. m. Wednesday in the chapel at 3834 Irving Park rd., and will continue all day Thursday.

Services for Ferry will be held in Valley Stream, L. I., his former home, on a date not yet determined.