

OCTOBER 28, 1927

PILOT DIED INSTANTLY

Strapped to His Seat in Burning Plane

TRIED TO LAND

A CADET of the R.A.A.F. was killed when his DH9 plane crashed into a paddock about five miles from Healesville at 8.30 a.m. yesterday and burst into flames.

HE was Cadet Clarence Charles Seach, 24, of Marrickville, Sydney, and had been in training at Point Cooke since May 2. He had done 86 hours' flying, including 44 solo, and had had 22 hours in a DH9 machine.

The machine, which fell on the farm of Mr. George Thirkell, on the Dalroy-road, was destroyed.

The cause of the crash will be investigated by the Air Accidents Investigation Committee, and by an R.A.A.F. Court of Inquiry. Both bodies visited the scene yesterday afternoon. Seach was on a cross-country practice flight when the crash occurred.

Attempting to Land?

Mr. Thirkell, of Park Nook, Badger Creek, who was the first on the scene after the crash, said that he saw the plane about 8.30 a.m.

"It was behaving in an unusual manner, and circled round three times," he said. "I thought it was going to land, but it shot up suddenly and went on.

"It crossed the road, and from a height of about 100ft. suddenly nose-dived.

"As I rushed down the hill towards the plane, dense smoke and flames shot up. Evidently the petrol tank had burst, and I found the wreckage blazing fiercely.

Could See Pilot in Flames

"I was unable to get near enough to help, owing to the intense heat. I could see the pilot still in his seat.

"We could not remove him until the flames had consumed the plane, when Constable Kennedy discovered he was strapped in his place. He evidently had been killed instantly."

Mr. Dawson, of Badger Creek, another eye-witness, said the engine appeared to stop and start again just before the crash.

"Before it finally dived," he said "the plane seemed to rock badly, and when almost touching a high tree, it suddenly fell to the ground.

Search by Second Plane

"A second or so later there was a terrific explosion, and a tower of flame and smoke ascended."

A second plane, apparently searching for someone, was seen soon after the crash. It was flying very low with the pilot leaning out of the cockpit scanning the ground, as if searching for landing ground or a comrade.

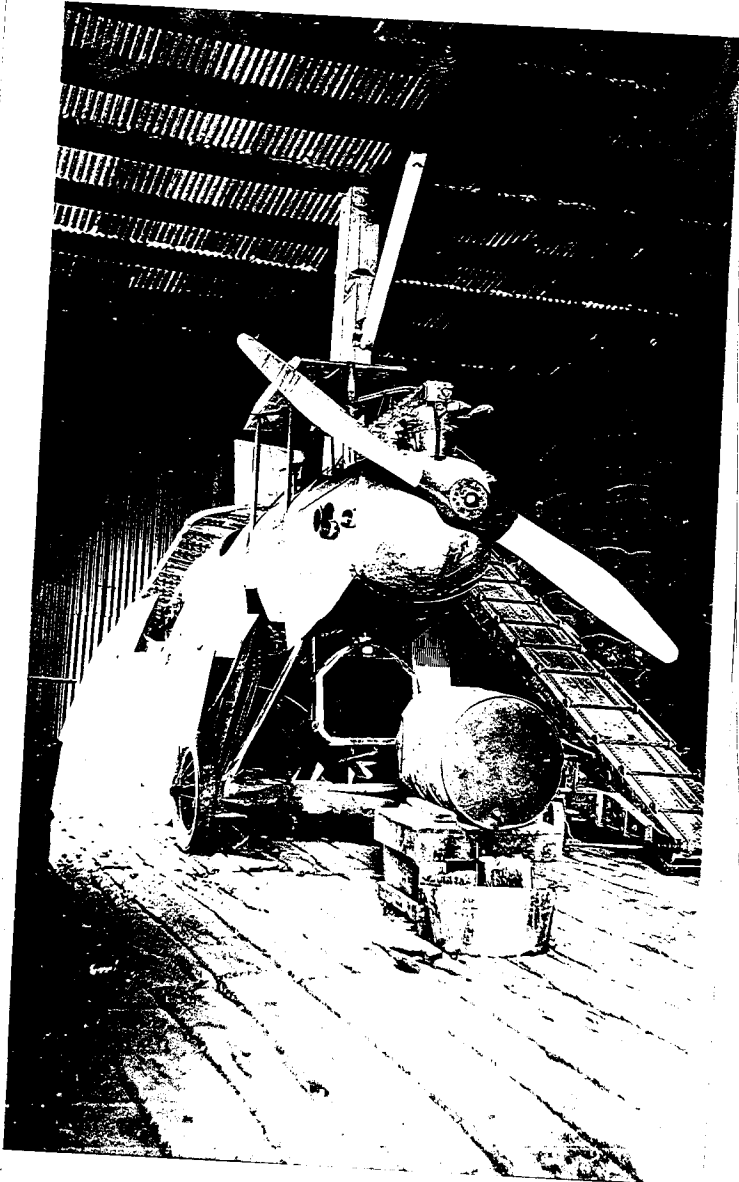
AVIATION.

AIR FORCE CRASH.

Cadet Killed.

MELBOURNE, Oct. 27.—While on a training flight this morning Cadet Seach, of Point Cooke, was killed when his machine crashed at 8.30 o'clock five miles from Healesville. Eye-witnesses stated that the machine was in flames when it reached the ground. As it struck there were two explosions. The aeroplane burned rapidly and was practically destroyed before assistance arrived. The engine appeared to stall at an altitude of between 100 and 200 feet, and the aeroplane crashed into Mr. George Thirkell's paddock, about 20 yards from the road.

28-10-27 WA PAPER



A6-3 Crash of Cadet Clarence Charles Seach at Point Cook (spelt Point Cooke) on 27 October 1925 on property of Mr George Thirkell of Park Nook, Badger Creek, investigated by Constable Kennedy

THE HEALESVILLE AEROPLANE CRASH



The still-smouldering wreckage of the Air Force aeroplane which crashed outside Healesville, today.

CRASHED 27.10.27