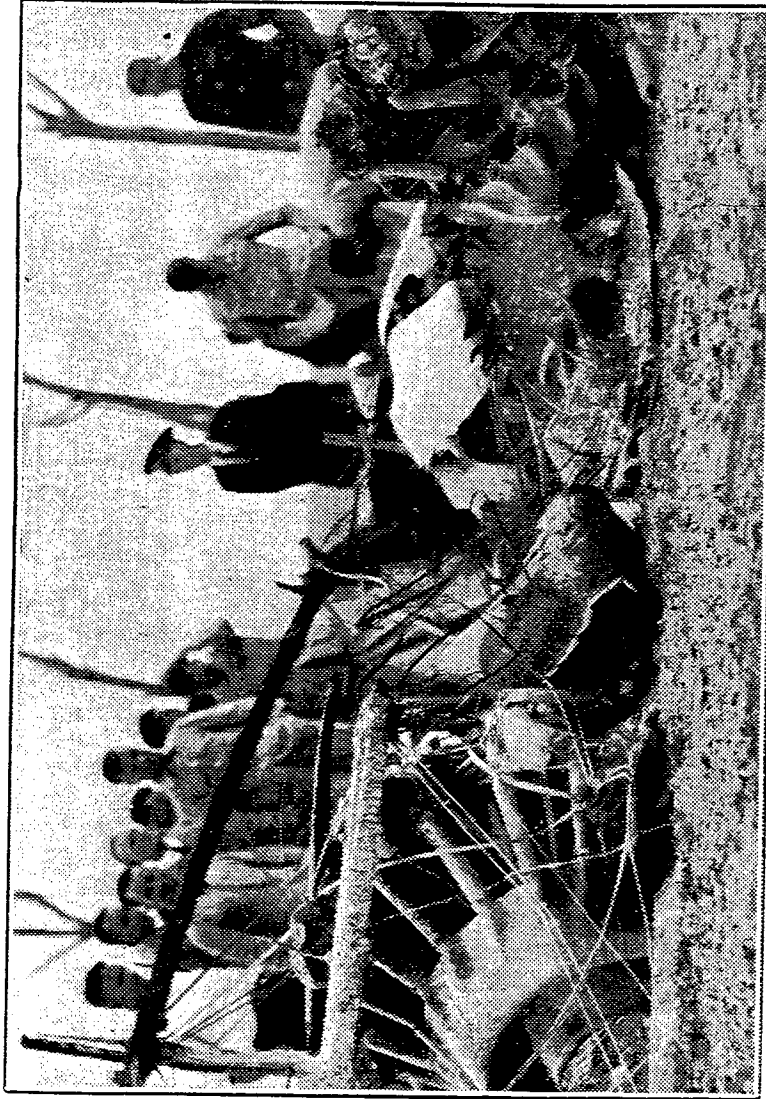


# CADETS KILLED IN AIR COLLISION



KILLED in the air crash at Point Cook yesterday.—Air Cadet K. Crispe, 24, formerly of Xavier College. He had a Melbourne University degree in engineering.



ENGINES OF THE TWO WAPITIS AFTER THE FATAL CRASH



20-YEARS-OLD VICTIM of the crash in which two Wapitis were destroyed at Point Cook.—Air Cadet J. P. B. McDonnell, was formerly a pressman in Adelaide.

# BURST INTO FLAMES

## Two Victims R.A.A.F. Cadets In Training At Point Cook

### PLANES MET AND INTERLOCKED

TWO cadets of the Royal Australian Air Force were killed at Point Cook yesterday. Their machines collided in the air and, crashing from between 600 and 800 ft., burst into flames. The victims were:—

**AIR CADET KENNETH ALOYSIUS CRISPE**, 24, of Reservoir.

**AIR CADET JOHN CHARLES BOLTON McDONNELL**, 19, of College Park, South Australia.

EACH was flying a Wapiti solo, and took off almost together at 2.5 p.m. Thirty-five minutes later they were about to make a landing on the Point Cook ground from the north-west when they collided, interlocked, and whirled to the ground.

AN instant later the planes burst into flames, and by the time the rescue parties reached them, the machines, which had large loads of petrol, were burning fiercely.

THE crash occurred about 300 yards from the flying station, on private property. A fire squad, an ambulance, and a fire tender, with special equipment, were quickly at work fighting the fire.

It was with great difficulty that the bodies were recovered. They were badly charred.

#### Dead Before Fire

The medical officer at the station, who examined the bodies immediately they were recovered, expressed the opinion that both cadets were killed when the planes struck the ground.

A number of other machines was in the air when the crash occurred. A witness of the mishap said the planes seemed to come together suddenly, and fall to the ground, striking it with terrific force.

In the view of experts, it is difficult to account for the accident. The suggestion which seemed to find most support was that the machines came in on the blind side of the pilots as they were gliding for a landing.

#### Machines Destroyed

IT was stated that one of the planes seemed to come into the other in a slanting direction, the impact occurring about midships.

The bodies of the young pilots were taken to Melbourne last night. There will be an inquest, and an inquiry by the Air Accidents Investigation Committee.

Both machines were destroyed. The framework of a wing stood up from the wreckage above the battered engines, which were close together.

Nearly four hours after the accident the wreck was still smouldering, and small flames were coming from the butt of one of the broken propellers, which was still attached to the engine.

#### Careers Of Pilots

AIR CADET CRISPE had been in training for about 15 months. His course was interfered with by an operation for appendicitis. He had 46 hours' flying time to his credit. He was a bachelor of civil engineering of the Melbourne University, and an old Xaverian.

Air Cadet McDonnell had been with the Air Force about nine months, and had done about 35 hours flying.

They were about half way through their training course, which lasts about 11 months, and were due to graduate in June.

#### Planes Had Good Record

UP to yesterday the Air Force Wapitis had had a remarkably clean record. Although about five machines had been written off, only one had been involved in a fatal accident.

The first of the fleet of 38 Wapitis was placed in commission four years ago. The machines, which were imported from England, cost about £3500 each.

#### Hoped To Enter R.A.F.

THE course qualifies them for the Royal Air Force of Britain, and they both expressed a desire to join this service.

It is about four years since there has been a fatal crash in this course. About 20 pilots are graduated each year, and 50 per cent. of them go into the Royal Air Force.

#### McDonnell Was Leading Athlete At School

ADELAIDE, Monday. — Cadet John McDonnell was a son of Mrs. J. Carlisle McDonnell, of Balliol Street, College Park, and the late Mr. McDonnell, a former master at St. Peter's College.

Before he joined the R.A.A.F. on June 16 last, he was on the staff of The News and The Mail. He was educated at St. Peter's College, where he won the Caterer Memorial Scholarship for the best student in work and sport in the intermediate forms.

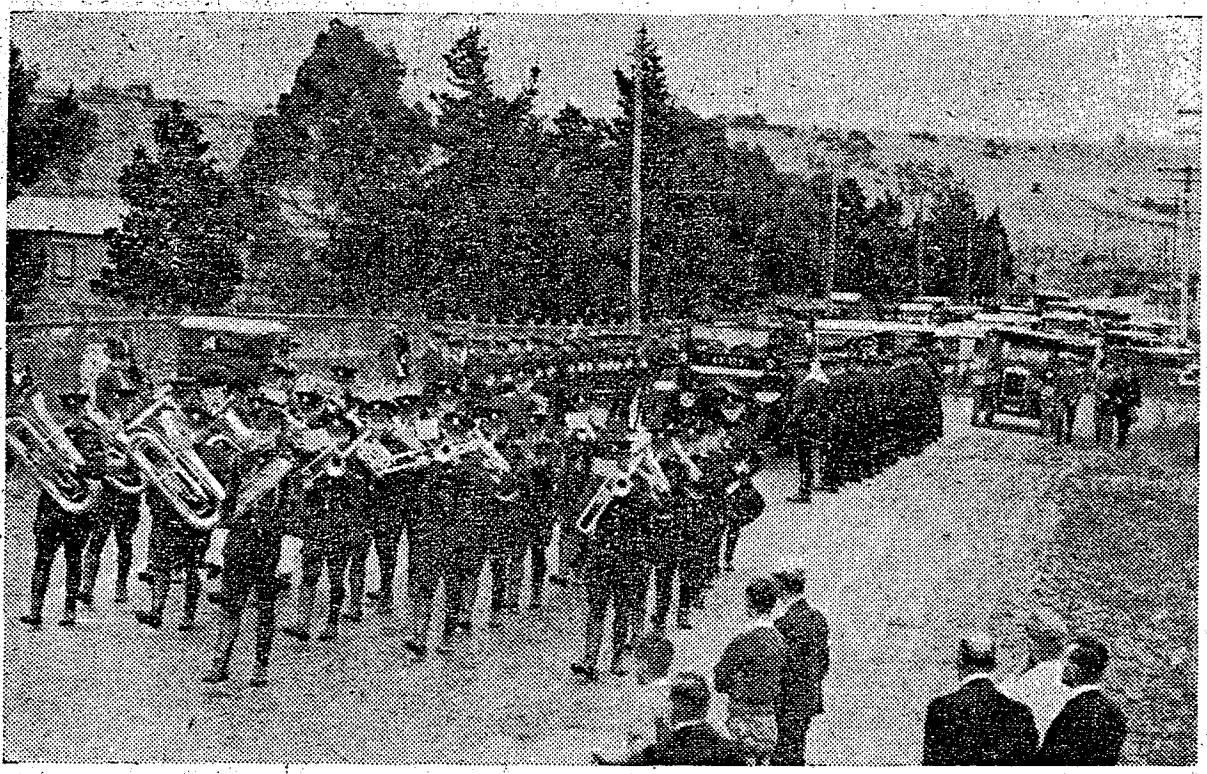
He represented his college in inter-collegiate football, cricket and athletics, and was captain of the school swimming team.

AS-6 McDONNELL

AF-8 CRISPE

7.2.33

# AIR CRASH VICTIM BURIED WITH FULL HONORS



The funeral of the late Air Cadet K. Crispe arriving at Strathallan cemetery, Bundoora, headed by the R.A.A.F. Band, with the escort.

THE funeral of Air-Cadet K. A. Crispe, who was killed in a mid-air collision between two planes of the Australian Air Force on Monday, took place today. It was preceded by a Solemn Requiem Mass in the Sacred Heart Church, Preston. The celebrant was Father John Cahir, Crispe's brother-in-law.

Father Durkin acted as deacon and Father Murtah as sub-deacon.

More than 20 members of the clergy of the archdiocese, including priests from

Xavier College, of which Crispe was formerly a pupil, rendered the impressive Gregorian chant.

Led by the Royal Australian Air Force Band and a full escort, with arms reversed, the funeral proceeded to the Strathallan cemetery, Bundoora, where the burial was conducted with Air Force honors.

### VOLLEYS OVER GRAVE

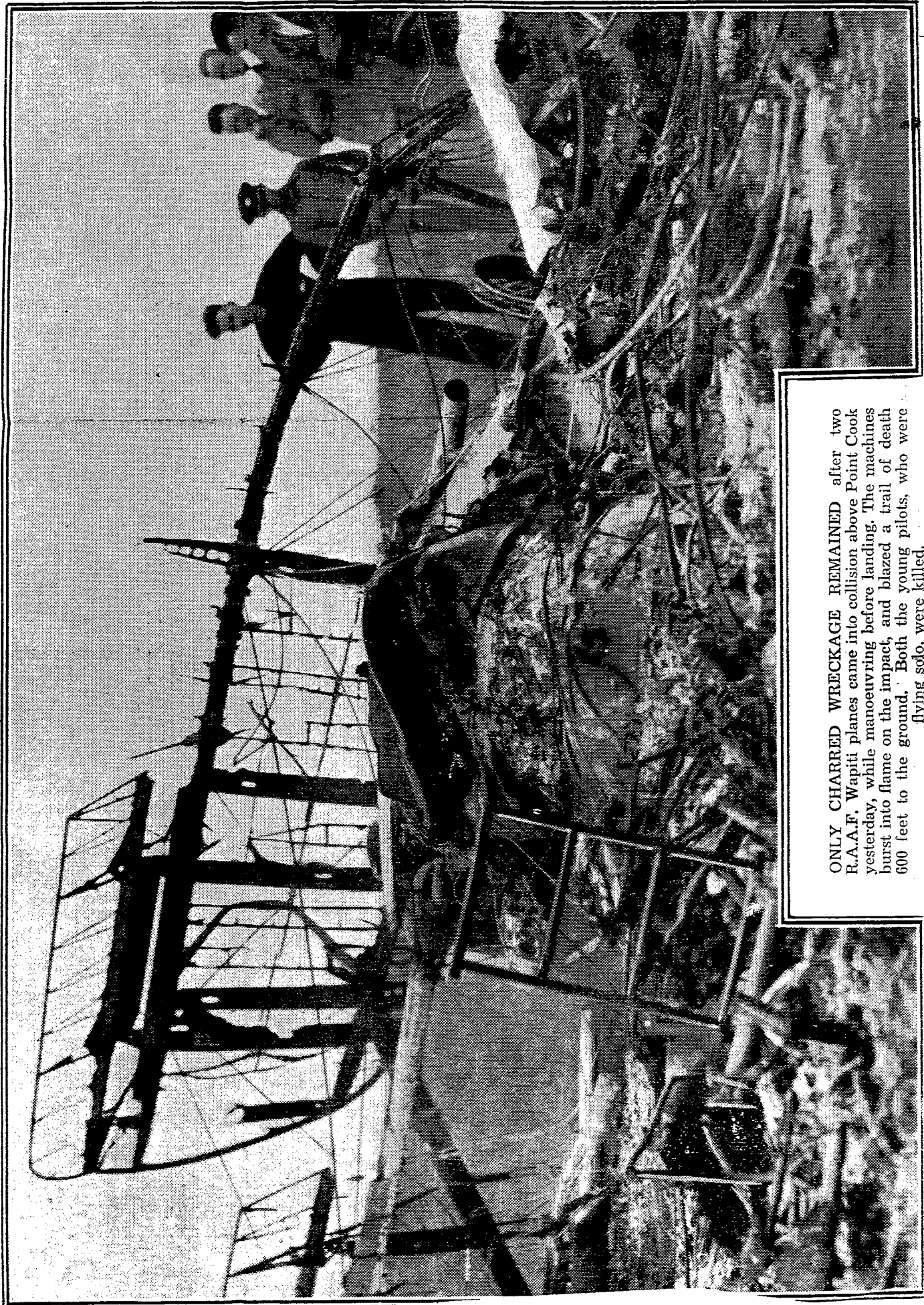
After the graveside service, which was read by Father O'Grady, parish priest

of Preston, the firing party presented arms and then fired three volleys to the accompaniment of the Last Post.

The Air Board was represented by Flying-Officer G. W. Boucher. Representatives of the Air Force included Wing-Commander McNamara, Squadron Leader Eladin, Flying-Officers Pearce and Harding, and Pilot-Officers Atkinson and Hefernan.

Young cadets, former comrades, were the pall-bearers.

HERALD WEDNESDAY 8.2.33



**ONLY CHARRED WRECKAGE REMAINED** after two R.A.F. Wapiti planes came into collision above Point Cook yesterday, while manoeuvring before landing. The machines burst into flame on the impact, and blazed a trail of death 600 feet to the ground. Both the young pilots, who were flying solo, were killed.

## FIRE DESTROYS WRECKAGE.

### Point Cooke Training Tragedy.

Two air cadets undergoing a 12 months' course of training at the training school of the Royal Australian Air Force at Point Cooke were killed yesterday afternoon when their machines crashed after a collision in the air. Locked together, and hopelessly out of control, the two aeroplanes fell into a paddock, and immediately caught fire. Both machines were destroyed. Their pilots were:—

Kenneth Aloysius Crispe, aged 24 years.

John Charles Bolton McDonnell, aged 19 years.

Crispe and McDonnell were senior pupils in the school, and, having completed the first part of the course, in which instruction is conducted principally on Moth aeroplanes, they were continuing their training on the larger service types. Soon after 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon both cadets were ordered to make practice solo flights in Wapiti machines.

Flying the machines under ballast, Crispe and McDonnell left the ground simultaneously. Although there was a brisk south-easterly breeze, flying conditions were ideal, the air was very clear, and there were a number of other machines in the air. At 20 minutes to 3 o'clock the two Wapitis circled to the north-west of the aerodrome for landing. They approached the landing area some distance apart, with their engines throttled right down.

From the aerodrome the aeroplanes were seen to converge slightly as they descended. Each pilot was "losing height" before preparing to land by the usual process of making gliding turns, in which the machines followed a zig-zag course as they dropped toward the aerodrome. When they were about 300 yards from the north-western boundary of the flying-field and 700 feet up they suddenly converged and collided, apparently almost side to side. The wings interlocked and held the two machines firmly together, and they fell head-long, slightly nose first. One machine struck the ground with its port wings, and these apparently crashed up into the body. The other machine fell almost nose-on, and the engine was driven backward into the front seat, in which the pilot was sitting. The tanks burst at the moment of impact and the petrol immediately caught fire.

the hangars, arrived within a minute of the collision. By that time, however, the wreckage was burning fiercely, and it was some time before chemical extinguishers subdued the fire sufficiently to enable the bodies of the cadets to be freed from the wreckage. Examination of the bodies showed that both pilots had been killed by the impact with the ground before the fire began. The paddock into which the machines fell had been planted with wheat, and the fire ignited the stubble which was still standing. This was quickly extinguished, but the wreckage of the aeroplanes smouldered for more than two hours.

Although many of the Wapitis employed by the Royal Australian Air Force are of the metal frame type, those used in the flying training school are of wood, and when the fire burned out the only parts intact were the engines; the frames of one pair of wings of one of the machines, a machine-gun, which had been burned out of its mounting, and the control and bracing wires.

Although both cadets were wearing parachute equipment, and had been instructed in its use, neither made any attempt to abandon his machine after the collision, although there would possibly have been time for them to do so. The pilots sit low in the cockpits of the Wapiti machines, however, and the machines may have been so locked together as to hinder escape. It is possible that they may have expected to regain control of the machines.

The accident was the first with fatal results which has occurred at the flying training school at Point Cooke for nearly five years. As about 20 pupils pass through a course in the school each year the record of nearly five years without a fatal accident surpasses that of nearly every other military flying school in the British Empire.

### Records of Cadets.

Air-Cadet Crispe was educated at Xavier College, and he later graduated as bachelor of civil engineering at the University of Melbourne. He was selected for training for a short-term commission about 15 months ago, and he began training more than a year ago. The first part of his course was interrupted by a serious illness, and he did not resume training until last July. In addition to much dual instruction, he had flown alone for about 46 hours, and was regarded as an excellent pupil. Crispe's parents live in Queen street, Reservoir.

Air Cadet McDonnell came from South Australia, where his mother lives, and he was engaged as a journalist before he was selected for training. He entered the flying training school about eight months ago and had had about 35 hours' solo flying experience. Both Crispe and McDonnell were applicants for appointment to short-term commissions in the Royal Air Force. They would have completed their training at Point Cooke in June, and had they qualified would have departed almost immediately for England.