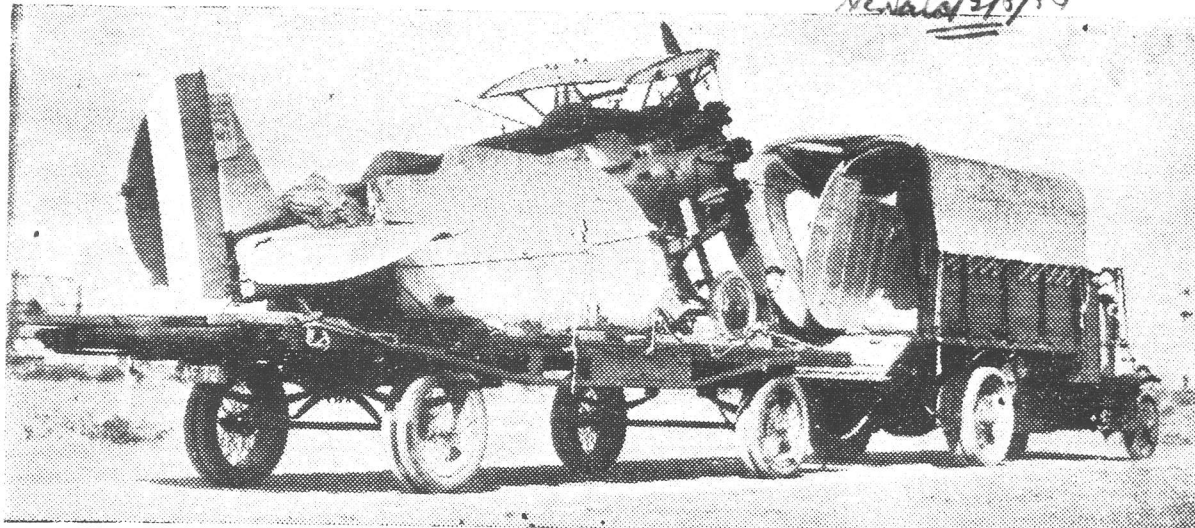


Air Force Plane's Forced Descent at Williamstown

HERALD 2/5/36



A British Bulldog of the Royal Australian Air Force being towed to Laverton from Williamstown today. Engine trouble developed when the plane was flying over the racecourse, and it was forced to descend nearby. This was accomplished without damage.

ENGINE failure compelled Flying-Officer Heffernan, of the Royal Australian Air Force, to make a forced landing in a Bristol Bulldog fighter in a paddock at Newport today.

He made a safe landing on soft ground near the Geelong railway line, about a mile from the Williamstown racecourse, and no damage was done to the plane. The machine could not be flown back

to Point Cook. Mechanics from the R.A.A.F. depot at Laverton removed the wings from the plane and put them in an Air Force van. Then the fuselage was placed on a trailer and towed to Laverton behind the van.

Flying-Officer Heffernan was on a training flight when the mishap occurred. Persons living in the dis-

trict said that they heard a thundering noise in the air before the plane came down.

Flying Officer Heffernan had ample space for his landing, and when he was circling before bringing his machine down he was able to keep well clear of houses. The house nearest to where the plane came to rest was an isolated dwelling a quarter of a mile away.

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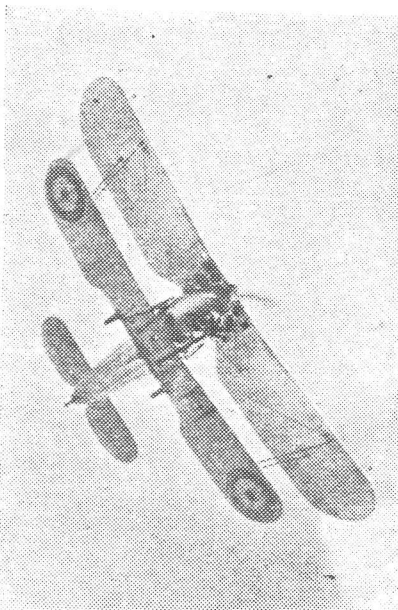
PLANE SKIMS TOPS OF HOUSES

STAR 2/5/36

FORCED TO LAND

AFTER GLIDING FOR MILES

Up more than 7,000 feet when his Bristol Bulldog machine developed engine trouble, Flying Officer V. G. Heffernan, piloting the meteorological observation plane, glided for several miles to a safe landing today in a large paddock at Newport.



One of the Point Cooke Bristol Bulldogs.

STAR 2.5.36

*only used landing loop
Can. load taken
2/5/36*

FOR a few exciting moments the big machine skimmed the treetops in the yards of neighbouring houses and residents, fearing a crash, ran from their homes.

Aware that something serious was the matter when the engine developed an increasing rattle when he was returning to Point Cooke the pilot, who had previously been flying at an altitude of 16,000ft., immediately cut off his engine.

Engine Disabled

Losing height rapidly, he made a determined effort to reach the Point Cook aerodrome without power, but was forced ultimately to land in a paddock near the railway line at Newport.

Flying-Officer Heffernan made a perfect landing, and climbed, smiling, from the cockpit after he had brought the machine to a standstill in the centre of the paddock.

Each day the plane soars to a great height to secure temperature readings for assistance in the compilation of weather charts at the Meteorological Bureau.

Flying-Officer Heffernan, who generally makes the flights, attributed the trouble to-day to a broken gudgeon-pin. He added cryptically, "Things might easily have been a lot worse."

A12-6 Bristol Bulldog forced landing at Newport near Geelong on flight from Point Cook, Flying Officer V G Heffernan 2 May 1936