

AIR CADET KILLED.

CRASH AT POINT COOK

Parachute Tangled in Plane.

MELBOURNE, April 16.—Air Cadet Norman Lindsay Chaplin (19) was fatally injured today when he jumped from a crashing aeroplane at Point Cook. His parachute became entangled in the machine and did not open fully.

Chaplin, who was flying solo and practising aerobatics in a Gypsy Moth plane, had just completed a loop when the port wing of the machine crumpled in the air. The machine went into a spin and Chaplin undid his safety belt, climbed out of the cockpit and jumped. After the crash his body was found three yards away from the machine. The ripcord of the parachute had been pulled and the parachute had partly opened but had become tangled in the plane.

The accident occurred a mile and a half east of Point Cook on a bracken-covered sandy field. Mrs. Thelma Morgan, who was camping with her husband and their two sons a mile away, saw the tragedy. She was walking along the beach with her young son towards Point Cook. They had not noticed Chaplin's machine in the air, but as they were about to return to their camp they heard a sudden roar and Mrs. Morgan saw the aeroplane diving towards her from the direction of the sea. It crashed 50 yards away. The child, thinking the machine was diving at him, ran into the water. Mrs. Morgan ran to the wrecked plane and saw Chaplin lying near the plane. The parachute was tangled in the machine. Fearing that it might catch fire, she hurriedly undid the parachute belt and dragged Chaplin away. He was unconscious and bruised but not disfigured.

Three temporary employees of the Royal Australian Air Force who were working about a quarter of a mile away hastened towards the machine and one of them examined Chaplin and found that he was dead. Officers and cadets from Point Cook arrived soon after and Chaplin's body was taken to the hospital at Point Cook.

This afternoon inquiries were opened by Air Force officials, and by members of the Air Accidents Investigation Committee. Wing-Commander H. F. De La Rue, commanding officer of the training school, said later that the cause of the accident was obscure, but it was believed to have been a structural failure.

Air Cadet Chaplin was the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Chaplin, of Ormond. He joined the training school in January and had 25 flying hours to his credit.

4-36 WEST AUSTRALIAN

ILL-FATED CADET WAS DOING ACROBATICS

MELBOURNE, Tuesday. "Wing of the Gypsy Moth aeroplane in which Air Cadet Norman Lindsay Chaplin (19) of the R.A.A.F. met his death near Point Cook on April 16 while doing aerobatics, folded up just as a butterfly folds its wings when alighting on the bush," one witness stated in evidence at the inquest today.

The Coroner (Mr. Tingate, P.M.) returned a finding of accidental death, being unable to say what made the aeroplane fall.

Eye-witnesses of the tragedy, told how they saw Chaplin clamber from the cockpit and leap for his life, only to strike the ground with a terrific impact when the parachute was either entangled with the plane or failed through lack of height, to open insufficiently.

Cross-examined by the Coroner, Squadron-Leader Francis Bladin, officer in charge of the cadet squadron at Point Cook, admitted that the evidence of witnesses that the wings of the plane folded up was in all probability quite correct, but he thought that their collapse was due to faulty handling in a loop by the pupil rather than to any mechanical defect in the plane.

Other evidence was given that Chaplin was doing aerobatics under instruction. He had been ordered, while flying solo, to do a loop circle and then land.

4.36 WA PAPER

A7-69 Cirrus Moth: crashed at Point Cook April 18 1936. Eyewitness Mrs Thelma Morgan. Comment by Wing Commander H F de la Rue and Squadron Leader Francis Bladin, commander of the cadet squadron, before the coroner Mr Tingate. Details of funeral given.

Air Force Honors At Funeral Of Cadet



A ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE GUARD marching in the funeral procession.

Full Air Force honors were accorded at the funeral today of Air Cadet Norman Lindsay Chaplin, who was killed when a Royal Australian Air Force plane he was piloting crashed near Point Cook on Thursday.

His remains were cremated at the Fawkner Cemetery.

Led by an escort and the Air Force Band, the cortege filed through the cemetery gates as an aeroplane circled overhead and dipped in a last salute. Chaplin's remains were carried on a gun carriage behind an Air Force wagon, his cap and sword lying on a large velvet cushion near the coffin.

After passing through the gates the cortege stopped and members of the firing party and escort squads stood with bowed heads and reversed arms for two minutes. A short service was then read and the firing squad paid its tribute.

The funeral left the home of his parents, Mr and Mrs W. J. Chaplin, in Lillimur Road, Ormond, at 11 a.m., but before its arrival at the cemetery a small crowd had been waiting for an hour and a half.

Air cadets who were in training with Chaplin were pallbearers.