

WAR ACE DIES NEAR AIRFIELD

A distinguished wartime flier and another RAAF pilot were killed today when an RAAF Tiger Moth training plane crashed about a mile from Schofields Aerodrome.

Both airmen, who were on a training flight, died instantly as the aircraft disintegrated among tall gumtrees.

Names of the victims have not yet been released.

The crash occurred at 8.55 am, a few minutes after the airmen had taken off from Schofields aerodrome.

Miss Joan Ferrett, who was waiting on Schofields railway station, said she heard the plane's engine cut out.

"The plane was about 200 feet up," she said.

"There were about 20 other people on the platform," she said.

"The plane suddenly lost height, and we thought it was going to hit the station.

"It cleared the station, and a wingtip struck halfway up a 50ft. gumtree."

IN CRASH



WRECKED TIGER MOTH after crashing near Schofields today. Portion of the wing can be seen in the tree-tops and the crashed aircraft is on the ground below.

Miss Perrett said a motorcyclist rushed through fences to the wreckage.

Both pilots were shockingly injured, and obviously had died instantly.

Passengers in a passing Sydney-bound train crowded the windows to look at the wreckage.

Trees snapped off

Driver of a passing RAAF lorry helped to extricate the bodies.

A guard from the RAAF station at Schofields was placed around the wrecked plane.

One wingtip hung from a branch 30 feet from the ground.

Two tall gumtrees were snapped off by the plane.

The squadron at Schofields is equipped with Mustang fighters, but a number of the pilots are having refresher courses in Tiger Moths.

In the last month two other light planes have crashed.

● A Moth crashed at Tenterfield on October 18, killing the two occupants.

● On October 31 another Moth crashed in a paddock near Forbes aerodrome, and two occupants were killed.

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