

# R.A.A.F. PLANE CRASHES.

## Three Killed Near Wagga.

### SYDNEY PILOT.

MELBOURNE, Friday.

A flying-officer and two leading aircraftmen were killed instantly when a R.A.A.F. training plane which they were flying crashed near Wagga about 2.30 p.m. to-day.

They were Flying-Officer John Francis Burban Weston, instructor, and two pupils, Leading Aircraftmen James Oliver Borain and Leslie Robert Taylor.

The machine left the Wagga Aerodrome at 1.45 p.m. to carry out a dual flight test. At 2.30 p.m. No. 2 Service Flying Training School at Wagga was informed that a machine had crashed near the State experiment farm.

The bodies of the three men were found in the wreckage.

The machine crashed on the orchard attached to the farm. It was witnessed from a distance by hundreds of people living in and near Wagga, and the noise as the machine struck the ground was heard five miles from the scene.

People in Wagga rushed from their homes and places of business when they heard the screaming noise of the engine as the machine flew over the town at a height of only a few hundred feet.

#### PILOT IN DIFFICULTY.

As it passed over the town it became evident that the pilot was in difficulty. The engine was racing, and the machine was losing height. When the machine was about four miles from the town and over the Experimental Farm, the many witnesses saw portions of the wings fall apart from the fuselage. Then the machine nose-dived to the ground.

The crew were killed instantly. Pieces of the machine were strewn over a distance of 400 yards from the spot where the crash occurred.

Members of the staff of the R.A.A.F. Flying School at Wagga were quickly on the scene, and a guard was placed over the machine.

Later the Deputy Coroner, Mr. Hugh Oates, viewed the bodies and opened an inquiry, which was adjourned to a date to be fixed. The bodies were then taken to the Wagga Hospital morgue.

"We knew that the pilot was in difficulty immediately we heard the noise of the engine as the machine passed over the town," an eye-witness said. "The engine was literally screaming. We have become accustomed to the normal sound of aeroplanes since the flying school was established here. People rushed from their homes and business premises and watched the plane. It was obvious that the pilot was making frantic efforts to bring the machine under control, but it was losing height. Then in the distance we saw the wings fall from the fuselage. The crash followed a moment later. It was terrific. Friends of mine who live a mile on the southern side of the town distinctly heard the crash. They were at least five miles from the scene, which was about four miles on the northern side of Wagga."

#### PARTICULARS OF VICTIMS.

Flying-Officer Weston, 23, single, was on the permanent staff of the R.A.A.F. He became an air cadet in January, 1938, a pilot-officer in December, 1938, and a flying-officer in June, 1939. After passing through the Camden Flying Instructors' School in April this year he was transferred to Wagga.

Aircraftman Borain, 18, single, enlisted as an air gunner in April this year, and trained at the Ballarat Wireless and Air Gunners' School. He was redrafted as an air crew pilot in May, and passed from the Somers (Vic.) Initial Training School to Archerfield (Q.) Elementary Flying Training School in June. He was sent to Wagga at the end of August.

Aircraftman Taylor, 29, single, enlisted as an air crew pilot in May, and passed from Somers to Archerfield at the end of June. He was immediately transferred to Wagga.

Family of the deceased are: Mrs.

KILLED IN  
AIR CRASH



FLYING-OFFICER J. F. B. Weston, R.A.A.F. instructor, who was killed with two trainees in a plane crash at Wagga yesterday.

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## Three Die In Crash

WAGGA, Friday.

An R.A.A.F. instructor and two trainees were killed when a plane from Wagga Training School crashed today.

The plane crashed in a lane-way at Wagga Experimental Farm, five miles from the town, at 2.30 p.m.

Those killed were: Flying-Officer John Francis Burban Weston, 23, of Edgecliff. Leading Aircraftman James Oliver Borain, 18, of Brisbane; and Leslie Robert Taylor, 29, of St. Peters (South Australia).

All were single. The experimental farm is 12 miles from the training school aerodrome.

#### "Flames Around Plane"

Several eye-witnesses stated that the plane broke in two before it crashed. A man who saw the crash from Wagga saleyards said:—

"The plane was flying low and appeared to be losing height. It was making more noise than these planes usually do.

"Just before it crashed, I saw flames around it."

With Weston as instructor and the other men as pupils, the plane took off from the flying school field at 1.45 p.m. No news of the plane was heard until 2.30 p.m., when the school was notified that it had crashed.

#### Was Film Actor

Flying-Officer Weston, who was on the permanent strength of the R.A.A.F.,