

Private Hunt Locates ^{Smith} ~~7/10/45~~ Crashed Plane

MELBOURNE, Monday.—The wreckage of an R.A.A.F. Beaufort bomber which disappeared two months ago has been found in rugged bush country nine miles from Eskdale, by a search party organised by relatives of one of the victims. The four occupants were found dead.

The wreckage and bodies were found at the head of the Mitta Valley after a search lasting two and a half hours on Saturday.

The victims were:—
F./O. F. A. Wallis, of Fairfield (V.).
F./O. R. V. Clayton, of Fremantle (W.A.).
F./O. D. A. Flavel, of Glenelg (S.A.).
F./Sgt. L. J. Sims, of Queensland.

Their plane failed to return to Sale on June 4 after an operational training flight to Mt. Gambier.

Messrs. A. and E. Wallis, brothers of Flying-Officer Wallis, and W. Daniel, another relative, went to Eskdale last Thursday.

Mr. Daniels said to-night that they organised their own search "in sheer desperation" because they could get no satisfaction from the Air Force.

A fortnight ago, as the plane had not been found, he and Flying-Officer Wallis's two brothers decided to move.

He applied to Wing-Commander Hepburn, of Sale, and was given some information about what line to take when he reached the area where the Air Force considered the plane had crashed. He was also able to inspect at R.A.A.F. Headquarters the aerial photographs.

When they arrived at Eskdale on Thursday, Mr. Daniel said, they found everybody in the township very willing to co-operate.

On Saturday Messrs. Daniel, A. Wallis and E. Wallis went out with 12 V.D.C. volunteers, having explained to them where the Air Force thought the plane had come down. The 15 men drove 12 miles after a search of two and a half days, scrambling miles over steep country, wrecked plane—nine days after it had been

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