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Monday,  
March 13, 1950.  
No. 25,154.  
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# Western Mail

AND SOUTH WALES NEWS  
THE NATIONAL DAILY OF WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

4<sup>TH</sup>  
EDITION

**MEGGEZONES**  
FOR THROAT COMFORT  
RECOMMENDED BY CHEMISTS



# 80 DIE IN WELSH AIR CRASH



THE above photograph shows the scene at Sigginston, near Llandow Aerodrome, shortly after the disaster. The wrecked port wing and engines can be seen on the left. In the centre of the photograph is the body of the airliner and extreme right fragments of the wreckage.

The group on the left was taken by a "Western Mail" photographer at Llandow on Friday morning, a few minutes before the ill-fated airliner left for Ireland.

## Llantarnam Village of Grief

THE tragedy struck at the heart of the agricultural centre of Llantarnam, Monmouthshire. In one house alone death claimed three young men. They were John Williams, who had looked after Court Farm for his mother since his father's death some years ago; his brother-in-law, Arthur Williams, who leaves a wife and baby daughter of 18 months, and W. Nicholas, who was married to John's younger sister. The young wife of Squadron leader Bill Irwin, of Llandow Aerodrome, with her small son waited anxiously for news. Bill could not get a seat on the aeroplane for the outward journey, but he had said he would try to return on the same aeroplane with the rest. But Squadron leader Irwin was not aboard the ill-fated Tudor; he returned in a Dakota.

PREVIOUS DISASTERS  
HEAVIEST death toll in a Llantarnam air crash previously when 75 people were killed in a Washington Airport on

## Worst Disaster in Civil Flying

### VICTIMS STRAPPED IN THEIR SEATS

HEARTRENDING accounts of the crash were given to Western Mail reporters last night by eye-witnesses. Thomas John Newman, aged 25, of Barn Cottage, Sigginston, said passengers were bringing home

### THESE KNOWN DEAD

THE following names

By OUR OWN REPORTERS

**E**IGHTY people, including seven women, were killed when a Tudor V. airliner bringing Welsh supporters from the international match at Belfast nose-dived and broke into hundreds of pieces in a field at Sigginston, near Cowbridge, yesterday afternoon to cause the worst disaster in the history of civil aviation.

At midnight 73 of the victims had been identified. Four of those unidentified were women.

There were only three survivors, two of whom, Handel Rogers, aged 35, of Gower View, Llanelly, and Gwynne Anthony, a schoolmaster, of Nevil-street, Llanelly, were the last to board the liner when she left Dublin yesterday.

They were sitting in adjacent seats in the tail of the machine and when the crash occurred were largely saved from being flung along the interior of the fuselage by their safety straps.

After the impact they were able to scramble through a gap which had been torn in the fabric of the airliner.

The third survivor, Melville Thomas, of Westbourne-crescent, Llanharan, was in hospital at St. Athan Aerodrome in a gravely critical condition early to-day.

The crash occurred as the giant silver-painted aircraft—the largest ever to land in South Wales—was preparing to touch down at Llandow Airport, 50 minutes after leaving Dublin.

Dozens of relatives were waiting to welcome the passengers home and surged forward as the roar of her engines were heard. Then the comforting roar died away and the aeroplane seemed to pull up, straighten out, shoot up again and then turn over on its back, crashing to earth a few yards from a farmhouse.

The machine broke in two as it hit the ground.

### Rescuers Rush

Men and boys who were playing football nearby raced to the aircraft while R.A.F. rescue crews sped from Llandow and St. Athan.

Calls went out to police, ambulance and fire services throughout South Wales. In a matter of minutes more than 100 ambulances, fire tenders and police cars were speeding to the scene.

The wreckage was piled high on the edge of a hill overlooking the village and the aerodrome.

Rescuers, appalled by the crash, were still more horrified by the silence which followed.

Inside the aircraft the dead were huddled forward in their seats, strapped down for landing.

The aeroplane was owned by Fairflight, Ltd., whose chief, Air Vice-marshal Donald Bennett, flew to the scene to make a personal investigation.

### Minister's Inspection

Lord Pakenham arrived in Cardiff shortly after nine o'clock last night and left at once for the scene of the crash with senior officials of his Ministry.

Lord Pakenham heard the news of the crash at Reading where he was spending the week-end with friends.

Immediately he caught the next train to Cardiff where he was met by Air Vice-marshal Bennett. Air Vice-marshal Bennett had flown from his home near Reading in an Oxford machine to the aerodrome where the accident occurred.

Lord Pakenham had a conference with him and Ministry of Civil Aviation and R.A.F. officials before driving to the aerodrome and intimating there would be a Court of Inquiry.

From there he went to St. Athan R.A.F. hospital for a brief talk with the two Llanelly survivors who escaped practically unscathed from the wreckage.

"At this stage I can only express the deep sympathy and condolence of myself and the Ministry of Civil Aviation," Lord Pakenham told the Western Mail.

Air Vice-marshal Bennett said the crashed aircraft had flown for more than 1,400 hours and had been extensively engaged on the Berlin air-lift.

### Airlift Record

"In fact it holds the record for the best achievement of any aircraft on the Berlin air-lift. It flew more hours on the air-lift than any other British or American machine."

"As far as I can see everything was in correct order," he said. "The 83 people on board was a load well within the certificate of airworthiness requirements for this particular machine."

He said that the pilot, Capt. D. Parsons, a married man whose home was at Maidenhead, joined his firm after service with the R.A.F. He had been flying Tudors for 17 months.

Three accident investigation officers of the Ministry of Civil Aviation also arrived by air and inspected the scene early to-day by the light of torches.

One of the officers is an expert on airframes and another an expert on engines. They will make a detailed inspection of the scattered wreckage to-day.

Senior officers of the Glamorgan police also arrived. The Chief Constable, Mr. Joseph Jones, was accompanied by his assistant, Mr. C. Watkins, and Superintendents Ewart Evans and Sam Davies.

The county ambulance service from 14 distinct districts included 35 vehicles under the direction of Mr. G. E. Austin, the county ambulance officer and his assistant, Mr. D. I. Morris.

Air experts from Cardiff, Llandow, and St. Athan, and an officer from the R.A.F. mountain rescue service raced to the scene and also inspected the wreckage to make reports.

Among the helpers were the week-end airmen of the County of Glamorgan Auxiliary Air Force Squadron, who are based at Llandow, and were at the aerodrome for flying practice in Spitfires.

The police kept constant watch on the cordoned-off wreckage, and after the Chief Constable had made his final inspection the field was closed to all but police officers.

The aircraft, which had been hired by Mr. Harold Dunscombe, of Brithdir-street, Cathays, Cardiff, who organised the trip, left Llandow on Friday afternoon.

Originally 72 people had booked, but so great was the number of requests for places that part of the aircraft was stripped and six more people were taken aboard.

### £10 Fare

Passengers who included large parties from Pontypridd, Llanelly and Cardiff, paid £10 5s. for the trip.

Mr. Harold Dunscombe's father told the Western Mail last night that as far as he knew his son had booked 72 seats on the aircraft.

"Harold was going to book two airliners so heavy were the inquiries for the trip, but he was advised to charter only one," he said.

The Tudor left Dublin Airport at 2.10 p.m. yesterday with enough fuel on board for almost four hours flying time and was due to arrive at Llandow airport at 3.03.

The 78 passengers arrived at Dublin Airport at 1.50 and there was a speedy Customs clearance. They were all cheerful after the Welsh victory.

The Tudor made a perfect take-off.

There was a crew of five including an engineer, and they refused an Irish Air Lines offer of servicing facilities, doing the work themselves.

Western Mail reporters, last night by eye-witnesses.

Thomas John Newman, aged 33, of Barn Cottage, Cigginston, said, "We saw the aeroplane approach, and then it circled and flew down low to land."

"When it was about 200 yards from the airstrip we heard the engines cut out, and it suddenly nose-dived into a field, narrowly missing our house."

"My brother and I rushed across the field, and as we got to the aeroplane two men staggered out, with a third behind them."

"One man said 'For God's sake get help.'"

### "A Horrible Sight"

"My brother ran to the telephone while I looked in the aeroplane."

"It was a horrible sight. Bodies were all piled up together and most of those inside the aeroplane were either unconscious or dead."

"I pulled two of the bodies clear and then R.A.F. officers from Llandow came along and pulled some more clear in case the aeroplane caught fire."

"The aeroplane was broken across its middle and the front part was smashed to splinters."

William Ledbury, licensee of the Victoria Inn, Sigginston, said "With other people in the village I was waiting for the aeroplane to come back."

"I saw it approach and then it disappeared behind some trees and I heard a dull thud."

"I realised I had crashed and dashed out with two bottles of brandy under my arm to give assistance I could."

"What I saw when I reached the aircraft made me almost physically sick, and I realised there was little I could do."

### Normal Approach

An official who was on the aerodrome awaiting the arrival of the aircraft said—

"We saw the aeroplane coming in from the Channel, and it came across the aerodrome towards the direction of Cowbridge and did a left-hand circuit."

"We saw the aeroplane coming lower to land and then lost sight of her over the brow of the hill, which is beyond the runway. We did not think anything was wrong at all as we waited for her to come up over the hill. Suddenly, however, she appeared to be dipping at an angle of about 45 degrees and it was obvious that something was amiss."

"One of her wings appeared to be dipping and the pilot was making efforts to straighten the craft out. She then obviously approached for a landing, but for her wheels we saw nothing."

"What happened next I do not know except that we suddenly realised she had crashed in a field some way from the runway."

"We dashed over and found all thought that the passenger would be all right as one side of the aeroplane appeared to be intact. The other side, however, had been ripped away."

"The passengers we still strapped in their seats, one of which had piled forward when the aeroplane crashed. They had to cut straps to extricate the dead."

"The scene inside the craft after the crash was a shambles. The wrecked aeroplane was spread-eagled on its back, wing first nose-dived to the ground. All the bodies, most of them terribly injured, were piled the forepart of the aeroplane."

"Ten people were alive when they were extricated, but some died soon afterwards."

"Personal belongings, including toys, food and nylon whistles

were being brought home with them, were scattered around the field and in nearby hedges and ditches."

"Eight-ton jacks were used to lift the nose of the aeroplane before the crew could be got out."

Mrs. Lydia Thomas, aged 20, Park Farm, Sigginston, said, "I was in my bedroom around three p.m. when I saw the aeroplane coming down past the window."

"I crashed with an awful thud into a field 40 yards from the window. I screamed and my parents (Mr. and Mrs. Evan Thomas) were among the first to reach the wreck."

"Two men succeeded in getting into the wreck. One had a nasty gash in his head and both were shocked."

Continued on Page 2

### RUGBY UNIONS' SYMPATHY

Sir David Rocyn-Jones, president of the Welsh Rugby Union, said last night, "The secretary (Mr. Eric Evans) and myself have been profoundly shocked at the tragic news as there are quite a number of friends of ours who have lost their lives."

"On behalf of the Welsh Rugby Union we extend our greatest sympathy to relatives and friends."

Mr. W. A. B. Douglas, hon. secretary of the Ulster branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union, said, "The Union sends to all relatives sincere and heartfelt sympathy in this tragic end to a trip to Ireland, where their country won the Triple Crown."

The officials and playing members of Cardiff Athletic Club send the following message, "The Cardiff Athletic Club wish to express their deepest sympathy towards the relatives of those sportsmen and women who lost their lives. It is a tragedy which has shocked us all."

The following telegram was sent by Sir Basil Brooke, the Northern Ireland Prime Minister, to Sir David Rocyn-Jones.

"I am deeply distressed to learn of the air disaster involving the death of so many Welshmen whom we had welcomed at the Rugby International at Belfast. Please convey to the bereaved and injured the profound sympathy of the Northern Ireland Government."

### U.S. Officers Recalled From Hungary

WASHINGTON, Sunday. The three United States Army officers declared persona non grata by the Hungarian Government are to be recalled, a State Department spokesman announced to-day. — Reuter

Continued from next column

Iam Ashe, 41, Wenallt-road, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

Beatrice Masson, 12, Windsor-road, Treforest; Mary Theresa Heggarty, no address; D. Davidson, air hostess (member of crew).

At midnight seven bodies remained to be identified.

## DEAD

The following names of the identified dead were issued late last night:—

Herbert Thomas, Llanelay-terrace, Pontypridd; Thomas Jonathan, Tawe House, Panteg, Ystalyfera; David P. Owen, The Parade, Pontypridd; Ivor Jones, Aberbeeg-road, Aberbeeg; Ronald Price, The Avenue, Garn-diffaith; Harold Dunscombe (the organiser of the trip), Arcade-chambers, Duke-street, Cardiff; William Portlock, Wern-crescent, Nelson, Glam.; William Jones, Aberbeeg-road, Aberbeeg; David Read, Brynawel Farm, Park-mill, Gower; Alexander Patterson, St. Mary-street, Risca; Joseph Watkins, High-street, Abercarn; Jesse Evans, Coronation-street, Blaiana; David Hawkins, Llanharan (believed now of Porth-cawl); Lleufer Jonathan, Cynllai Villas, Ystradgynlais; George Burnett, Varteg-road, Varteg.

Glyndwr Winstone, Prince of Wales Hotel, Abertillery; Robert Thomas, Gwynfi-terrace, Llanharan; Arthur Williams, Court Farm, Llantarnam; Lloyd Richards, Pictonterrace, Llanharan; Howard Evans, accountant, The Parade, Pontypridd; Austin Morrissey, Danygraig-road, Risca; David Hopkins, Alltwen Hill, Pontardawe; David Jones, New House Farm, Cwmbran.

John Masson, Windsor-road, Treforest; Brinley Austin Jones, Pantypwllin, Abertillery; John Read, Alltwen Hill, Pontardawe; Hywel Hopkins, Seaview-terrace, Aberavon; Roy Masson, Tawe-street, Pontypridd; Bernard Anthony O'Carroll, of Buckinghamshire (crew); Donald Rowlands, no address.

Douglas Burnett, Woodland-terrace, Abercarn; Herbert Rees, Graig-road, Godregraig; A. C. Graham, Beaconsfield-road, Farnham Common (Bucks.); William Uren, Tyllwyd-place, Newbridge; Mark Lewis, The Ranks, Abercarn; Colin Jenkins, Blaenavon.

Ivor Guy, Grove-road, Risca; Albert Robins, no address; Thomas Jerman, Bridge-street, Risca; George Prior, Pump-street, Blaiana; Thomas Blunt, Tredegar-street, Risca; J. G. Walters, Dewsland, Penycave-road, Port Talbot; Harold John, Bedwlyn-road, Ystradgynlais.

Capt. D. J. Parsons (no address given).

David Burgess, The Parade, Pontypridd; William Schofield, Penylan, Folland-road, Garnant; Edgar Watkins, New Kings Arms, William-street, Blaenavon; Daniel Nelson, Edward-street, Glyn-Neath; John Davies, Lewis-street, Ystradgynlais; William Nelson, Chain Walk, Glyn-Neath; William Nicholas, Penywain Farm, Cwmbran; William Stevens, Llantarnam-road, Llantarnam.

Bert Butcher, Greenhouse Farm, Llantarnam; Reginald Beavis, Sunnybank Bungalow, Danygraig, Risca; William Gwynn, Gwynn's Garage, Ystradgynlais; Richard Bradley, Brynmelin Hotel, Greenhill, Swansea.

Alan Blizard, 15, Brookland-road, Pontymister; William Brooks, 23, Brook-terrace, Llanharan; Gomer Griffiths, 4, Prospect-place, Garnant; Noel Goodwin, 23, Brookland-road, Pontymister.

Ivor Oxslade, 16, Sea View-terrace, Swansea; Ray Box, 35, Crown-street, Crumlin; Henry Turner, 11, Neylar-street, Aberystwyth; Albert Smith, Lion Hotel, Broad-street, Blaenavon; William Irving, Lyndene, Llantarnam-road, Cwmbran; Elwyn Davies, Coronation-road, Garnant.

W. Pascoe, 1, Harold-street, Llanharan; William Coles, Pictonterrace, Llanharan; Sidney Hill, 15, Cae Pistyll-street, Swansea; Wil-

Continued in preceding column

Llandow on his return and saw the crash. He identified his father afterwards.

Word is anxiously awaited about yet another of Mrs. Williams's sons-in-law, Mr. B. Rosser. He was flying back from Dublin, but it is not known whether he was in the aeroplane which crashed.

Mrs. Stevens, of Star-row, a widow, was preparing a meal for her son, William, when a police inspector called to tell her that he was among those killed.

Others from the village killed in the crash were, Dan Jones, of Coedeva Farm, and George Maggs, of Cwmbran.

"We Feel Lost" Mrs. L. Jarrett, one of the villagers, told a Western Mail reporter, "At one blow we have lost more than at any other time, including the war."

"It is a very sad village. Neighbours are rallying round the stricken families, but nobody really knows what to say or do. We feel lost and stunned."

Swedish air crash previously mentioned. 23 people were killed at Washington Airport on November 2, 1949. An airliner collided with an American Air Force fighter. Worst crashes in Britain were:—

- (1) A Dutch airlines Constellation crashed and burst into flames near Prestwick Airport on October 22, 1948, killing 40 people.
  - (2) A Swedish Cloudmaster airliner and a R.A.F. York transport collided in mid-air near Northolt Airport on July 4, 1948. Thirty-nine people were killed.
- Other recent crashes involving British aeroplanes included:
- August 19, 1949: B.E.A. Dakota crashed into the Pennines between Oldham and Saddleworth killing 24 people.
  - February 19, 1949: B.E.A. Dakota and R.A.F. Anson collided near Coventry with 14 dead and January 18, 1949, B.S.A.A. Tudor IV, disappeared in Bermuda area with 20 lost.



What a really tempting and delicious first course — Batchelors wonderful tomato soup!

## Guest Husband

Geoff is away on business most of the week. The first time he arrived home unexpectedly there were only meat left-overs to eat. I ran to my neighbour, who most generously helped me with good things from her shelf of Batchelors canned foods. Gorgeous Batchelors soup tender Batchelors peas, luscious Batchelors fruit—what a treat! Home from abroad, Geoff has

awarded me nylons. He thinks I'm the wonderful one! Give your family Batchelors delicious foods today.

"B" for Batchelors

**FOOD NEWS from Batchelors Bee**

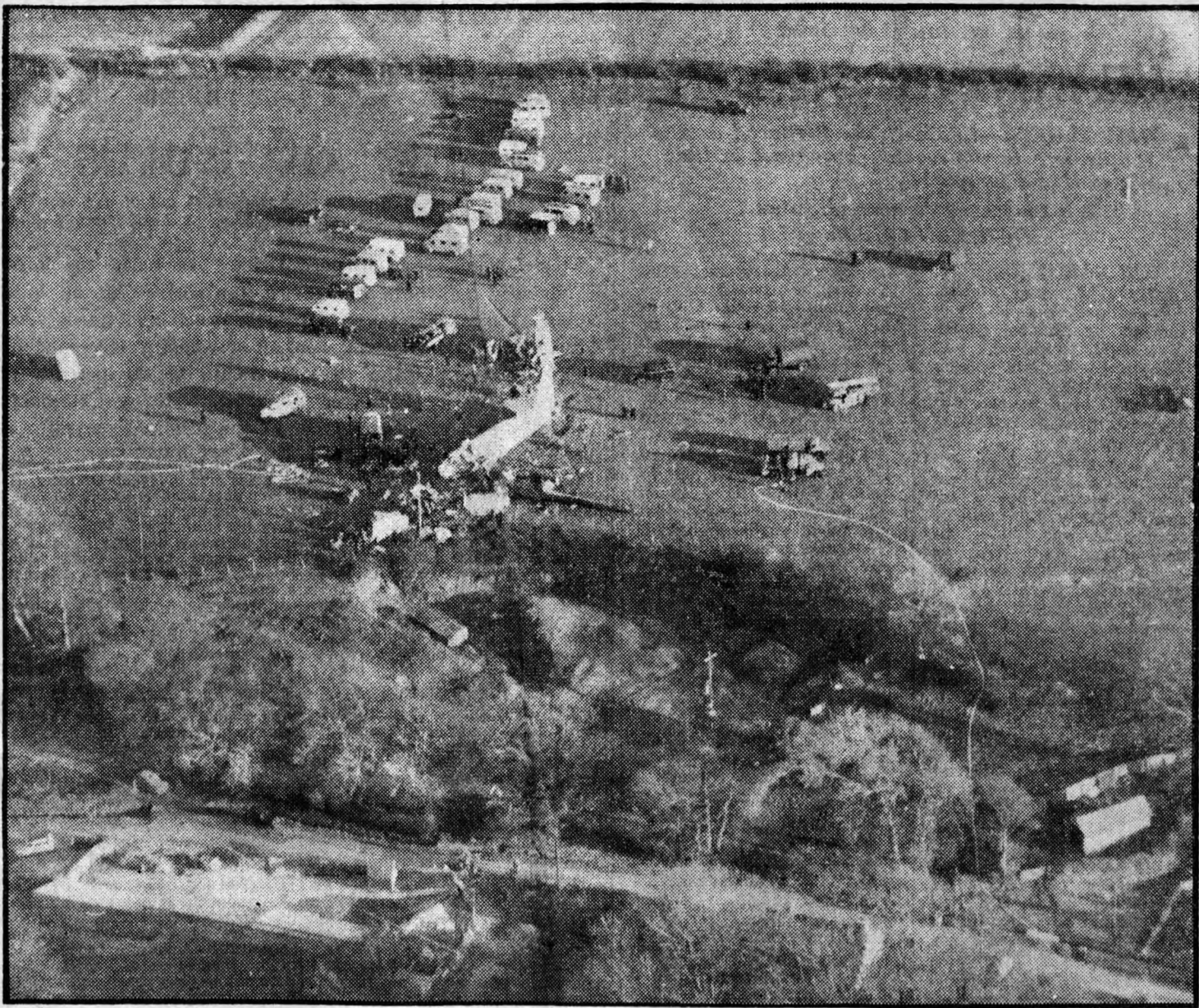
Remember — Batchelors peas are rich in protein. Serve them often for the good health of your family.

**Batchelors**

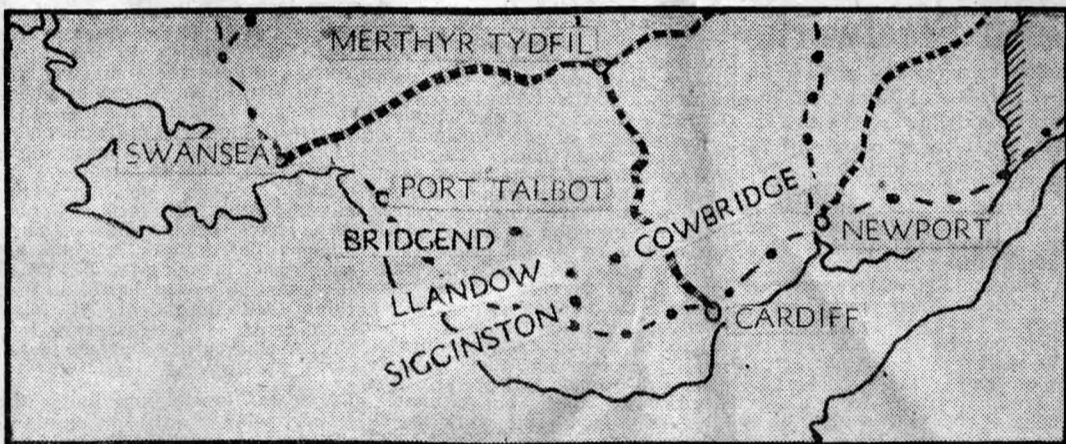
WONDERFUL Foods

ENGLISH CANNED SOUPS • VEGETABLES • FRUITS

EN22/785/08



**A**ERIAL view of the crash showing how narrowly the aeroplane missed the village of Sigginston (in the foreground).



Map showing the area in which the disaster occurred.

### Injured Constable in Hospital

William Bernard Davies, aged 23, a hawker, of Milton-terrace, Swansea, was remanded on bail for a week at the local magistrates' court on Saturday on a charge of assaulting Police-constable William Harry Miller in the execution of his duty the previous night.

Mr. R. A. Foster said the officer's injuries necessitated his removal to hospital where he was to undergo an X-ray examination.

Police-constable W. J. Pring said he saw Constable Miller struggling with Davies in Singleton-street. He had an injury to his eye and appeared to be in a dazed condition.

### The Churches

The Rev. Harri Samuel, of Ystalyfera, who recently returned from Patagonia, has accepted the pastorate of Brychgoed, Devynock and Sennybridge Congregational Church, Breconshire.

### Recent Wills

Mr. William Henry Dowell, of St. Julians-road, Newport, former licensee of the Globe Hotel, Pontypool, an old-time Welsh international Rugby forward, £3,970 (£3,922).

### IN BRIEF

## CLIMBERS RESCUE SHEEP

**M**R. GWILYM WILLIAM HUGHES and his 18-year-old son, Bobby Hughes, of Nant Uchaf Farm, Nant-gytheryn, about 12 miles from Pwllheli, risked their lives on Saturday to rescue a sheep which strayed to the Blackrock, above the village, and fell on to a ledge.

The two men climbed down a rope and found the sheep, which was pulled up to safety by another rope.

**Confirmations.**—The Archbishop of Wales confirmed 40 candidates at a confirmation service at St. John's Church, Nelson, last night. The Rev. Henry Withers, rector of Lanfabon, assisted.

**Cyclist Injured.**—While cycling along the Cardiff-Newport road yesterday Arthur Summers, aged 19, Amherst-street, Grangetown, Cardiff, collided with a stationary car at Quarry Hill, St. Mellons, and was taken to Cardiff Royal Infirmary with multiple injuries to his face.

**Treharris Boy Killed.**—Brian Davies, seven-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Davies, Mary-street, Treharris, was knocked down at Treharris on Saturday evening by a bus proceeding from Cardiff to Merthyr, and was killed instantly.

**Hunt.**—West Glamorgan Hunt met at Neath on Saturday, with



PASSENGERS boarding the

WHAT M  
BE

Inside this week's  
supplement on

FUC

Did he believe there v  
virtue in his teacher