

As a prelude to the air tragedy, we show you this Hertfordshire landscape under its first mantle of snow - a fall that routed visions of an early Spring, and the cause, perhaps, of a terrible disaster.

Yes, Winter had come, when a Valetta Transport plane crashed into the thickly-wooded ~~slopes of a Hertfordshire~~ hillside, near Albury, just after taking off from Bovington aerodrome.

The plane was carrying sixteen R.A.F. personnel, returning home in the snowstorm ~~last~~ after playing a second round Rugby Cup ~~Match~~ Tie at Halton Camp.

The tangled mass of wreckage was strewn in all directions. Parts of the plane can be seen embedded in tree trunks - striking testimony to the force of the impact.

~~Unhappily~~, there was only one survivor of the sixteen ^{airmen} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ who met a sudden and violent death - a tragic ending to their afternoon of sport.