

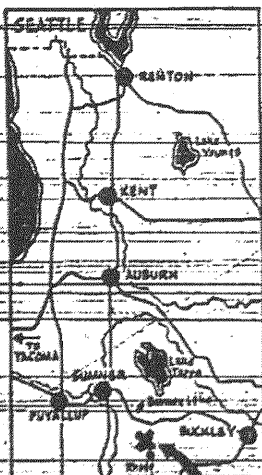
TRAGEDY NEAR ORTING



CRASH SCENE: A member of the Air Force Police stood guard today over the smoldering wreckage of a C-118 Air Force transport plane which fell in flames and exploded in a wooded area near Orting last night. The bulk of the craft's remains, still smoldering today, was strewn over a wide area for a distance of about 350 feet. Shredded bits of the aircraft were mute evidence of the violence of the crash. Other fragments were hurled hundreds of feet into woods surrounding this area.—Times staff photo by John T. Cross

The Air Force today was seeking the cause of the flaming crash of a C-118 transport plane on a wooded hillside about five miles north of Orting last night.

The four men aboard the plane were killed. They were: First Lieut. Robert R. Dimick, 26, the pilot, Bowling Green, Ohio; 1st Lieut. Thomas E. Insater, 24, co-pilot, Lance Creek, Wyo.; Tech. Sgt. Guy J. Cunningham, 27, flight engineer, San Antonio, Tex., and Sergt. Arthur T. Foote, 44, flight engineer, whose wife lives at West Palm Beach, Fla. Dimick had planned to



version of a commercial DC-6. The plane had taken off from McChord Air Force Base at 6:29 p. m. on a local training flight. The crash was at 8:19 p. m.

Colonel Booth said the pilot radioed shortly before the crash:

"This is it!"
"We have hit something, or something has hit us."

After giving a "Mayday" distress signal and asking for a heading to the field, the pilot paused, then said, "This is it!"

Nothing more was heard. No other planes have been reported missing in the area.

Police Chief Fred Emard of Orting saw the crash.

"It looked like it was going to come down right on Main Street. I guess the pilot saw the lights of the town, because he swerved sharply to the right. Seconds later, there was an explosion and the whole sky lighted up."

"The good Lord must have been watching, because someone made the plane swerve away from our town."

The plane crashed in the Rhode Lake area about three miles east of Sumner and two miles south of Bonney Lake.

Firemen rushed to the scene. The plane burned with such intense heat that there was little they could do.

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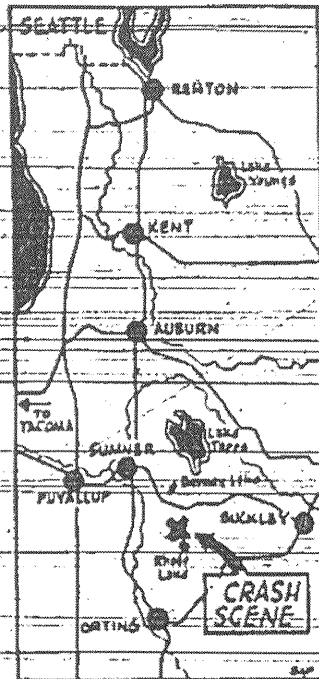
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Dimick had planned to leave today for Japan to marry his sweetheart, an American schoolteacher.

A witness said it appeared Dimick swerved the plane at the last moment to prevent it from crashing into the town of Orting.

"Collision" Unexplained

Col. Robert E. Booth, commander of the 1705th Air Transport Group, said the pilot's last radio message in-



LOCATION: This map shows where a C-118 Air Force transport plane crashed in flames last night.

dicated there had been an aerial collision. The plane was a military

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Police Chief Fred Emard of Orting saw the crash.

"I was parked on the main street in my police car," Emard said, "when I heard a rumbling. I looked up and saw the plane coming over a hill about six miles south of town. It was completely on fire and was trailing a stream of fire about 200 yards behind it.

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A party of 70 airmen this afternoon began a ground search along the stricken aircraft's line of flight from where it first reported trouble to the crash scene. They were looking for anything that might shed light on the accident. A helicopter aided the search.