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AEROPLANE WRECKED.

Machine Hits Fence. OCCUPANTS ESCAPE.

BRISBANE, Sunday.—Essaying a short take-off from a paddock directly behind the Crown Hotel, Rocklea, on Saturday afternoon, a Moth aeroplane piloted by Captain C. C. Matheson struck a wire fence and crashed. Both Captain Matheson and his passenger, J. V. M. R. A. Little, of Sydney, had narrow escapes from serious injury. Though the machine was reduced to wreckage both scrambled free, suffering nothing more serious than a slight shaking. Mr. Little, who is managing director of the Independent Oil Industries, Ltd., and on a brief visit to Brisbane, was invited by Captain Matheson to accompany on a pleasure flight around the city on Saturday afternoon. They left the Archerfield aerodrome about 3.15 p.m. in a Moth machine owned by Mr. C. H. Ferris. They had been in the air only a few minutes when trouble developed. The engine commenced to labour, and then suddenly cut out. Faced with the inevitability of a forced landing, Captain Matheson selected a large paddock in the Rocklea area behind the Crown Hotel. He glided the machine into position and effected a perfect landing in a far corner of the field. The mishap to the engine was found to be of a minor nature and was quickly adjusted by the pilot. No apparent difficulty presented itself in the take-off, and after a run of about 200 yards the machine rose and cleared an inner fence by almost 30 ft. Then when almost directly above a second fence it dropped sharply and the under carriage became entangled with the top strand of the wire fencing. The impact flung the machine forward on its nose and as the propeller struck the ground it slewed sharply round to face the direction from which it had come. The aeroplane was badly damaged.

At the first impact the fuselage was shattered, and as it slewed round the left wing and propeller were torn completely away. It was later removed to the Archerfield hangar by motor truck.