

M.T. July 15/70.

Lorne Gray, his wife and son found at last

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Staff Reporter

PORT CREDIT — The bodies of Lorne Gray, the 45-year-old former vice-president of the St. Lawrence Starch Co., his wife Judy, and their four-year-old son Gordon, missing in their light plane since last Aug. 29, have been found.

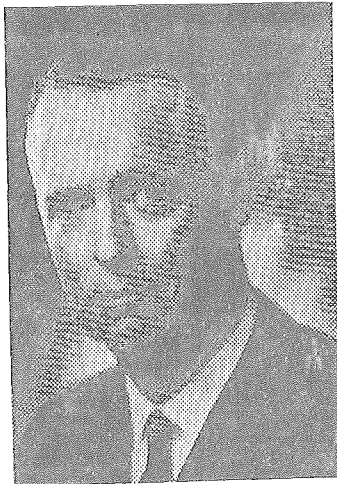
The wreckage of their Cessna 180, which had taken off from Soo, Michigan, headed for Kenora, was spotted from the air last week just 35 miles south of Wawa on the side of the area's tallest mountain. The crash site is located between Highway 17 and Lake Superior.

Police say a diamond engagement ring and gold wedding band with the inscriptions "Judy and Lorne" and a date provided positive identification of the bodies. The remains of all three were sent to Plummer Memorial Hospital in Sault Ste. Marie and released earlier this week, an OPP spokesman told the Times Monday.

"They have been absolutely positively identified," OPP said. "The plane's serial numbers and the wedding rings provided the proof."

GARGANTUA POINT

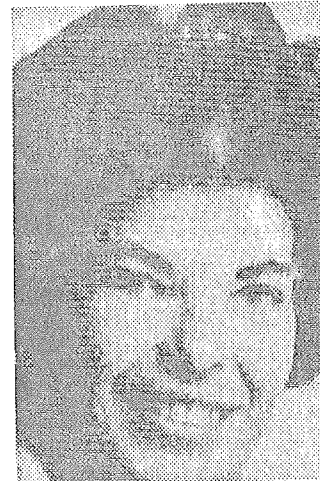
Police said Iliff Johnson, a pilot employed by Great Lakes Power Co., was flying in a plane leased from the Airdale Flying Service last Tuesday when he spotted what appeared to be wreckage near Gargantua Point on Lake Superior.



Lorne Gray



Gordon Gray



Judy Gray

The following day an OPP plane scouted the site and by Thursday a ground party reached the scene of the crash. The plane apparently had smashed into the side of the 1,600-foot mountain and burned.

The Gray's two-year-old daughter, Laura, was with relatives when the accident occurred.

During the first week after their disappearance hope ran high that Gray had been able to bring the pontoon-equipped plane down on one of the many lakes that dot the

area. But poor weather and futile search and rescue attempts slowly led searchers to the conclusion the family had been killed.

A piece of aluminum, washed ashore near Paradise, Michigan, about 45 miles from Sault Ste. Marie, again raised hopes of finding the plane but examination by American authorities soon proved it a false lead.

The air search was suspended by the Canadian Forces Search and Rescue Division on Sept. 11 after sweeping more than 87,000 square miles of ground. It was started

again between Oct. 20 and Oct. 24 when heavy leaves had fallen from the tree cover but again the search proved fruitless.

The family left Mississauga Aug. 28 for a holiday, staying at Soo, Michigan overnight. They started off the next morning for a Labor Day weekend in Kenora, planning a number of stops along the way.

BROTHERS SEARCHED

Both of Gray's brothers, John and Douglas, took part in the search along with a number of private planes piloted by friends and planes from the Department of Lands and Forests.

Gray was vice-president of the St. Lawrence Starch Co. in Port Credit. His father, W. T. Gray, founded the company.

Lorne joined the firm in 1951 and became vice-president in 1960. Well known for his work in community affairs and as a campaign manager of the 1968 United Appeal, he is sorely missed by both community and friends.

He was a member of the Port Credit Rotary Club, the Toronto Board of Trade, the Mississauga Golf and Country Club, the Beaver Fishing Club and the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association.

Mrs. Gray was also active in community work and had been named a director of the South Peel Hospital in February of last year.

No funeral arrangements have been made as yet.