

# TWO CANOEISTS MISSING

FEARED DROWNED

JUNE 1962.

## INTENSIVE SEARCH OVER MAGNETIC ISLAND

TOWNSVILLE, June 18.—Two young men who sailed from Townsville on Saturday afternoon in their 16ft. yellow canoe, bound for Florence Bay, on the eastern side of Magnetic Island, are believed to have drowned.

An intensive land, sea and air search was set in motion to-day in a bid to find the men, John Raymond Bowkett (24), a married member of the R.A.A.F., and Peter Hetherington (18), a clerk.

Hetherington is the president of the Townsville N.F.C. Bushwalkers' Club. Bowkett is also a member of the club and both he and Hetherington have been keenly interested in canoe construction over the past two years.

On Saturday afternoon they set out from the Strand in a 16ft. 6in. canoe, equipped with red sails and paddles, to sail to the Boy Scouts' camp at Florence Bay. They were to return to the mainland on Saturday night.

Police were notified to-day that the two men were overdue and Constable Frame, the Magnetic Island police officer, began a search of the island. He travelled by car over the rough road to West Point, the most westerly extremity of the island, and then walked for about two miles over slippery rocks on the northern side of the island.

Constable Frame scanned the numerous rocky bays with binoculars without sighting any trace of the canoe and bright red sail or the two men. He said reports by people on the island that they had seen the canoe moored at Arcadia on Saturday and Sunday led him to believe there were at least two, and possibly three, canoes answering the description of the missing one at the island at the week-end.

Two Neptunes from No. 10 Maritime Squadron at Garbutt were called into the search this morning and they swept over a big portion of the coast north of Townsville at a height of about 1500ft. The Neptunes will resume the search to-morrow and a crash launch is to leave at 7 a.m. to go as far north as the Palm Islands group and Lucinda Point.

Light planes from the Bush Pilots and the Townsville Aero Club made runs over Magnetic Island and the bay beaches this afternoon, while the father of the missing youth (Mr. Arthur Hetherington) travelled in a chartered launch to Bay Rock, a short distance from the island. Mr. Hetherington circumnavigated the island in the chartered launch before nightfall.