

DE REXSHIRE ATHL

Army Men Honored at Peru Service Memorial Dedicated At Spot Where 16 Fliers Lost Lives

HINSDALE—In military man-

ner, the memorial on Garnet Peak
was dedicated yesterday afternoon
to the memory of 16 Army fliers
who lost their lives there Aug. 15,
1912. The dedication was made by
Rev. A. Rawson Holgate, a former
pastor of the Middlefield Congre-
gational Church, assisted by mem-
bers of the Benjamin F. Sullivan
Post of the American Legion from
Dallien. The families of three of
the men who died there were rep-
resented, and one of the three sur-
vivors of the crash, James Fern,
now of Lee, was in attendance.

The dedication followed the an-
nual home coming service of the
Peru Congregational Church. Rev.
Albert H. Plumb of Hartford,
Conn., pastor of the church 50
years ago, gave an historical ad-
dress at the church service which
was conducted by Rev. S. R. Swift,
pastor of the First Congregational
Church of Hinsdale and Peru. Prior
to the home coming service which
began at 2, a basket lunch was held
on the church lawn with coffee
and lemonade furnished.

Four Miles From Highway

The spot on Garnet Peak where
the monument and plaque stand
is more than four miles off the
main road. Under the direction of
Cpl. James Ashe of the Pittsfield
State Police barracks and the town
constables the traffic moved along
the dirt road to a spot less than a
half mile from the monument. A
few feet from the five-foot
monument a pile of twisted scrap
metal, part of the fatal plane, was
nearly piled and in the wooded
area around the little shrine other
pieces of fuselage lay, worn and
faded by the weather of the last
four years, but still vivid remind-
ers of war's sacrifices.

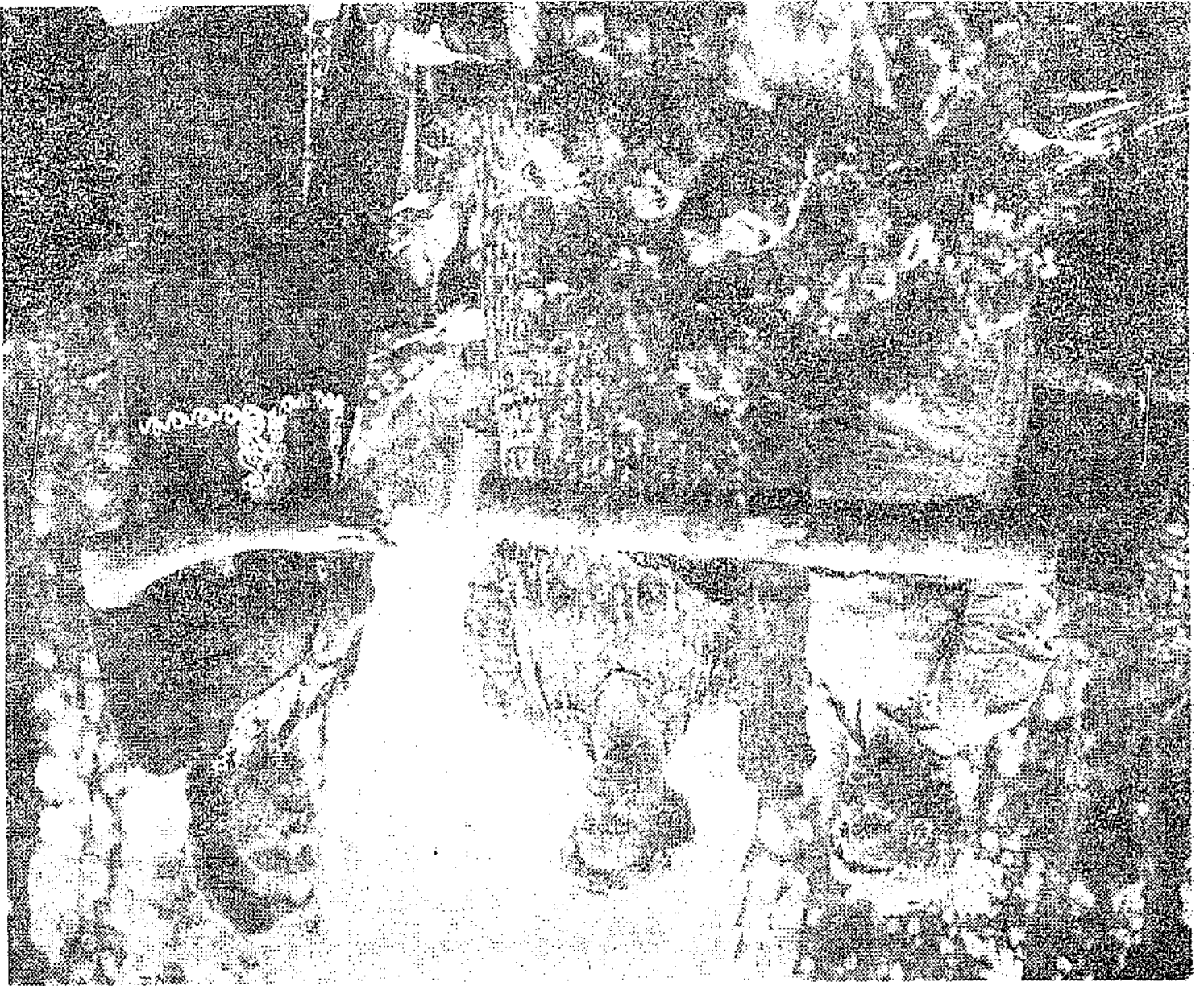
The ceremony opened with a
prayer by Rev. Holgate and a
welcome to those present. His
brief dedication address was titled
"A Rendezvous With Life," and he
referred to the rendezvous with
life enjoyed by the 16 fliers who
paid the supreme sacrifice while
young and vigorous. He referred
also to the untimely death of
Jesus Christ who was crucified at
the age of 33.

"A man is a failure only if he
fails to utilize his powers and
abilities to the fullest advantage.
Even if a baseball team wins a
game, it is not a success if it has
played an ignoble game," he said.
He added that he believed the 16
fliers who lost their lives in the
plane crash would tell us to live
nobly, if they had the power to.
In closing he stated that he was
not dedicating the memorial to the
death of the fliers, but to their
rendezvous with life.

families and friends of the de-
ceased who made the trip to Peru
include members of the family of
Frank A. Lastosky. They were his
mother, Mrs. Genevieve Lastosky,
a sister, Teresa, his brothers, Wal-
ter and Adam and Mr. and Mrs.
Joseph Vuhas, all of Swantonville.
Pa. The family of Lieut. Gardner
V. Plann of Ransomville, N.Y., was
represented by his widow, and his
brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and
Mrs. Charles M. Plann, Mrs. Ethel
Field, the mother of Pilot L.L.
Joseph J. Field, had flown from At-
lanta, Ga., to be present. Another

distinguished guest was 92-year-
old James F. Merchant of 8 Shep-
ard Street, Westford, a former
Pittsfield and Peru resident. Mr.
Merchant's father was killed in ac-
tion in the Civil War.
Representatives present from the
Dallien post were Delmar W. Stev-
ens, Lewis E. Armsby, Donald F.
Filio, Charles H. Callaghan, Stan-
ley A. Smith, Ernest W. Beals,
George S. Galusha, George G. Gal-
usha, Harry R. Stevens, Maurice
L. Callahan, Albert H. Jandry, Ed-
ward G. Belcher, William J. White,
Albert Phillips, Gordon Briggs and
George Krapf, past county com-
mander. The group was accom-
panied by Commander Maurice J.
Callaghan, Orville A. White of
Dallien, bugler, played taps follow-
ing a three-gun salute by the Le-
gionnaires.
Present from the Pittsfield post
were Martin Bolander and Leo
Lincoln, past county Commander
William Connolly from Great Bar-
rington represented his post.

Pilot's Mother Visits Crash Scene



After a most difficult trip through brush and over fallen trees brought down in last winter's ice storm, Mrs. Ethel M. Fields of Atlanta, Ga., mother of Lieut. Joseph James Fields, pilot of the transport that crashed at Earnest Peak, Peru, Aug. 15, 1942, taking 16 lives including that of the pilot, visited the spot where the ship piled up yesterday. To the left are Mrs. David Cochran and Mrs. Charles Wheeler, both of Peru, who with newspapermen guided Mrs. Fields to the area. Also in the picture is a rustic cross and wreath of flowers placed there Sunday on the first anniversary of the crash by these two women and other Peru residents. Mrs. Fields was most appreciative of the gesture. At the scene she displayed unexpected control of the emotion she must have experienced. Before leaving Peru Mrs. Fields donated to the fund for a permanent memorial to the 16 boys.

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Pern To Dedicate Memorial

Sunday Ceremony
Will Take Place
Where 16 Men Died

service. Coffee, tea, and lemonade for the basket lunch will be furnished from the Town Hall. Committee members stated last night that arrows would be posted to guide visitors to the site of the ceremony, about four miles from the top of Peru Hill. Edgar Briggs of Dalton has donated his sound equipment so that everyone may hear the address.

The five-foot monument was erected some time ago, but the dedication plaque arrived only this week and was put in place today.

The inscription on the tablet is as follows:

PERU—A monument on Garnet Peak will be dedicated Sunday as a memorial to 16 Army officers and enlisted men who lost their lives there Aug. 15, 1942. The event will be in conjunction with the annual homecoming service at the First Congregational Church from 2 to 3:15 the 15th. The disaster which claimed the lives of 16 soldiers and put three other soldiers, badly burned, in hospitals, occurred when a large Army transport plane en route from Fort Benning, Ga., to Boston, sheared off tree tops for 100 yards, crashed, and burst into flame.

Families To Attend

The families of at least two of the victims will be in Peru Sunday to participate in the ceremony. They are the pilot's mother, Mrs. Ethel Field, who expects to fly from her home in Atlanta, Ga.; and Mrs. Eleanor Plain of Ransomville, N.Y., widow of Lieut. Gardner V. Plain. Mrs. Plain will be accompanied by her father-in-law, Dr. John Plain, also of Ransomville. Other families of the victims may be on hand.

Rev. A. Rawson Holgate, former pastor of the Middlefield Congregational Church, will officiate at the ceremony and will be assisted by members of the Benjamin F. Sullivan Post, American Legion of Dalton. There will be a basket lunch on the church lawn from 12:30 to 2 in the afternoon, followed by the church homecoming

man B. Flinkman of Baltimore, Md.; Sam E. Hathorn of Pringles, Miss.; John H. Kelley of Titus, Ala.; Robert W. Lamon of Shawnee, Okla.; Frank A. Laslosky of Kingston, Pa.; Joseph C. Neuport, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Jack E. Palmer, Antigo, Wis.; 1st Lt. Gardner V. Plain, Ransomville, N.Y.; Stanley E. Racine, Pensacola, Fla.; Norman Sands, Chicago, Ill.; Steve E. Schollin, Oak Lawn, Ill.; Charles F. M. Scott, York, Pa.; James F. Thompson, Hollywood, Cal.; Austin W. Weedes, Craig, Neb.; and James D. Westbrook of Anderson, S.C.

One of the survivors, James Fern, married a Lee girl and lives in that town.

Anniversary of Peru Crash Brings Note From Mother

The second anniversary of the plane crash at Garnet Peak, Peru, where 16 members of the Army Air Force died and three were saved, was yesterday. The day brought a letter to The Eagle from Mrs. Hazel L. Lee of Columbus, Ohio, mother of one of the three who lived through the crash and fire. She wrote: "We are still thinking with grateful hearts of the people of Pittsfield and Peru and the kindness that was extended to us during our many weeks there."

Two of the young men, Sgt. Robert G. Lee, 25, son of Mrs. Lee, and Cpl. Alonzo S. Pearson, of Windsor, Pa., are living together in Columbus, Ohio, where they are working in the Curtis-Wright plant on the assembly lines of a Helldiver bomber factory. Sgt. Lee wears the Soldiers' Medal of Honor awarded him in this city for saving the lives of two of his crew mates. The third of the trio saved is Sgt. James Fern of Abington, Va., who more than a year ago married Miss Florinda Cuillio of Lee, a supervising nurse at the House of Mercy where Fern recovered from injuries. Sgt. Fern is now assigned to Fort Benning, Ga. Lee and Pearson were hospitalized in Pittsfield and at Lovell Hospital, Fort Devens, for a total of 15 months. Fern, less seriously injured, returned to duty after a shorter period at the House of Mercy.