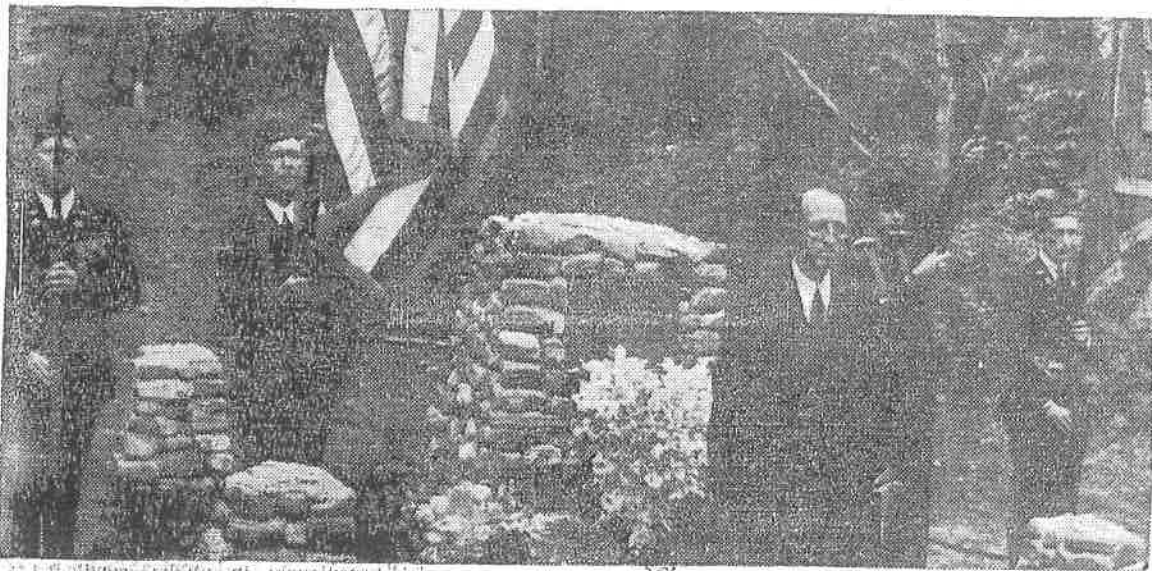


Peru - Air crash memorial to victims.  
Springfield Republican 19 Aug. 1946

# Peru Dedicates Air Crash Plaque



(Gravette Photo)

Rev. A. Rawson Holgate saying prayers at the monument to the 16 men who perished in a plane crash, August 15, 1942, on Garnet peak, Peru. Mr Holgate is the former pastor of the Middlefield Congregational Church. Members of the Benjamin Sullivan post of the American Legion constitute the color guard.

## PERU DEDICATES 2. AIR CRASH PLAQUE

(Continued From First Page)

Legion, was opened with a prayer by Rev. A. Rawson Holgate, former pastor of the Middlefield Congregational church.

Following the presentation of colors by members of the Legion, Mr Holgate dedicated the monument to the victims of the ill-fated plane.

Three families of boys on the plane were represented as was one of three survivors. Mrs Ethel Fields of Atlanta, Ga., mother of the pilot, Joseph J. Fields, Mrs W. Lastosky, mother of Frank A. Lastosky, with six members of her family from Edwardsville, Pa.; Mrs Eleanor Plain, widow of 1st Lieut Gardner V. Plain with his father, Dr John Plain and Mr and Mrs Corliss Plain of Ransomville, N. Y., were present.

James Fern, who is now married and living in Lee, was the only survivor able to appear. Robert Lee of Columbus, O., and Alonzo Pearson of Wimber, Pa., are the remaining living members.

Mrs August Kiligas of Pittsfield, the first woman to give blood to the civilian defense program, also attended. It was her blood that saved the life of James Fern.

As the sun set through the opening of the trees, created by the plane crash, the Legion members fired three salutes to the dead, and taps was sounded. Flowers, on the monument, were presented by Mrs Field, Dr Plain and family, and Mrs A. J. Young of Pensacola, Fla., mother of Stanley E. Racine, one of the men killed.

Preceding the dedication service, the First Congregational church of Peru has observed its annual mid-summer homecoming service. This custom instituted 25 years ago, was well attended, and many old acquaintances and friendships were renewed. This year also marks the 50th anni-

Peru, Aug. 18—In a hushed and sacred spot on Garnet peak townspeople of the village and surrounding communities gathered with family members of the deceased and one of three survivors in a memorial service to the 16 officers and enlisted men, who lost their lives at this site in an airplane crash August 15, 1942.

The five-foot cobblestone monument, with a bronze plaque, on which is listed the names of those who died, has been erected by the voluntary contributions of people from Peru at the site of the disaster. The ceremony attended by 140 persons, under the direction of the Benjamin Sullivan post of the Dalton American

versary of the present edifice, the original building now housing the town hall.

The oldest member present was James Merchant, 92, of Westfield. He at one time worked for Benjamin Frissell of Peru. A letter was received from Dr Philip Watts, former member of the Drew Theological seminary N. J. Rev F. R. Swift of Hinsdale, present pastor, introduced Rev Albert H. Plumb, who was minister of the church in 1897.

In Mr Plumb's sermon, he related the history of Peru and conditions that existed at the time of his pastorate. He also spoke of the many great men that have come from small villages, who make up the backbone of the nation.

At the close of the service, all those present were asked to sign a guest book. 35 cars then left the church, driving four miles from Peru hilltop before walking a half-mile through a marshy road to attend the dedication of the monument on Garnet peak.

Peru - Air crash  
Plaque dedicated to victims.

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LOCAL HISTORY FILE