

[Clipping of news headline and article]

...News, Saturday, January 14, 1956

Five Missionaries Buried Close to Plane Wreckage

Quito, Ecuador – (AP) – Five U. S. missionaries massacred by savage Indian tribesmen they had hoped to convert to Christianity, were buried in Ecuador's jungle yesterday near the stripped skeleton of their plane.

The search for the missing men came to a grim close when rescue parties found the fifth body in the remote Curaray River Valley. The others had been located over the past few days by air and ground searchers combing the jungle habitat of the primitive Auca Indians.

Attack After Radioing

Grady Parrott, president of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, announced the fate of the five who apparently were attacked just after radioing "here come a group of Aucas we have not known before."

Among the dead was Peter Fleming of Seattle, Wash., nephew of Dr. Alan R. Fleming, a chiropractor of 601 Central Ave., Plainfield, N. J. The others were identified as Nathaniel Saint, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.; James Elliot, Portland Ore.; Edward McCully, Milwaukee, Wis.; and Roger Youderian, Lansing, Mich.

Witness to Sacrifice

Abraham Vanderpuy, president of the Inter-American Fellowship of Ecuador, said the missionaries' Piper plane, "Wings of Mercy," will be left at the death scene as "a witness of their sacrifice." Searchers said the Indians had stripped the craft and ripped the fuselage.

The mission group had been trying to win the Auca's friendship for the past four months. They had made numerous flight over [sic] an Auca settlement along the river and dropped machetes, beads, and other trinkets which apparently delighted the tribesmen. Finally the party landed on a river bank and set up an advance base of operations.

Didn't Seem Afraid

Fleming's diary told of the group's first contact with the Aucas. By shouting in the Auca tongue, they lured two men and a girl – all nude – from the jungle. The natives did not seem afraid, he said. "Today," the diary said, "is a great day for Christ's evangelism."

Informants in Quito said it was the third attempt by missionary groups to convert the Aucas who know little of modern civilization. In Cincinnati, Ecuador's ambassador to the United States, Jose R. Chiraboga, expressed his government's regret over the tragedy.