

John Douglas “Pete” Madre, T-33

18 October 1914 – 22 November 1938

(aged 24)



“Guard of Honor Will Escort Body of Memphian Killed in Crash of Bomber”

Full military honors will be accorded Second Lieutenant John Douglas Madre of Memphis tonight at 7 o'clock when his body arrives from LaGrange GA, where he died at 6 o'clock yesterday of injuries suffered in the crash of an Army bomber which also brought death to seven of his companions.

A uniform guard of honor from Tech High School, where Lieutenant Madre gained fame on the gridiron before he became a football star at the University of Mississippi, will meet the train and serve as military escort. The body will be accompanied to Memphis by Captain James G. Pratt of the United States Air Corps.

“Family Returns”

His mother, Mrs. Glatis Atkins Rayhorn of 1156 Union, his sister, Mrs. Richard Dorsey, Mr. Dorsey and Jack Woodmansee, all of whom were at Lieutenant Madre's bedside when death claimed him, returned last night. Burial will be in the



National Cemetery with military services at the grave conducted by a firing squad from the R.O.T.C. unit at Tech High. Lieutenant Madre who suffered injuries, had been unconscious most of the time since the huge ship crashed in flames in the swampy woodland seven miles north of LaGrange Friday night during a driving rainstorm. Although he regained consciousness for a short time and recognized his mother and sister, he was never able to give a comprehensive account of the tragedy.

“Probe Continues”



Six of the fliers, who were en route from Mitchel Field, Long Island to Maxwell Field AL, were killed instantly from the crash. The seventh died a few hours later.

Meanwhile, an investigation board, headed by Major Aubrey Hornsby of Maxwell Field continues its search for some clue to the cause of the crash. Although, preliminary inquiries indicated the weather was responsible. Major Hornsby said he had discovered “some suspicion of engine trouble.” Announcement of the board’s findings was not expected for several days.

Born 24 years ago in Drensdan TN, Mr. Madre moved as a boy to Canton MS, came to Memphis in 1923. He first gained athletic fame while attending Snowden Junior High School, starred in football and track at Tech High, has been described as one of the greatest high school blocking backs. At Ole Miss he played guard, was a secretary-treasurer of the “M” club, and a member of the Phi Kappa Psi social fraternity.

News of his death spread sorrow over the university campus when word was relayed from student to student following the reception of the telegram by Ray Hapes, a former teammate and fraternity brother of the young aviator.

At reveille, Sergeant Oscar Feagin and his R.O.T.C. staff raised the Stars and Stripes then lowered it to half-mast where it remained throughout the day in tribute to the former student.

Lieutenant Madre received an appointment to Randolph Field and reported immediately after his graduation from Ole Miss. Following an illness which interrupted his studies during the Spring and Summer, he served as student instructor and graduated from Kelly Field with high honors October 5. He was a member of the 99th Bombardment Squadron at Mitchel Field.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Rayhorn and two sisters, Mrs. Dorsey and Mrs. Kathryn Woodmansee, all of Memphis.

Information from The Commercial Appeal, Wednesday, November 23, 1938.

