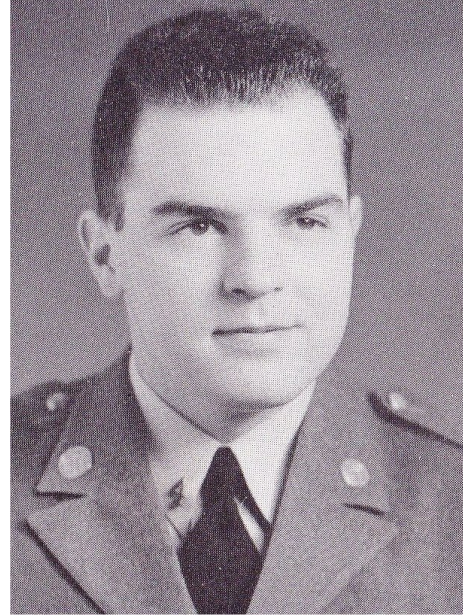


Organizational Training

Following his graduation from Clemson College, Harry Nelson Anderson of Newberry reported immediately for military service. There was a war on after all.

Anderson majored in chemistry at Clemson and was a member of the Class of 1942. He attended ROTC summer training on Clemson's campus in 1941 and qualified as a marksman on the rifle range. As a senior, he was assigned as a cadet second lieutenant in Company G, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment.

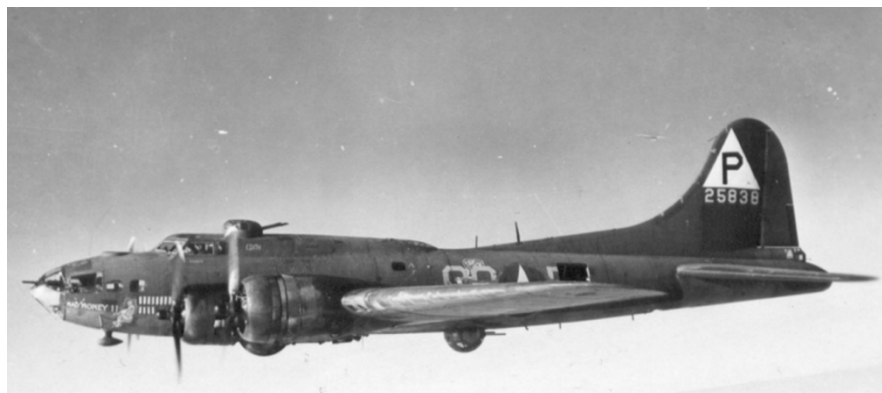
Once on active duty, Anderson applied for and was accepted into the Army Air Force's flight training program. He earned his pilot's wings at Columbus, Mississippi in March 1943. After being designated as a bomber pilot, Anderson reported to the 346th Bomb Group at Dyersburg, Tennessee, about 17 miles east of the Mississippi River.



The 346th was an operational training unit. As such, it carried a larger than normal complement of personnel and equipment because its mission was to provide a cadre for and train up new groups to be sent to combat operations overseas. Once the cadre for a new group was identified and put in place, six months were required to fully man and equip the organization. By the time this organizational training was complete, the new group would spin off from the 346th and head to its combat assignment. Then the cycle would begin anew.

Second Lieutenant Anderson was training as a crewmember for one of the new B-17 Flying Fortress heavy bomber groups soon scheduled to depart for overseas. On September 5, 1943, Anderson was the pilot of a ten-man crew flying what was expected to be a routine training mission. It didn't turn out that way.

According to the official accident report, the bomber's attitude indicator malfunctioned while the aircraft was flying in clouds at an altitude of 8,000 feet. The attitude indicator is a primary instrument when flying in conditions of low visibility as it conveys to



the pilots the aircraft's orientation relative to the Earth's horizon. Without the information from the attitude indicator, Anderson was unable to determine and therefore maintain the bomber's proper attitude in flight. The aircraft apparently went into a dive which developed into a spiral.

The aircraft quickly exceeded its maximum operating speed and experienced a structural failure in flight. According to the copilot, one of four men who was able to parachute to safety, "... after a few seconds of being tossed around, the fuselage broke right at the top turret." He escaped with his parachute only half buckled on, but Anderson did not. Anderson and five others were killed in the crash.

Young men and complex aircraft rushing to meet critical wartime needs led to high levels of training accidents throughout the war. The demand for more bomb groups to destroy German industries and eliminate the enemy's war-making capacity caused the Army Air Force to accept accident rates that would be unimaginable by today's standards.

Second Lieutenant Harry Nelson Anderson was survived by his parents and a half-brother. He was buried in the Rosemont Cemetery in Newberry.

