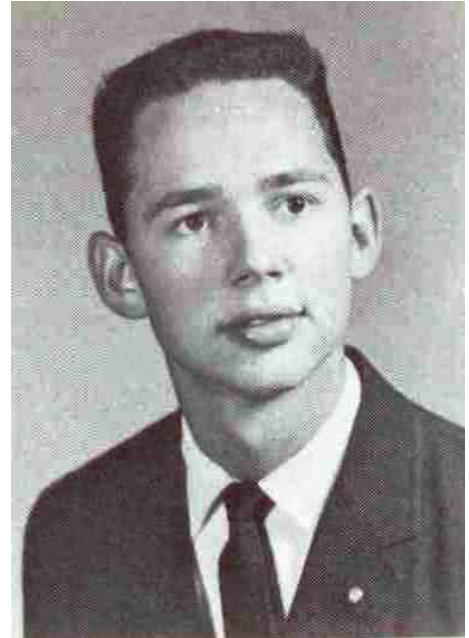


SCANG Pilot

Joseph Erskine Gable was a member of Clemson's Class of 1963. He was an agricultural economics major from Belton, and an Air Force ROTC cadet. He was also a musician, marching in Tiger Band, performing with the Concert Band, and serving as a member of Mu Beta Psi, the national honorary music fraternity. Gable had a strong faith as evidenced by his membership on the South Carolina Christian Action Council and his service as secretary and later president of the Wesley Foundation. He was also a member of the campus chapter of Future Farmers of America. His academic and leadership abilities were recognized by his membership in the Arnold Air Society, which promoted the purposes of the Air Force and its ROTC program.

Gable married Sarah Hamilton and they had two children, daughter Maura, and son Joseph.



Following graduation, Gable reported for active duty and was assigned to the Air Force Strategic Air Command. He remained with SAC until 1969 when he became a full-time alert pilot with the South Carolina Air National Guard [SCANG]. Captain Gable was assigned to the 157th Fighter Interceptor Squadron of the 169th Fighter Group based at McEntire Air National Guard Base in Eastover.



The 169th was established by the National Guard Bureau in 1957 as part of the United States' integrated air defense system. In peacetime, it was under the control of South Carolina's governor to assist in managing natural disasters or domestic disturbances. The 157th was the group's flying squadron.

On March 11, 1972, Captain Gable and Captain Henry George, in civilian life a commercial airline pilot, took off from McEntire on a training flight. They were at the controls of a T-33, an advanced trainer, and were being observed by SCANG pilot Captain John Johnson flying an F-102 fighter.

While on a low altitude pass near the Santee-Cooper lakes, Gable's T-33 rolled into a vertical attitude at just 2,500 feet. It crashed seconds later near the Lane community, killing both Gable

and George. Prior to the crash, there was no hint of aircraft malfunction and the two pilots had been carrying on ordinary conversation. The official investigation board failed to determine the cause of the accident and the deaths of the two experienced flyers.

Captain Joseph Erskine Gable was survived by his parents, his wife, their daughter, and their son. He is buried in Belton's Garden of Memories.

