

## Pandemic Victim

The twenty-second commencement ceremony of the Clemson Agricultural College took place in the College Chapel on the morning of May 30, 1918. Arthur Allen Madden, Jr. of Columbia was one of one hundred thirteen members of the graduating class, thirty-nine of whom were already in the armed forces. Madden would soon join them.

Madden arrived on campus as a cadet private in 1914 and would exit as a senior private for years later. An electrical and mechanical engineering major, he held the distinction of being the youngest member of his class. He served as vice-president of the Richland County Club. He was also a member of the Columbia City Club, the Junior Electrical Club, the Senior Electrical Club, the Clean Sleeve Club, and the Senior Private Club.



After graduation, Madden answered his country's call and enlisted in the Navy. He was sent to the naval training school at Philadelphia for a five-month course. In late September, four months into his training, Madden was stricken with the influenza. The spread of the Spanish Flu had been greatly assisted by the comings and goings of naval and merchant ships transiting back and forth from the war zone in Europe. While the 2020 COVID pandemic lowered the average life expectancy in the United States by one-and-a-half years, the flu pandemic of 1918-1920 knocked ten years off the average life span of an American.

Madden was admitted to the 4<sup>th</sup> Naval District Hospital and his father, Dr. A. A. Madden was notified that his son was critically ill. Dr. and Mrs. Madden departed for Philadelphia immediately, but their son's condition developed into pneumonia and he died before they could reach his bedside.

By early October 1918, deaths among servicemen were becoming so common that *The State* newspaper's headline read "Another Columbian Dies In Service." Of the twenty-seven Clemson alumni who died while on military service during the First World War, half succumbed to the flu or its companion, pneumonia.

Machinist Mate 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Arthur Allen Madden, Jr. was survived by his parents, two brothers—one then a Clemson cadet—and three sisters. He was buried in Columbia's Elmwood Cemetery.

