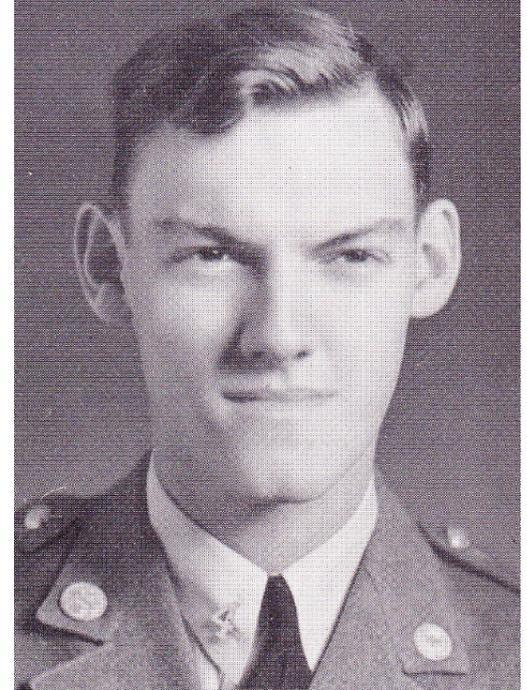


## Non-Battle Death

There were surely many ways to die in World War II. The National World War II Museum estimates that sixty million died world-wide during the conflict, a staggering figure that includes forty-five million civilians. The United States military recorded 416,800 deaths and while most of these were attributable to enemy action, a startling 83,400 fell into the category of “nonbattle deaths.”

Thomas Albert McTeer of McClellanville was a member of Clemson’s Class of 1942—the first class to graduate following America’s entrance into the war. McTeer was an honor student in civil engineering who served as vice president of the campus chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He was a member of the Episcopal Student Association and marched with the Sophomore, Junior and Senior Platoons. He completed ROTC summer training and qualified as an expert on the firing range.



The son of a Great War veteran, McTeer’s parents must have felt a mixture of pride and trepidation when their older son entered the Army following graduation. Lieutenant McTeer trained at Camp Blanding, Florida and participated in maneuvers at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts before shipping overseas to North Africa in May 1943.

McTeer was assigned to the 111<sup>th</sup> Engineers Combat Battalion, a unit of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The 36<sup>th</sup> was a Texas National Guard outfit called to federal service.

On June 25, 1943, McTeer died in North Africa of gunshot wounds. He was awarded a Purple Heart, but the cause of his wounds is not known and his death was listed as “nonbattle.” Nonbattle deaths included those resulting from vehicle accidents, airplane crashes, illness, disease, and other causes not occurring from enemy action.

Thomas Albert McTeer was buried in the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial, Carthage, Tunisia. He was survived by his parents and his younger brother.

