

DISCLAIMER

This biography is a rough draft and a work-in-progress.
The research has not been completed, so there may be errors and omissions.
Please return to Tuscania1918.org in the future to see if a revised and
finalized version is available.

Abbreviations:

b = born

d = died

F: = Find A Grave (www.findagrave.org)

NOK = next-of-kin

TUSCANIA

Sears, Burley
1893 MO – 1925 CA

BURLEY SEARS.
1892-1925.

Burley Sears was born in Jackson County, Missouri, January 14, 1892, and died in Los Angeles, Calif., February 14, 1925, aged 33 years and 1 month. His parents died when he was a small boy, and for several years he made his home with his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Lillard Holloway, of the Pleasant Ridge community of Cass county. In the fall of 1909, he went to California, and since that time had made that state his home.

Burley made friends wherever he went. In a letter recently received by his aunt, Mrs. Holloway, from a friend in Los Angeles, she stated he numbered his friends there by the hundreds. The deceased had been in poor health for four years, suffering from gastric ulcers of the stomach, being under the care of his physician continuously for the past year. The last month of his life was spent in the Methodist Hospital at Los Angeles. At the age of 12 he became a Christian and united with the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, never moving his membership from the old home church. In November, 1917, he joined the United States Army, being a member of Company "E," 6th Battalion, 20th Regiment of Engineers, and served until the close of the war.

Funeral services were conducted by the Huntington Park Elk Lodge, of which he was a member. He leaves to mourn their loss one sister, Mrs. Hazel Reynolds, Eldorado, Kans., and a host of other relatives and friends.

Obituary of Burley Sears – "Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO)
Thursday 26 Mar 1925 p 6

SEARS BURLEY		X	C	1 263 727
Bag 17 Co 20 Engrs			K	
Taft Calif			A	
Ssn	250 640	Died	T	447 679
Born	1/14/93		R	
Enl	12/9/17	Dte	6/11/19	Cl
			I	

U. S. VETERANS BUREAU
MAIL AND RECORDS
Form 7308—Rev. Sept., 1926

INDEX CARD

GPO 7-1287

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:WWLY-6P3Z>

Burley Sears

Vital • California, County Birth and Death Records, 1800-1994

Name	Burley Sears
Death Date	14 Feb 1925
Death Place	Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, United States
Death Place (Original)	Los Angeles, California, United States
Event Type	Death
Document Number	1782
Page	227

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/sources/L781-JT5>

MOUND VALLEY.

Weather hot and dry.

Burley Sears, of Pleasant Ridge, was here Friday.

Ray Stevens of Archie was in this

"Cass County Democrat" (Harrisonville MO) Friday 16 Jun 1905 p 5

Mr. Burley Sears of Lone Tree was a business caller in this city Friday.

“Harrisonville (MO) Review & Cass County Leader” Thursday 25 Jun 1908 p 4

Burley Sears has left our community for California, he started last Saturday.

In Lone Tree, Cass MO news – “Cass County News” (Harrisonville MO) Friday 25 Sep 1908
p 7

Boy Injured.

A 17-year-old boy, Burley Sears by name, was seriously injured here yesterday, by jumping from a moving train. Sears had come up from Calexico and was on his way to Riverside to seek work at orange picking. He had bought a ticket on the Southern Pacific road and boarded a Salt Lake train here, discovering his mistake as the train was well under way, and jumping off. He sustained several cuts on the head and face and a wrenched back. He was taken to the Colton hospital.

“San Bernardino (CA) County Sun” Tuesday 2 Feb 1909 p 7

BLANKET FRANCHISE FOR COLTON STREETS

*Recall Petition Had Reading
Before the City Trustees
Last Night.*

COLTON, Nov. 6.—(Staff correspondence of THE SUN)—The Southern California Gas Company, through Attorney Byron Waters of San Bernardino, tonight presented a petition before the Board of City Trustees, asking for a blanket franchise, running 50 years, to cover all the streets of Colton. The company proposes to install a system here which will make possible gas connections with every house in town.

The discussion which followed the presentation of the petition brought out that the big corporation, backed by Huntington interests, plans large improvements here in the matter of gas mains. The petition was referred to City Attorney R. M. McHargue and City Engineer Charles Wondries, to report back to the board at the next meeting.

Recall Is Read.

The recall petition for Trustees Martin, Junod, Van Loven and Strunk, was read. It contained 211 names, of which 33 had been thrown out by the clerk, leaving 178. One hundred and sixty-eight being 25 per cent of the whole number of votes cast at the last general election in which there were 671, was declared sufficient to call an election, and an ordinance to that effect passed its first reading tonight, the time, subject to change in final reading, being set on December 22.

The following names were on the petition: P. H. Reed, W. J. Kirkpatrick, G. A. Fisher, J. J. Fouch, J. N. Fouch, H. C. Dobson, P. S. Gallant, F. A. Morris, J. M. Tully, W. C. Culross, R. E. Dunchue, F. B. Parsons, H. J. Krohn, R. H. Mathews, S. B. Wright, C. W. Curtis, L. H. Wood, S. D. Bayless, C. S. Mathews, E. Muschewski, Fred Brownlee, Fred Arnold, E. B. Ferguson, G. S. Fullenwider, N. P. Colvin, Jack M. Price, Ed C. Wright, J. B. Wilds, W. A. Parr, C. F. Bailey, Marshall Hert, Charles Medhurst, Sam Ralling, L. Kerr, Edw. Cannady, Blase Gonzales, A. J. Davis, T. F. Pickley, N. L. Parmer, W. H. Kirby, C. W. Westermeir, J. F. Water, A. M. Clark, J. P. Farrill, W. L. Wobser, J. C. Raney, I. D. Short, T. C. Lanier, C. W. Hoag, C. I. Markham, C. I. Roach, S. I. Rubidoux, Robert E. Hohnke, R. M. Duke, Charles Reeves, George McLaren, Burley Sears, Charles Bradley, J. L. Powell, Ellis Hylton, A. R. Hert, J. W. Doty, W. S. Wood, C. P. Davis, Floyd Gallehue, O. L. Thompson, L. E. Abel.

[list continues]

"San Bernardino (CA) County Sun" Tuesday 7 Nov 1911 p 7

25 ENLISTMENTS IN KERN MONDAY

Detachment of 21 Young Re- cruits Leaves for Army Post Last Night.

Twenty - five enlistments in the United States army were reported yesterday by Sergeant Alex Pullman of the local recruiting station. Twenty-one of these recruits went north last evening. Gilbert A. Cowan was appointed lance corporal in charge of the detachment.

Yesterday was one of the heaviest in the history of the local office and the detachment leaving was among the largest yet sent out by the recruiting officer. All of the enlistments were for the various branches of the recruiting office.

The following men from the Taft Midway district went north last night:

From the West Side.

FRANK G. FLOWMAN, 26th engineers.

WILLIAM A. WINTERS, 26th engineers.

CLARENCE O. PETERSON, 26th engineers.

WILLIAM C. ALEXANDER, 26th engineers.

CARTER MARTIN, 26th engineers.

CHARLES A. LINGO, 26th engineers.

JAMES GINGRICH, 26th engineers.

DELLAMAR T. STEVENS, 26th engineers.

HUGH W. SIMPSON, 26th engineers.
RALPH E. WRIGHT, 26th engineers.
BURLEY SEARS, 20th engineers.
FRANK L. CARR, 23rd engineers.
PHILIP G. NORMAN, 26th engineers.
WILLIAM T. LUMPKIN, 26th engineers.

All the above men, fourteen in number, were sent down by Private (first class) Walker who is in charge of recruiting in that city.

The other men who entered the service yesterday and accompanied the above to San Francisco, were:

GILBERT A. COWAN, 20 years old, Glendale, aviation section signal corps.

MCKINLEY WITT, Bakersfield, 22 years old, medical department.

ROBERT L. PRUETT, Bakersfield, 24 years old, medical department.

FRANK I. LOUSTALOT, Bakersfield, 21 years old, aviation section signal corps.

JOSEPH B. ROSSI, Bakersfield, 21 years old, employed by The Californian, quartermaster corps.

ALMON J. MARTIN, Grass Valley, 22 years old, quartermaster corps.

Those who enlisted yesterday but have not yet gone north, are:

LANCELOT A. FARNUM, Fellows, 24 years old, signal corps.

FRED G. STOECKL, Bakersfield, 24 years old, 26th engineers.

WILLARD TODD, Taft, 40 years old, 26th engineers.

MAX GOLDRING, Maricopa, 23 years old, quartermaster corps.

A telegram has been received at the local office requesting the officer in charge to make a determined effort to get men for the medical department, as five thousand men are wanted badly.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO REGISTRANTS

UNDER JURISDICTION OF THIS LOCAL BOARD

There has been mailed to you a questionnaire which you are required by law to execute and return within seven days from date hereof. Failure to do so constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by not to exceed one year's imprisonment; and such failure may also deprive you of valuable rights and result in your immediate induction into military service and trial by court-martial.

KERN NO. 1.	KERN NO. 2.
Mailed out January 8: Garnett E. Adams. Ward Robertson. Mario Pucci. Wm. E. Freeburn. John Stewart. Robert W. Brewer. Fred Winkler. Albert J. Williams. Wm. H. Banks. John M. Lorimer. Alferdo Arellanos. Simgee. Harvey A. Lewis. George W. Freitas. Jose M. Linares. Jesus Aguirre. Ben A. Jackson. Harry A. Leadley.	(Mailed January 8th.) Al C. Goodman, Fellows. Louis D. Marvin, Maricopa. James S. Stack, Taft. Lewis T. Van Horne, Fellows. Reyes S. Espinosa, Los Angeles. Floyd R. Wilson, Fellows. John M. Skinner, Maricopa. Morse B. Gibson, Taft. Ray Stevenson. Henry J. Mianer, San Bernardino. Rafel Supraino. Cerado Brancoli, Buttonwillow. Wm. H. Price, Albert, Okla. Asher J. Turnet, Los Angeles. John Cody. Burley Sears, Taft. Floyd E. Crabbe. Geo. D. Patton, Taft.

[list continues]

The same newspaper which reported Burley Sears was being mailed a draft questionnaire had earlier reported his enlistment – Burley entered the Army on 9 Dec 1917 – “Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo” Wednesday 9 Jan 1918 p 8

REGISTRANTS WHO HAVE NOT CALLED FOR QUESTIONNAIRES

TAFT, Jan. 11.—Now that the last of the draft questionnaires have been mailed out from the exemption boards at Bakersfield an effort will be made to learn who have failed to receive these questionnaires. The list of un-called for questionnaires, which are now at the postoffice in Taft, is as follows:

Willard Ammerman, Maurice Drixel Bowhay, John J. Bradley, Homer Brewer, Alfred Bennett, Samuel John Bell, Jose Collo Cotta, Wm. L. Davies, Francis J. Hilderbrand, James Holland, John S. Juhl, Duncan M. Johnstone, Harry Johnston, George A. Kenner, George Bowman Leibert, Clarence McIrland, Barney McMeel, Benjamin H. McKell, Roland Edward F. McLean, Daniel Edward Norton, George Washington Nelson, Henry Joseph Olin, Ben M. Oviatt, Edward O'Connell, Peter Petroff, Wm. A. Palmer, Grover C. Platke, Guy C. Pince, Lester Leroy Robb, Wilben O'Neil Roberts, Joe Smith, Thomas Clyde Reaves, Herman Ruben, Albert Alex Robinson, James C. Sullivan, Loyal J. Spencer, Charley W. Spear, Adolph H. Schroeder, Denison Keith Standing, Frederick O. Selsby, Oscar Sanlow, Burley Sears, Wm. F. Sefzik, Isaac N. Treece, Burt Logan Tabrig, Feliciano Torres, Harry Turner, James L. Vincent, Donald M. Velayas, Charles A. Wallace, Harold O. Womeldurf, Lee N. Wing, Eric G. Zetterquist.

And now reports Burley Sears has failed to come get his questionnaire in CA – “Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo” Saturday 12 Jan 1918 p 5

* * * *

Burley Sears, a Taft boy with the Twentieth engineers at Camp American University, Washington, D. C., has written an interesting letter to John Elland on the West Side, in which he says that the weather there is everything but what the boys in Sunny California are now experiencing.

* * * *

"Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo" Friday 18 Jan 1918 p 4

LETTER FROM BURLEY SEARS.

Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett of this community have received a letter recently from Burley Sears of Taft, Calif. Burley has lived in California for the past 10 years. He formerly lived here, making his home with Mr. and Mrs. Lillard Holloway, and his many friends will enjoy reading his interesting letter, I am sure. He enlisted for United States Army service in California last fall, and, at the time the letter was written, was in Washington, D. C. Following is the letter:

American University,
Washington, D. C.

Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett
and Family:—

Received your welcome letter, and was glad to hear from you. Hope that you people are all well. I have not been feeling a bit good for the past two weeks. Our Company is expecting to leave almost any day for "over there." They have us write postal cards, and write on them, "Arrived Somewhere in France," and, if we do arrive safely, they mail them then. If we don't arrive safe, the party to whom the postal card is addressed is informed as to what occurred. Will write you a card, just before leaving here, so you will get it when I arrive in France.

I certainly enjoyed reading your letters, and especially reading the clippings from the CASS COUNTY DEMOCRAT. I guess they are going to the Army the same in every state. This is certainly a great place. A person sees and learns something new almost every day. But, at that, it is disagreeable, mostly on account of the weather we are having. It has been awfully cold for me, as I had not seen any snow or ice for 10 years.

It was a surprise to hear of the Reichert boys joining the Army. Ever since I received your letters, I have thought of the "coon hunts" and "rabbit hunts" and the way I used to have my traps set and look at them on the way to school, and a million other things that happened, I've thought about. The best part of a person's life, or the part they really enjoy the most, is when they are going to school, but they can't see it until they are older. Give Orvie D. Harger my best regards, and tell him that I have not forgotten him.

There is one thing here, which is hard to get, and that is the bugle calls. There are so many of them. The one that blows at 5:45 o'clock a. m., I can't repeat it, but I know that a fellow had better roll out and "do it now!" It certainly is cold to crawl out at that time, too, especially here. Am going to try and get the "Retreat Call" down pat, for when they blow retreat, I don't want to be left behind. Would you? We have houses to sleep in here, with stoves to heat them, and, so far, plenty of coal, and I have an idea that is better than we will have "over there."

Am not a bit sorry that I enlisted. I was missed in the first Selective Draft call, and, at that time, war didn't seem like it was real to me, but when the draft came, and I began to see fellows that were taken in, and some of them good friends of mine, I saw differently, and enlisted. I have about what I want here in the 20th Engineers, and, if I had waited, this work would have been uncertain.

believe would be true, so there you are. They asked us who to notify, in case of accident, so I gave them your address. I suppose this is in case a "Sub" gets the best of us.

Seeing and hearing what that human Kaiser (they call him human, but I have never been able to see him in that way,) has said and done, it really makes my "Missouri blood" boil, for I would be willing, if I knew it would end the war and make the world FREE FOR DEMOCRACY, to go out in some side alley, or anywhere, and take an even break with him. Many Americans have lost their lives, and there will be lots more before we get him, and fellows, who were just getting where they could do something in life, had to leave their civil pursuits and take up arms against him. About 600 of us, from camp here, went to hear Billy Sunday the other night at Washington, D. C. He is holding one of his big revival meetings here, now, and he is certainly "some" evangelist.

You meet fellows from most every state in the Union here. I have met some from California, that I knew, but have not met any from old Missouri, yet. Have had the pleasure of seeing President Wilson once, but have not heard him speak. They say, that when we leave, we will march in review before him on our way to the transport. I would have liked to have had a box of "eats," as a fellow here, in this Army, is always looking for something good to eat, but I will stop off, when I come back from France, and get some of that good, old country sausage.

There has been quite a lot of sickness among the boys here, measles being the most important pest, outside of colds. Everyone has a cold. Some say that we will only be allowed two letters monthly, after we get "over there," but you can hear so much that is not true. On the other hand, things happen that you can't

old country sausage.

Well, as this is the last letter I can get to you people for quite awhile, I have written a lot, and would like to write more, if I had more time, but I have got to do some washing, and that is quite a job for me. Give my best regards to Tim Kelley and family, when you see them; also, to Myron G. Holloway and family and "Aunt Carrie" Holloway. You won't forget that postal card I mail here, that you get when I get to France, and then I expect to hear from you people. Must close for this time, wishing you all the best of best wishes, and will write again when I get "over there."

BURLEY SEARS,
American University,
Company "E," Sixth Battalion,
20th Engineers,
United States Army.

"Cass County Democrat" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 31 Jan 1918 p 6

LOCAL BOY WAS ON TUSCANIA.

Burley Sears, Formerly of Pleasant Ridge Community, a Survivor.

Burley Sears, a former Cass county boy, now a member of Company "E," Sixth Battalion, Twentieth Engineers, was among those soldiers, who were being transported across the Atlantic Ocean on the ill-fated ship, Tuscania, sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland on the night of Wednesday, February 6, 1918, on which occasion a number of United States soldiers lost their lives. On Sunday, February 10, Postmaster Harlie F. Clark of Harrisonville received a telegram from Senator William Joel Stone, at Washington, D. C., announcing that young Sears was listed among the survivors of the disaster, and asking him to notify relatives here. The following is the telegram, as received:

Washington, D. C., February 10, 1918,
9:30 o'clock a. m.
Postmaster, Harrisonville, Mo.

Burley Sears of Harrisonville was on Tuscania. War Department advises he was saved. Advise relatives and friends.

Readers of the DEMOCRAT will remember that there appeared in the issue of Thursday, January 31, 1918, of this newspaper the copy of a letter written by Burley Sears, who was then stationed at Washington, D. C., where his detachment was awaiting orders to go to France, to Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett, who reside in the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, south of here, and who sent it to us for publication. Mr. and Mrs. Hollett are old friends of the young soldier, who formerly made his home with Mr. and Mrs. Lillard Holloway in that neighborhood, leaving there about 10 years ago for California, where he had since made his home, up to the time of his enlistment several months ago. His letter, which appeared in our Pleasant Ridge items, breathed a fine spirit of patriotism, and, in mentioning the trip which he was soon to take across the ocean, he stated that he had written them a postal card, which would be delivered to them, if he arrived safely on the other side, and had given their names as those who should be notified, in case anything untoward happened to him. He also made jocular reference to the fact that a "Sub" might get the best of them on the way across, but little thinking, probably, that such would be the case.

We extend congratulations to the young man on his narrow escape, and feel quite sure that, now that he is "over there," he will be anxious to do his full part in bringing to judgment the evil powers, which were responsible for the death of his comrades, and came so near bringing his own existence to a close.

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 14 Feb 1918 p 11

Butler Lady's Nephew on Tuscania.

Hurley Sears; nephew of Mrs. J. H. Stone, of this city, was a member of the 20th engineers which was aboard the Tuscania. So far his name has not been in the list of those landed in Ireland. He formerly lived in Cass county, but enlisted in the army in California.

Mrs. Lillard Holloway, of Lone Tree, received a telegram the last of the week from her nephew, Burley Sears, who was on the ill-fated Tuscania, saying that he had landed safely at some port in Ireland. Mr. Sears was also a nephew of Mrs. J. H. Stone of this city.

"Butler (MO) Weekly Times" Thursday 14 Feb 1918 p 3

Former Cass County Boy Was on The Tuscania

Burley Sears, several years ago employed on farms in this vicinity, was among the number aboard the Tuscania which was torpedoed and sunk off the Irish coast last week.

Sears was a private in the Twentieth Engineers. He enlisted from some point in the western part of the country, giving the name of Pearl Hollett, of Lone Tree, as the one to notify in case of accident. He was an orphan, but had made his home with the Hollett family for a number of years. A telegram from Senator Stone announced the safe landing of the young man.

Sears is a nephew of Mrs. Lillard Holloway, south of Harrisonville, and of Mrs. J. H. Stone of Butler.

"Harrisonville (MO) Review & Cass County Leader" Thursday 14 Feb 1918 p 1

All the local friends of Burley Sears were glad to get the news that he was one of those saved when the Tuscania went down. It is hoped that Burley will send a letter soon, that we may be sure he was rescued.

"Harrisonville (MO) Review & Cass County Leader" Thursday 21 Feb 1918 p 8

Pearl Hollett, one of the most popular young farmers of the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, in the vicinity of Lone Tree, made a call at the DEMOCRAT office, while in town on business Thursday afternoon of last week, to re-enlist as a member of the "Army of 5,000 Subscribers." The same afternoon he posted a letter to his old friend, Burley Sears, who was one of the survivors on the transport Tuscania, sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland some two weeks ago. Mr. Sears is a member of the Twentieth Regiment of United States Engineers, which is now in active war service "over there."

"Harrisonville (MO) Review & Cass County Leader" Thursday 21 Feb 1918 p 5

Burley Sears, several years ago employed on farms in this vicinity, was among the number aboard the Tuscania which was torpedoed and sunk off the Irish coast last week. Sears was a private in the 20th Engineers. He enlisted from some point in the western part of the country, giving the name of Pearl Hollett of Lone Tree as the one to notify in case of accident. He was an orphan, but had made his home with the Hollett family for a number of years. A telegram from Senator Stone announced the safe landing of the young man.

"Pleasant Hill (MO) Times" Friday 22 Feb 1918 p 7

TAFT BOY ON A LIFE RAFT FOR 5 HRS. AFTER TUSCANIA WENT DOWN

TAFT, March 9. — Burley Sears, a former Taft boy and who was a member of the 20th engineers board the Tuscania at the time it was torpedoed off the Irish coast on February 5th, writes home telling of his experience. Although not permitted to give out information in this regard, Sears intimates that it was quite some experience. He declares, however, he was not weakened, and

is being given every attention with plenty of clothes and an abundance of food. He writes as follows:

Letter From France.

Arrived safe at an Irish port. Am getting the best of treatment that one can get from these Irish and Scotch people. The most of the 20th engineers are safe here. I have to write as brief news as I can. Suppose by the time you get this you will have the news of our trip in the papers.

"Was on a raft with a life belt on around by neck for five hours. You can't imagine the experiences I have had in the short time I've been after 'Fritz.' I surely will have some tales to tell you when I

get back. Ha! Ha!

"Sure had an awful feeling, but 'It' didn't scare me for I haven't weakened yet.

"Am feeling fine, and since I've landed have had a good place to sleep and plenty to eat. Didn't have any clothes when I landed but what I had on and a life belt, but have plenty of clothes now.

"As I can't write to everyone, tell Johnnie Elland, Lisel and bunch at the Shamrock restaurant, Head Drilling company and the rest of my safe landing and experience with the Subs." Believe me, it was worse than the time the truck dropped through the bridge with me near Taft."

“Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo” Sunday 10 Mar 1918 p 10

A TUSCANIA SURVIVOR WRITES.

Burley Sears, Formerly of Harrisonville, Is Now in Good Health.

Private Burley Sears, who grew to manhood in the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, south of Harrisonville, and, who, although he had been gone from there about ten years when he became a member of the Twentieth Regiment of the United States Engineers in California last December, still regards that place as his home, was one of the survivors of the Tuscania submarine disaster, which occurred on the evening of Tuesday, February 5, 1918, the details of which, as reported by the daily newspapers, are still fresh in the minds of the people of this country. All those on board the big soldier transport were, for a considerable period of time, face-to-face with death, some 200 or more going down to a watery grave, as a result of its sinking.

The awful hours of suspense that followed the sinking of the troop ship, which he spent tossing about on a frail raft, at the mercy of the sea, made a deep impression on Private Burley Sears, but, instead of making him fear them, as was desired by the Germans, it has aroused a spirit of vengeance that makes him all the more anxious to meet them on the field of battle.

The following letter, in which he tells of the sinking of the Tuscania, has recently been received from Private Sears by his cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett, who reside several miles south of Harrisonville:

"On Active Service,"

February 15, 1918.

Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett,
Harrisonville, Mo.

Dear Cousins:—

Well, I am not far from the place for which we started, but you have read, I presume, about our ship, the Tuscania, getting torpedoed by a German U-boat. It was an awful experience. A person can't realize the feeling of it, unless they had been aboard it. I was on a raft in the water from 7 o'clock until 12 o'clock that night, before I got picked up.

The shipload of us was scattered like a bunch of quails over the British Isles, but we have gotten together now at a certain camp. Most of us were saved. We were an awful looking "bunch," for some of us were bare-headed and had no shoes, and some were clad only in their underclothes. I had just started for supper when the explosion came, and had on all my clothes, with the exception of my overcoat and hat, but lost everything else I had.

My short time in the United States Army has been exciting, for I enlisted December 9, 1917, and got "blowed up" by a "Sub" on the 5th of February, 1918. So, you see that it is coming plenty fast enough for me just now. Oh, but wait until I get a chance to get a shot at those Germans! I know I can fight more now than before I was torpedoed. If I could transfer from the Engineers to the Infantry, I would be tempted to do it, for I would be sure to get a shot at them then.

Hope you are all well and feeling good. I caught an awful cold, but am getting all right now. All the country I have seen so far has certainly been beautiful, especially Ireland. Well, I must close for this time. I hope for an answer soon. I have not received the package you sent me, as I left Washington, D. C., a few days after I got your letter. With best regards to the Tim Kelley, George A. Harter and C. L. Vansandt families, and everyone in the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, and with love and best wishes to yourselves, I beg to remain,

Yours very truly,
BURLEY SEARS,
 Company "E," Sixth Battalion,
 Twentieth United States Engineers,
 American Expeditionary Forces.

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 14 Mar 1918 p 1

* * * *

Burley Sears of Taft is in the business of killing Germans "Somewhere in France."

* * * *

"Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo" Sunday 19 May 1918 p 14

BURLEY SEARS NOW IN FRANCE.

Survivor of the Tuscania Disaster
Writes Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett.

Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett, who reside in the neighborhood of Lone Tree, Cass county, have written the DEMOCRAT, stating that they recently received a letter from their relative, Burley Sears, formerly of that neighborhood, now a member of Company "E," Sixth Battalion, 20th Regiment, United States Engineers, written under date of May 15, 1918, in which he stated that he had just received his first mail from the United States, consisting of 15 letters.

Readers of the DEMOCRAT will remember that Burley Sears was the only Cass county boy on the ill-fated Army transport, Tuscania, which sailed from the United States about February 1 of the present year, and which was sunk by a torpedo from a German submarine, near the Irish coast, during that month. As a result of this mishap, Burley was in the water about five hours before being rescued, and was confined to a hospital for some time thereafter. By reason of this fact, he was left behind by the other members of his Regiment, and this accounts for the fact that he did not receive his mail, which probably followed the Regiment. He is now with his detachment of troops in France, however.

He says that England and France are beautiful countries, and that there are very many interesting things to see there. He referred, particularly, to the ancient buildings, and also said that the most beautiful flowers grow there that he has ever seen. The buildings are all of stone, and he recently had the privilege of seeing and learning the ancient history of an old Cathedral at Winchester, England. He had forgotten the date at which this ancient structure was erected, he said, but stated that a person would only have to look at it to tell that it had existed about the same length of time as the "Rock of Ages." Special services were held there one Sunday, for the benefit of the soldiers, about 1,000 of whom attended and enjoyed the occasion very much. He is in the best of health, and sends his regards to his many old Cass county friends. He directs that his mail be addressed "Amex-E. F." instead of "A. E. F." on account of the fact that if it is addressed the latter way, it sometimes gets mixed with the mail of the Australian Expeditionary Forces, which is indicated by the same initial letters.

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 13 Jun 1918 p 13

We note that in The Cass County Leader last week, there appeared "story" on the front page, relating "Hurley Sears, a survivor of the 'Lusitania,'" which probably referred Burley Sears, a survivor of the "Tuscania," which wasn't so far wrong when you come to figure it out, and just about at par with the usual efforts of that "sheet" in the matter of getting facts.

A little bit of snarky criticism by one newspaper of its rival, which reported on Hurley Sears of the "Lusitania" – "Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 13 Jun 1918 p 13

BURLEY SEARS WITH COMPANY.

**Cass County Survivor of "Tuscania"
Is Now Back on Duty Once More.**

Mr. and Mrs. Pearl Hollett, who live in the neighborhood of Lone Tree, have recently received a letter from their cousin, Private Burley Sears, who formerly resided in that community. Private Sears will be remembered by DEMOCRAT readers as being one of the survivors of the "Tuscania" disaster, in which a number of his comrades were lost at sea, when their transport was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat. His letter, which was dated June 30, 1918, follows:

Dear Cousins and All:—Just received your letter, and was glad to hear from you. This leaves me feeling well, and I hope you are the same. If you could only see me now, I am sure you would laugh, as I am writing by a candle, and on a rough desk in a tent. It is now about 1 o'clock in the morning. Am on guard duty, herding prisoners. We have two shifts, with two hours on and four off for 24 hours, and then are off for 24 hours. I expect to be back driving a motor car, before long. All that I hear is some crickets, and a dog barking somewhere. It makes me feel somewhat lonesome, for the dog barking sounds like "Old Carlo," and that is about the only thing that sounds like it does in the United States; even the people don't make a noise, so I can understand them. Most of the people here drive oxen. Some drive mules, which are very small, and drive them with yokes around their necks, like they do oxen. All the vehicles have only two wheels, which is quite strange to me, as I have never seen anything like it before.

Well, I just got back to my original Company a few days ago, and was glad to get back, too. I was left in the hospital, and everything is so busy "Over Here," that it's a hard matter to get back to your Company, when you are left behind. We are comfortably located here in tents, with wooden floors and sides. Have three mills running, and everything is "fine and dandy." The days are rather warm, but one can sleep at night, very comfortably, with covers. As you see, we are at "Castels," Landes County, in the extreme southwestern part of France, about 15 miles from the ocean, and, of course, things are very quiet here, being so far south. We don't hardly ever see an airplane down here, while, up there, they seem to be "playing tag" over you at all hours. We have a new Y. M. C. A. "hut," which has just been completed, and, also, a baseball diamond, on which we have some very good ball games. Our Battalion Concert Band is a good one. Well, I must close, as the candle is flaring, so that I can hardly write, and it is about time for me to "walk my post" again. Hoping to hear from you soon, and with love and best wishes to all.—PRIVATE BURLEY SEARS, Company E., 6th Battalion, 20th United States Engineers, American Expeditionary Forces, France.

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 15 Aug 1918 p 9

**Johnnie Eiland has received a letter from Burley Sears and Bill Grea-
son in France saying that they will
soon be home.**

"Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo" Thursday 9 Jan 1919 p 6

John Elland has received interesting letters from Burley Sears and Bill Greeson, who are still in France. The boys hope to be returned home soon.

"Bakersfield (CA) Morning Echo" Saturday 22 Mar 1919 p 6

BURLEY SEARS WRITES HOME.

Survivor of "Tuscania" Sinking Is Still With the Engineers in France.

Mrs. Carrie J. Holloway, who resides in the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, south of Harrisonville, has written to the DEMOCRAT, enclosing two letters from her nephew, Wagoner Burley Sears, who formerly resided in that community, a number of years ago, and who is now serving with the American Expeditionary Forces in France. This newspaper has had the pleasure of publishing several letters from Wagoner Sears, who will be remembered by our readers as being one of the survivors of the ill-fated "Tuscania," an English transport, which was sunk by a German submarine, off the coast of Ireland, while carrying United States troops overseas. The first following of these letters was written on February 5, 1919, which was the first anniversary of the sinking of the "Tuscania," and reads, as follows:

Dear Aunt and All:—Will try and drop you a few lines today, as I have not heard from you, for quite awhile. I hope you are all in good health. Well, this finds me as far away from home as I was several weeks ago, and, furthermore, there are no encouraging indications that I will get back soon.

This 5th day of February is a great day in "History" to us, the members of the Sixth Battalion of the 20th United States Engineers, for, one year ago today, we spent our last day on board the "Tuscania," and it was also the last day which that ship floated on the water. There is lots of talk today, among ourselves, as to how we got off of the ship and got away, etc., and this evening the Chaplain plans on holding a prayer meeting, in remembrance of our comrades, who perished at sea.

Our feeling of thankfulness to those dear Irish and Scotch families, for the way in which they cared for and looked after the able and disabled, alike, cannot be expressed in words, and the friends and families of all who were on board the ship can rest assured that everyone received the same care that a mother would give her own son. This day is a holiday, set aside for thankfulness, given us by our Major and Chaplain, and I am sure that those dear people, who wept and cared for us, will not be forgotten today, nor in the years to come.

The members of my Squad, after discussing our salt water swim, were, naturally, led to talk of the days of long ago, when we were "kids" going to school, and the way and times we had swimming then, and, of course, I had many a story to tell them of the swims I had taken in Tennessee Creek.

—BURLEY SEARS.

sick" ones home yet. We have all begun to feel the spring weather here, now, although it is still raining most of the time. Some April showers!

It has been quite awhile since I heard from you, and I am pretty sure that this is my second answer, but our mail has been very irregular of late, so one cannot depend upon it. I try to write regularly, although there is no news to write, aside from telling jokes on the French people. We don't mean any harm in our stories about them, but, sometimes, it seems to raise the censor's temperature.

Our Squad was recently discussing the question of who could talk the most French, and we had quite a hot argument, all participating, with the exception of one fellow, who seemed quite satisfied, by saying that he would be contented, as long as he could count his money in French, but he had been in England with us, where we soon learned the difference between a sixpence and a shilling, and not to give a boy any money to get you any "sweets," as it was almost certain that you would lose your money—also, the boy's acquaintance.

We are getting cold storage meat from the United States now, and it is much better than the French beef, which we have used most of the time in France. The French work their beef too long with yokes around their necks, before they butcher them. The meat comes from Bordeaux, to within about 20 miles of here, every other day, and it is my job to meet it there with a motor truck and bring it the rest of way. Well, I will close, hoping that you are well, and that I can get back and enjoy civil life before long. With love and best wishes,—WAGONER BURLEY SEARS, 17th Company, 20th United States Engineers, American Expeditionary Forces, France.

—BURLEY SEARS
(Captieux, Gironde, France.) April 15, 1919—Dear Aunt and All:—Will try and write you a few lines this evening. Will have to say again that we have had no more encouragement toward going home than when I wrote you last. They have sent some of the fellows home, who had dependents of sickness in their families, which, of course, is fair and a good thing, but they have not sent any of us "home-

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 15 May 1919 p 11

COLTON BOY ON

TORPEDOED TRANSPORT

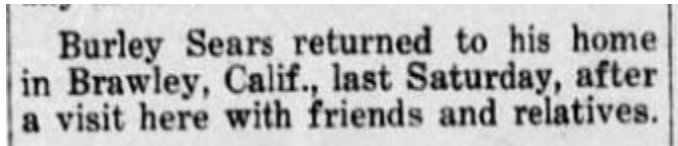
Not all of the dangers of the war were found at the battle front as many a soldier who risked life in get there can tell. One of this kind is Burley Sears, a well known Colton boy who enlisted early in the war from the Pacific Fruit Express plant that sent a lot of fine soldiers overseas. Mr. Sears lives in Bakersfield now but is here on a visit with his old friend, Preston Fuller. Like others of his kind he has little to say of his hardships, but the story has come out of one event that he will not forget even after his experiences at battle fronts in France. Sears went over on the transport Tuscania, which was one of the first transports attacked and sunk by a submarine. When near the Irish coast the transport with 2000 soldiers on board went down in the icy winter waters. Nearly all were saved by boats or rafts but 200 of our soldiers lost their lives. Sears was rescued from a life raft after over five hours at sea with the cold waves washing over the frail support when with others he was picked up by a patrol boat and landed at Larne, Ireland. From there he was sent to England to join other rescued soldiers and then forwarded to France, where he did his part in destroying the power of the Hun. While the German bullets were thick and plenty and other dangers to life and limb were encountered, not a soldier of the

30 on that life raft at sea will ever forget their harrowing experiences where it looked as if relief would never come and that a watery grave would surely be their lot.

"Colton (CA) Daily Courier" Friday 23 Jan 1920 p 3

Burley Sears of California arrived in this community last week for a visit with Mrs. Carrie Holloway and the Pearl Hollett family. Burley made his home in the Holloway home for several years.

Pleasant Ridge news - "Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 8 Sep
1921 p 12



Burley Sears returned to his home
in Brawley, Calif., last Saturday, after
a visit here with friends and relatives.

Pleasant Ridge news - "Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 6 Oct
1921 p 2

Father:

SHOT IN SELF DEFENSE.

A Missouri Farmer Forced to Kill a Neighbor Made Mad by Drink.

PLEASANT HILL, Mo., June 1.—Last night about 8 o'clock Alexander Sears, living near Strasburg, nine miles east of here, went home intoxicated and began abusing his family. His wife and children finally fled to the home of John Arnold, a neighbor. Sears then tore up the carpets, and with an axe chopped up the rear end of his house, broke the stoves, tables and household goods, set fire to a barrel of oil in the yard, and carrying the goods out, piled them upon the fire. Then he wound up by chopping his buggy into kindling.

When he had completed his work of destruction Sears went to the Arnold house. Arnold ordered him away, and Sears crying out that his family always ran to Arnold for protection when he attempted to run the house, and he was going to settle the matter, advanced, axe in hand.

Arnold at once ran into the house, and seizing an old musket, returned to the door and emptied its contents into the left breast of Sears, who continued to advance until Arnold struck him with the butt of his gun, felling him, death resulting almost instantly.

Sears had always been considered a desperate character, and only a few months ago he shot and seriously wounded John Allen. He leaves a widow and two small boys.

Arnold bears the name of being a quiet and inoffensive citizen, and all uphold his action.

Tragedy Near Strasburg.

Alexander Sears, residing about two and one-half miles northeast of Strasburg, this county, was shot, struck with the stock of a gun and killed at that point by John Arnold, Wednesday afternoon about 5 o'clock.

So far as we have been enabled to learn of the particulars concerning the killing, they are as follows:

Arnold and Sears are neighbors, and as we understand, the two men have so far been on friendly terms, and last Wednesday afternoon Sears was in this city, as also was Mrs. Arnold and some others of her family, and with whom Sears accompanied home in a spring wagon. Sears had made some purchases of groceries and also had drunk more or less, as was his habit whenever he came to town. Nothing appears to have gone wrong with him until after he had reached his home and carried his groceries in, Mrs. Arnold driving on to her home, which is about fifty yards distant. Soon after going into the house he began abusing his wife for some real or imaginary cause. He then went out in his yard and set fire to a keg or barrel of oil and began chopping his buggy into pieces with an ax, and then went to the house and began to demolish the furniture, saying that he intended to burn it up with the buggy, and also threatening the life of his wife, who fled and sought safety in the home of

Mr. Arnold.

Sears after having destroyed his buggy and broken up such of the furniture as he cared, starting for Arnold's house where his wife had taken refuge, with the ax in his hands. When within a short distance of the door, Mr. Arnold confronted him and told him that he should not enter the house with an ax, and to keep off; but Sears continued to approach, the ax partially raised. Again did Arnold tell him to stop, and then seizing upon an old musket standing near, he fired its contents (small bits of cut lead) into Sear's left breast. The madman, for such he must have been, staggered, swayed and was yet trying to get to Arnold or into the house, when the latter dealt him a blow with the stock of the gun just over the left eye, killing him instantly. Arnold surrendered to the constable of that township and will have an examination sometime to-day at Strasburg. Later in the evening of the day on which the killing occurred, Squire Blevens held an inquest over the remains and the jury returned a verdict that Alexander Sears came to his death from a gunshot and a blow at the hands of John Arnold."

Sears had been engaged for some time past in operating a saw mill west of this city, and bore a good name for fair and honorable dealings with his fellowmen. Yet withal, he was considered a dangerous man when in liquor, and is the man whom report says shot a man named Allen a few months ago for no other reason than that Allen, who was at Sears' house during the indisposition of the latter, chanced to remark upon inquiry to the doctor who had been summoned, that Sears' sickness was caused by too much drink, a remark which Sears overheard and rising from his bed ordered Allen out of the house, and after Allen had retired into the yard, pursued and fired at him seriously wounding him, and after seeing him fall, fired one shot at Allen's sister who was in the yard, narrowly missing her. Arnold bears the reputation of being a quiet, peaceable and upright man.—Pleasant Hill Local.

"Cass County News" (Harrisonville MO) Friday 9 Jun 1893 p 3

Trustee's Sale.

WHEREAS, Alexander G. Sears and Cora A. Sears, his wife, did, by their certain deed of trust, dated the 27th day of December, 1890, and recorded on the 31st day of December, 1890, in book No. 94, at page 213, in the office of the recorder of deeds for Cass county, Missouri, convey to the undersigned trustee, the following described real estate, situate in the county of Cass and state of Missouri, to-wit:

The east half of the northwest quarter of section twenty-one (21), township forty-six (46), range twenty-nine (29), to secure the payment of the promissory note in said deed of trust described, together with the interest thereon.

And, whereas, default has been made in the payment of the interest accruing on said note for the period from January 1st, 1893, to January 1st, 1895, by reason whereof the whole of said note has become due.

Now, therefore, I, the undersigned trustee, by virtue of the powers in me vested in said deed of trust, and at the request of the legal holder of said note, hereby give notice that I will, on

The 8th day of February, 1895,

between the hours of nine o'clock in the forenoon and five o'clock in the afternoon, at the front door of the court house in Harrisonville, in Cass county, Missouri, being the west door and the west entrance to the stairway leading to the upper stories of the building on the east side of the public square wherein the sessions of the circuit court of said Cass county are held, expose said real estate for sale at public vendue, to the highest bidder for cash, to pay off said note and interest and the expense of executing this trust.

JAMES M. DUNCAN, Trustee.
Harrisonville, Mo., Jan. 8, 1895. 45-tds.

Deceased Alexander G. Sears & living wife Cora A. Sears in default on property – “Cass County Democrat-Missourian” (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 10 Jan 1895 p 2

Mother:

OBITUARY

Cora A. Holloway, nee Webb was born in Jackson County, Mo., March 28, 1869. Married to Alex Seals May 6, 1889, who died a few years later, leaving her two children.

September 6, 1886 she married Gordon Holloway. Two children blessed this union. Mrs. Holloway professed faith in God and united with the Pleasant Ridge Baptist church September 1897, from which time she has born a character strong and beautiful in christian faith.

Mrs. Holloway died Oct 27, 1900 at her home six miles south-east of Harrisonville.

Her life was one of service and sacrifice, her disposition gentle and humorous, her life pure and harmless, her death peaceful and serene.

The funeral services were conducted by Rev. Hrice at the Pleasant Ridge Baptist church.

A FRIEND

"Cass County News" (Harrisonville MO) Friday 9 Nov 1900 p 3

Mrs. Cora A. Holloway Dead.

Mrs. Cora A., wife of Gordon Holloway, died at her home near Lone Tree, on Saturday, Oct. 27th, 1900, in child-birth.

Deceased was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Webb, and a sister of Mesdames J. B. Hogan and John Stone of this vicinity. She was born in Jackson county, Mo., March 28th, 1869. She was a consistent Christian lady, a faithful member of the Baptist church at Pleasant Ridge, where the services were held on Monday.

Besides the father, mother, brothers and sisters, a husband and four little children are left to mourn the loss of a loving wife and mother. In this their great affliction they have the sympathy of the entire community.—Adrian Journal.

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" (Harrisonville MO) Thursday 8 Nov 1900 p 5

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MARRIAGE LICENSE.

State of Missouri, }
County of Cass. } This License authorizes any Judge, Justice of the Peace, Licensed or
Ordained Preacher of the Gospel, or any other person authorized under the Laws of this State, to solemnize
Marriage between Gordon Holloway of Lone Pine County
of Cass and State of Mo who is over the age of twenty-one
years, and Cora Sean of Harrisonville in the County of
Cass and State of Mo who is over the age of eighteen years

WITNESS my hand as Recorder, with the seal of office hereto affixed, at my
office in Harrisonville, Mo., the 7th day of Sept 1896
By E. P. Hammon Deputy. J. M. Dale Smith Recorder.

STATE OF MISSOURI, }
County of Cass } This is to Certify That the undersigned, A. H. Davis,
did, at Harrisonville in said County, on the 4th day of September A. D. 1896
unite in Marriage the above named persons.

The foregoing Certificate of Marriage was filed for Record in my office on the 7th day of September
A. D. 1896 By E. P. Hammon Deputy. J. M. Dale Smith Recorder.

Marriage of mother Cora Webb Sears to R. Gordon Holloway 9 Sep 1897 -
<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/509069014:1171>

Marriage Licenses.		
For the week ending, Sept. 16, 1896		
{ Sam'l Robertson.....	Freeman	
{ Laura Nelson.....	Freeman	
{ Gordon Holloway.....	Lone Tree	
{ Cora Sears.....	Harrisonville	
{ Geo. A. Johnson.....	Drexel	
{ Fannie R. Bake.	Freeman	

"Cass County Democrat-Missourian" Thursday 17 Sep 1896 p 2

Sibling:

BROKE HIS NECK.

Sad Accident to Troy Sears, Near Lone Tree.

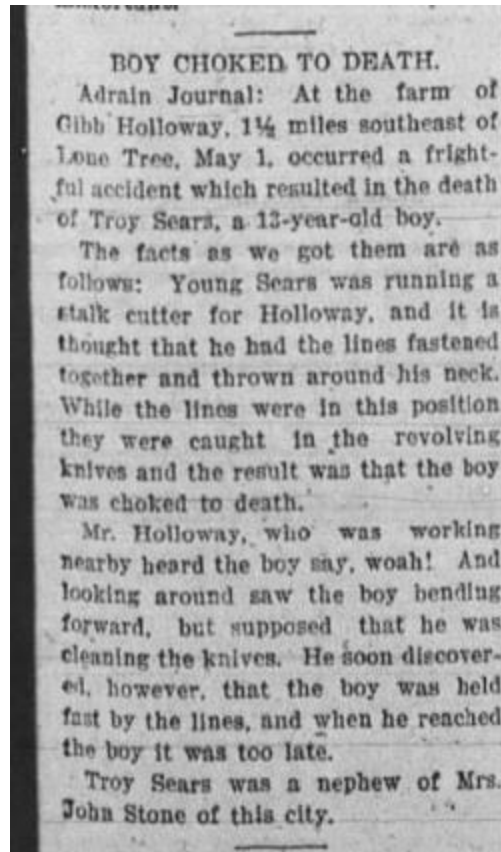
Cass County Democrat.

Troy Sears, a 11-year-old lad who lives with Lillard Holloway on his farm two miles southeast of Lone Tree, met with an accident which cost him his life while cutting stalks in the field Wednesday morning about 8 o'clock.

The boy was seated on the stalk cutter driving, and Mr. Holloway was ploughing about 75 yards away. In some manner, one line became wrapped around the boy's neck, drawing his head downward almost to his knees, probably breaking his neck or snapping the spinal cord. The boy made no outcry.

As soon as the line became taut the horses stopped of their own accord, and Mr. Holloway, who chanced to glance in the boy's direction, immediately went to his relief. When he reached him the boy was dead. Mr. Holloway called a number of his neighbors to his assistance, and the body was moved to the house.

Troy Sears was a grandson of T. B. Webb, who formerly lived in Harrisonville, now residing at Vinita, I. T. The accident was one of the saddest which has happened in that vicinity for some time, and has cast a gloom over the entire community.



"Springfield (MO) News-Leader" Tuesday 7 May 1901 p 3

Half-sister:



Hazel E. Reynolds, 83, dies

Hazel E. Reynolds, 83, 211 N. Gordy, died Sunday evening after a long illness. Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Kirby-Morris Funeral Home. Burial will follow in Sunset Lawns Cemetery.

Mrs. Reynolds was born Aug. 8, 1897 in Harrisonville, Mo., the daughter of Henry and Cora Holloway. On June 27, 1917 she married Lee C. Reynolds in Iola, Kan. She

came to the El Dorado area in 1922 from Kincaid, Kan. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church and a circle of the church.

Survivors include one son, William R. Reynolds, 500 E. Locust; one daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Wegley, Shawnee, Kan.; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Lee, in 1970 and by one brother.

Listed in Burley's obituary as his surviving sister – [Hazel Edith Holloway Reynolds](#) (1897-1980) –
Find A Grave 7722460



Half-sister Hazel Edith Holloway Reynolds - <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/160620558/person/122191956272/media/6b9d56f2-8c83-4f82-9ad0-ca8ad84cb6a1>

Name: Burley Sears

Name variations: Listed as Burley C. in the 1900 census – one online family tree lists him as Burley Christopher Sears

Military:

On Tuscania: 20th Eng. 17th/Co. E - private

Serial number: 250,640

Entered service from: Harrisonville, Cass MO

Sailed on "Tuscania" as: Burley Sears

Next-of-kin on "Tuscania": cousin Pearl Hollett, Harrisville MO [Pearl is male]

Returned from war on: "Santa Paula" May 1919

Sailed on return ship as: Burley Sears

Next-of-kin on return ship & rank: aunt Mrs. Mattie Stone, Butler MO (wagoner, 17th Co., 20th Engrs, Forestry)

World War I draft registration (1917): as Burley Sears - b. 14 Jan 1893 Harrisonville MO; res: General Delivery, Taft, Kern Co. CA. Single. Truck driver, Head (?) Drilling Co., Taft CA. Short & stout.

Veterans Administration Military Index:

Enlisted: 9 Dec 1917

Discharged: 11 Jun 1919

Address: Taft CA

Rank/unit: wagoner, 17th Co., 20th Engineers

Birth & death:

Born: 14 Jan 1893 Harrisonville, Cass MO (obituary: Jackson Co. MO)

Died: 14 Feb 1925 Los Angeles, Los Angeles CA (CA Death Index, which gives birth year as 1885) - died between Dec 1924 & 18 Nov 1925, a resident of Bakersfield, Kern CA ("Bakersfield California" 18 Nov 1925 p 10 reports Burley Sears among those "Passed to the Great Beyond since December, 1924:")

Find A Grave record: 245226752 (created 31 Oct 2022)

Burial location: unknown

Cemetery:

Tombstone:

Father: Alexander G. Sears, b. NC – 31 May 1893 Strasburg, Cass MO. Operated a sawmill but was considered a “dangerous man” when intoxicated. A few months before his death, he shot John Allen when Alexander overheard Allen telling a doctor that Alex’s problems were due to drinking & narrowly missed shooting Allen’s sister. On the day he died, Alexander took an axe, broke up his household furniture & added it to a burning oil fire in his yard. Then he chopped up his buggy. His wife Cora & 2 sons Troy & Burley had fled to the house of neighbor, John Arnold. When Alexander went to Arnold’s house, Arnold told him he could not enter his house with an axe. When Alexander raised his axe, Arnold shot him in the chest with an old musket. When Alexander continued to advance, Arnold hit him over the head by the left eye with the stock of the gun, killing him. Buried in Reed Cemetery, Pleasant Hill, Cass MO.

Find A Grave: 131343494

Mother: Cora A. Webb Sears Holloway, 28 Mar 1869 Jackson Co. MO – 27 Oct 1900 near Lone Tree, Cass MO (6 miles southeast of Harrisonville MO). Daughter of Thomas Benton Webb (13 Jun 1835 MO – 8 Nov 1914 MO, F: 9113452) who had fought in the Civil War for the Confederacy & Sarah Ann Sharp (Apr 1837 MO – 22 Feb 1901 OK, F: 9113458). In the 1880 census for Mound, Bates MO, Cora Webb (11) lived with parents T.B. Webb (44) & Sarah Webb (42) & her siblings.

Cora married Alex/Alexander Sears on 6 May 1889. They had 2 sons, Troy & Burley. Alexander was killed by a neighbor, John Allen, who first shot Alexander & then hit him on the head with the gunstock.

Married R. Gordon Holloway on 6 Sep 1896. Their daughter, Hazel Edith Holloway, was born 8 Aug 1897. Her obituary says they had 2 children.

Cora died in childbirth. Buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, Harrisonville, Cass MO.

Find A Grave: 7505338

Parents’ marriage: 6 Mar 1889

Stepfather: R. Gordon Holloway, Feb 1862 – 22 Jul 1918 Kincaid, Anderson KS. Son of Lawson Holloway & Mahala Jackson. His 1st wife was Ida May Cramer (1868-1894). Gordon was the brother of Thomas Lillard Holloway, with whom Troy & Burley Sears resided as children.

Cora Webb Sears & Gordon were the parents of Hazel Edith Holloway (Reynolds).

In the 1900 census, Troy & Burley Sears are listed with the surname Holloway.

Buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, Harrisonville, Cass MO.

Stepfather’s Find A Grave: 7505337

Stepfather’s marriage: 6 Sep 1896

Spouse:

Spouse Find A Grave:

Marriage:

Children:

Sibling:

- Troy Sears, Mar 1890 MO – 1 May 1901 Cass Co. MO. Troy died at age 11 in a farming accident. Troy lived with Thomas Lillard Holloway & was driving a stalk cutter in the fields. Lillard was plowing about 75 yards away. The lines to the team were around Troy's neck when they got caught in the cutter's knives, bringing Troy's head down to his knees & breaking his neck or spinal cord. When Lillard reached him, Troy was dead. Buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, Harrisonville, Cass MO. F: 7505342

Half-sister: by his mother Cora Webb Sears's 2nd marriage, to R. Gordon Holloway

- Hazel Edith Holloway Reynolds, 8 Aug 1897 Harrisonville, Cass MO – 5 Nov 1980 El Dorado, Butler KS. Daughter of R. Gordon (Find A Grave) or Henry (obituary) Holloway & Cora Sears. Her mother died in 1900 & she was raised in Lone Elm by her aunt Bellzona ("Aunt Belle") Holloway (1852-1930), her father's sister. Her maternal grandparents were Tom Webb & Lou Sharp. Hazel married Lee Clarence Reynolds (1893-1970, F: 7722447) on 27 Jun 1917 in Iola, Allen KS. Buried in Sunset Lawns Cemetery, El Dorado, Butler KS. F: 7722460

Notes:

His Tuscania next-of-kin: Mr. Pearl Hollett (not cousins by blood)

Pearl Hollett

30 Nov 1884 Wymore, Gage NE – 2 Nov 1946 Harrisonville, Cass MO. Son of James Alexander C. Hollett & Alice Ford. Married in 1905 to Lora Mae Holloway, the daughter of Thomas Lillard Holloway & Carrie Jane Jones. Lora married Clarence Almer Hammonds (1875-1970) in 1952. Buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, Harrisonville, Cass MO.
Find A Grave: 7505226

His "Santa Paula" next-of-kin: aunt Mrs. Mattie Stone

Martha Elizabeth Webb Stone

25 Oct 1866 Grain Valley, Jackson MO – 6 Dec 1951 Adrian, Bates MO.

Married to John H. Stone (1861-1954, F: 17902334). John was elected State Treasurer of MO in Nov 1924.

Martha's Find A Grave 17902366.

Lived with:

Thomas Lillard Holloway, who is his stepfather Gordon Holloway's brother.

2 Feb 1851 MO – 2 May 1909. Son of Lawson Holloway & Mahala Jackson.

Married 4 Mar 1874 to Carrie Jane Jones (1856-1932, F: 7505320). Buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, Harrisonville, Cass MO. F: 7505317

Lillard's daughter Lora Mae Holloway married Mr. Pearl Hollett.

Holloway family tree:

Lawson Holloway & Mahala Jackson

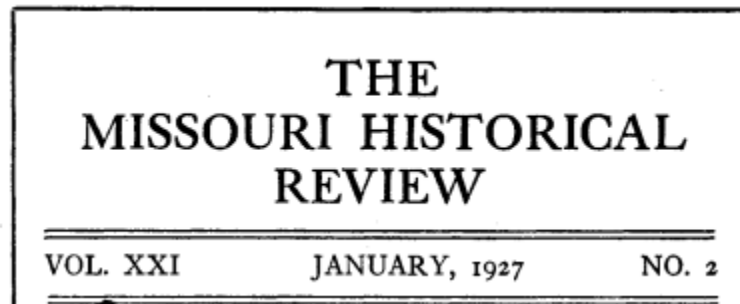
Sons:

Thomas Lillard Holloway & Carrie Jane Jones

R. Gordon Holloway & Cora Webb Sears

Granddaughter:

Lora Mae Holloway (later Hammonds), married to Mr. Pearl Hollett



CASS COUNTY. DREXEL, STAR.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Jan. 1. | Life sketch of Henry W. Grimes, Union veteran. |
| Apr. 30. | Story of boys and girls seventy years ago. By J. B. Wilson. |
| | HARRISONVILLE, CASS COUNTY DEMOCRAT. |
| Jan. 29. | Life sketch of William W. Cook, former Cass county official. |
| Feb. 12. | Life sketch of John K. Zook, Civil War veteran. |
| | Some laws and ordinances of Harrisonville sixty-eight years ago. |
| Mar. 12. | Life sketch of W. S. Miller, Confederate veteran. |
| Mar. 19. | Life sketch of R. E. Findley, Union veteran. |
| Mar. 26. | Life sketch of Burley Sears, World War veteran. |
| June 18. | Life sketch of W. R. Walker, Union veteran. |

Index to historical biographies -

<https://digital.shsmo.org/digital/api/collection/mhr/id/9370/download>

Family tree at: [https://www.ancestry.com/family-](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/160620558/person/122191956779/facts)

[tree/person/tree/160620558/person/122191956779/facts](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/160620558/person/122191956779/facts)

Pre-war:

Moved from Harrisonville, Cass MO to CA in Sep 1908.

"San Bernardino County Sun" 2 Feb 1909 p 7 - 17 years old, seriously injured 31 Jan 1909 when jumped from a moving train at Colton CA. Sears was up from Calexico on the way to Riverside CA to pick oranges. He bought a ticket on the Southern Pacific RR but got on the wrong Salt Lake City UT train by mistake so he jumped off. He got several cuts on his head & face & wrenched his back. Is in the hospital in Colton.

Wartime:

"Bakersfield (CA) Californian" 18 May 1918 p 14 - "Former Taft Man in Tuscania Sinking" – Burley sears writes from France to Johnny Eiland in Taft CA. Burley came across a man he knew in Taft who worked for Head's company when Burley was a truck driver there. Burley has only gotten 1 letter since he left, written 18 Jan 1918 by W.J. O'Rourke. He saw lots of coverage of the Tuscania sinking in newspapers but his name was given as Hurley not Burley & the address was his birthplace of Harrisonville MO. "Had rather they had put my other address, Taft, California."

Post-war:

"San Bernardino County Sun" (San Bernardino CA) 21 Jan 1920 p 5 - Burley Sears of Bakersfield CA is visiting his friend Preston Fuller in San Bernardino CA. Burley has just returned from 17 months overseas. A Tuscania survivor, he spent 5 hours on a raft with 30 others before being rescued by a patrol boat. Was taken to Larne, Ireland. Burley was employed by P.F.E. in San Bernardino before entering the Army.

"Bakersfield [CA] Californian" 18 Nov 1925 p 10 - Elks Lodge Memorial Day celebration to be held 8 Dec 1925. Article notes Burley Sears died between Dec 1924 & this Nov 1925 announcement

Obituary:

"Cass County Democrat" (Harrisonville MO) 26 Mar 1925 obit – Burley's parents died when he was a small boy. For several years, he live with his uncle & aunt Mr. & Mrs. Lillard Holloway, in Pleasant Ridge, Cass Co. MO. He moved to CA in autumn 1909 & resided there since. Has been in ill health for 4 years with gastric stomach ulcers. Has been under a doctor's care for the past year. Spent last month of his life in Methodist Hospital, Los Angeles CA. Became a Christian at age 12 & became lifelong member of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. Joined the Army in Nov 1917, Co. E, 6th Battalion, 20th Engineers. Funeral by Huntington Park Elk Lodge, of which he was a member. Survived by 1 sister (Mrs. Hazel Reynolds, Eldorado KS) - "Burley made friends wherever he went."

Censuses:

1900 Grand River, Cass MO – Troy & Burley Sears are listed with surname of Holloway, but their father is listed as born in NC

Gorden [sic] Holloway, 38 MO, Feb 1862, parents b. TN, married 5 years, farm laborer
 Cora A., 31 MO, Mar 1869, parents b. MO, gave birth to 3 children, 3 are living [wife]
 Troy B., 10 MO, Mar 1890, father b. NC, mother b. MO, at school [stepson]
 Burley C., 8 MO, Jan 1892, father b. NC, mother b. MO [stepson]
 Hazel E., 2 MO, Aug 1897, parents b. MO [daughter]

1910 cannot locate – would have been likely living in CA

1920 cannot locate – would have likely been living in CA