

Donald Keith Burleson



Donald Keith Burleson is our 6th Honoree for the Wall of Honor, October 22, 2017



Donald Keith Burleson

"Donald Keith Burleson was the only child of Lt. Col. Louis Francis Burleson and Virginia Griffiths Burleson. Don was born in Aurora, Colorado March 25, 1956 during the time that his father Louis was stationed at Lowry AFB in Colorado. After Louis retired from the Airforce in 1958, the family of three moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Louis had previously been stationed in Albuquerque and that was where he met and married Virginia in 1941. Virginia was born in Dublin Ireland. She immigrated to the United States as a baby with her widowed mother in Jan 1921.

Don attended grade school and High School in Albuquerque. He then completed his undergrad and MBA at the University of New Mexico. Don's parents, Louis and Virginia both died during his freshman year at UNM. Louis died September 26, 1975. Virginia died March 25, 1976.

After finishing his education, Don pursued a career in computer services management focusing on Database Administration.

Don had two children, Andrew and Jennifer. Andrew has an MBA from ECU and works in government in North Carolina.

Jennifer has an MBA and a Juris Doctorate from UNM. Jennifer is a practicing attorney with a prestigious law firm in Albuquerque New Mexico.

Without any siblings to lean on Don felt alone in the world when his parents passed, so he reached out to his extended Burleson family. Knowing that his father Louis was born in North Carolina, Don contacted every Burleson he could find in North Carolina. His efforts to connect led to the start of the Burleson Family Research Group."

Direct Descendants of ISAAC SR BURLESON

ISAAC SR BURLESON
Bom: 1750
Died: 1810
in SPRINGER CEM OFF OF DUSTY RD, STANLY CO, NC

MARTHA CLAY
Married: 1781
Died: Bet. 1826 - 1830

JOSEPH BURLESON
Bom: 1805
in MONTGOMERY CO, NC
Died: 1843
in STANLY CO, NC

NANCY ROGERS
Bom: 1805
in NC
Married: 1828
Died: Aug 1847
in STANLY CO, NC

JOHN WESLEY BURLESON
Bom: 28 Sep 1839
in MONTGOMERY CO NC
Died: 22 Aug 1926
in FROGPOND, STANLY CO NC 90634449

SARAH LUCINDA PAGE
Bom: 04 Aug 1845
in STANLY CO NC
Married: 14 Nov 1865
in STANLY CO NC
Died: 20 Jan 1924
in FROGPOND, STANLY CO NC 92150080

JAMES VESPASIAN (PACE) BURLESON
Bom: 25 Jul 1870
in STANLY CO NC
Died: 05 Nov 1949
in ALBEMARLE, STANLY CO, NC

CORRINA PAULINE HARDISTER
Bom: 20 Dec 1874
in STANLY CO, NC
Married: 30 May 1900
in NEW LONDON NC
Died: 28 Jan 1953
in CONCORD, CABARRUS CO, NC 56972757

LOUIS FRANCIS BURLESON
Bom: 30 Nov 1914
in NEW LONDON NC
Died: 26 Sep 1975
in ALBUQUERQUE, NM 3864199

VIRGINIA GRIFFITHS
Bom: 1920
in DUBLIN, IRELAND
Married: 1941
Died: 25 Mar 1976
in BERNATILLO CO, NM 3864201

MELISSA GAIL KOENIG
Married: 13 Dec 1980
in ALBUQUERQUE, NM

DONALD KEITH BURLESON
Bom: Mar 1956
in AURORA, COLORADO

JANET LAVENDER
Bom: 25 Dec 1955
in GASTONIA, NC

ANDREW BURLESON
Bom: Apr 1985
in ALBUQUERQUE, NM

JENNIFER BURLESON
Bom: Jul 1986
in COLORADO SPRINGS CO

BEN KITTLESON

Lt. Col. Louis Francis Burleson, USAF

Louis Francis Burleson was born on November 30th 1914 in a farm house in New London North Carolina. Louis was the last child of Corinna and J. V. Burleson, being born when J. V. was 44 years-old. Louis was a very athletic young man and earned high school letters in football, basketball and baseball.

A good student, at 15 years old he went to live in New York City and his name appears in the 1930 US census living on Lexington avenue with his sisters Mary and Sarah. He returned to New London and graduated from High School in 1932.



Louis F. Burleson

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Early Air Corp service

Gifted with a photographic memory and a natural ability in mathematics, Louis supervised poker games in the casinos on Waikiki beach. By taking 10% of each pot to keep the game honest, Louis earned over \$1,000 per month, far more than his meager military pay of \$36/month. By 1938, Louis was promoted to sergeant, earned his pilot's license and had a nice off-base apartment on Waikiki beach, where he hired a Navy Captain's wife to do his cleaning.

In 1941 Louis F. Burleson was transferred to Kirtland Field in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

It was there in 1941 that he met [Virginia Geraldine Burleson](#) (then Virginia Rylance (Griffiths)), a whirlwind romance culminating in their marriage in September 1941, less than 90 days before Pearl Harbor and the outbreak of WWII.

In 1935 Louis Burleson joined the US Army Air Corp and was stationed with the 8th pursuit group in Hawaii for six years, where he learned aircraft mechanics and served as pitcher for the Army baseball team.

Here he served as a crew chief for the P-36 and P-40 fighter aircraft.

These were the days when Hawaii was still an unspoiled paradise.



His new wife, Virginia (Ginger) Griffiths immigrated from Ireland, and was born on Feb 15th, 1920 in Dublin, the daughter of Geraldine and Charles Griffiths. Charles died at sea in 1919 when returning from Australia

Virginia then immigrated to the United States with her mother, widow Geraldine Burns to New York City in 1920. Her mother re-married in about 1932 and became Geraldine Rylance, moving to Albuquerque New Mexico.

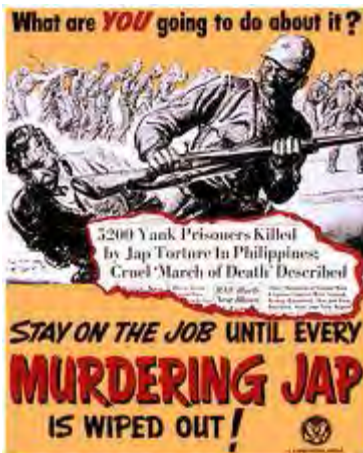
Less than a week after their wedding, Louis was promoted to Technical Sergeant and transferred to Clark Field in the Philippines where he was assigned to the 19th bomb group of the 5th Air Force as a mechanic for the fleet of several dozen B-17 bombers.

It was at Clark Field where Louis first encountered combat when he fought the Japanese on December 7th, 1941. The Japanese had leaked news of their attack on Clark Field prematurely, giving the airmen a brief heads-up on the impending sneak attack! Listening to radio reports of the attack at Pearl Harbor, the radio announcer also said that Clark Field had also been bombed, even though it was quiet at Clark Field.



Taking the hint, the B-17s were quickly moved to a safer area, but less than 10 minutes after the announcement a wave of more than 50 Japanese bombers devastated Clark Field, destroying more than half the U.S. air power in the Pacific theater.

After the cowardly attack, a single P-40 was idling at the end of the runway. Louis was horrified that the pilots head was blown clean off, and he had to reach over the bloody pulp to shut down the engine.



As the Japanese invaded the Philippines, Louis fled to the island of Luzon where the last holdouts prepared a stand against the Japanese invaders. After General MacArthur was ordered to leave Luzon, morale declined as the Americans were short on food and supplies and vastly outnumbered by the Japanese.

Many of those who remained were murdered in the Bataan death march, a Japanese war crime where only 54,000 of the 72,000 American POW's survived to reach their destination .

WWII Service Notes:



Clark Field, December 1941

Louis Burleson was ordered to take the last ship from Luzon, leaving his compatriots to face certain defeat.

Those left behind were captured and were forced to march north through the jungle in the infamous “Bataan Death March”.

Louis Burleson was [evacuated to Darwin Australia](#) in a B-24 on January 27, 1942.

February 16, 1942 - Six B-17 of the 19th Group took off from Malang at 0830 to attack enemy forces in the Telang, Moosit and Oelang Rivers.

No. 2455
Mathewson
Scarboro
Wood
Burleson
Gardner
Elder
Clevenger
Hale

February 19, 1942 - Crews and planes were prepared for 0630 take off. At 0230 the bomber command ordered three planes to take off as soon as possible and the others at dawn. The target was given as 4 cruisers and two transports on the south coast of Bali. The first three airplanes were to bomb at night individually with single bombs. The first three planes cleared the airdrome at 0500.

No. 2484
Mathewson
Scarboro
Wood
Burleson
Gardner
Routher
Lyday
Elder

These planes with the same crews departed Malang at 1240 for second mission of the day to Den Passac and Bali.

February 22, 1942 -The 19th Group sent two B-17Es against the Denpasar Airport on Bali,

No. 2472
Mathewson
Scarboro
Wood
Burleson
Gardner

Routher
Lyday
Elder



The 19th bomb group suffered heavy losses from the daring daylight raids and they sought to undertake a new bombing method that would minimize casualties.

It was this type of [innovative thinking, coming up with new uses for existing tools](#) that helped win the war in the Pacific.

The 19th bomb group motto was "In Alis Vincimus" On Wings We Conquer.

On September 23, 1942, Louis Burleson was part of a bold attack on the Japanese where the 30th squadron of the 19th bomb group performed [dive Bombing a B-17](#) to sink a Japanese ship.

As a gunner on the B17's, Lou's expert marksmanship with the 50 caliber machine guns sent many Japanese fighter planes crashing into the Pacific Ocean. Louis Burleson once stated that he believed that he shot down at least ten enemy aircraft using a technique that he discovered from the nighttime bombing raids.

Unlike the B-17 which has a protecting inner lining to seal-up bullet holes, the Japanese fighters did not have this feature. By loading his machine gun with incendiary rounds he was able to explode the fighters with a well-placed shot into the wings.



Actual Photo of the B-17 mission over Rabaul

Dive bombing in a B17

The B-17 is a large heavy 4-engine bomber, not designed to work as a dive bomber, but we were desperate for a victory over the Japanese, and desperate times called for desperate measures, [using a B-17 as a dive bomber](#).

Rabaul harbor was a major Japanese port, heavily guarded by Flack cannons and machine guns, impenetrable in daylight. The only hope of a victory was to attack at night when the Japanese gunners could not see the B-17, but the cover of darkness worked both ways. Even with the top-secret Norden bombsights, they needed light to see the targets. And even if we could see the ships, a freighter is a mighty small target from 20,000 feet.



Louis flew on the mission that destroyed a 10,000 ton Japanese troop ship by dive bombing it

After word got out about the Japanese atrocities at Bataan, morale was at a all time low and a small group of heroic young airmen decided to execute a bold attack against the Japanese. Major Bernard Schriever, a newly-minted Major fresh from Graduate school at Stanford University, joined the 19th bomb group in Australia and directed Burleson's effort to perfect the flare racks.

In less than 90-days Schriever recommended Louis Burleson for an officer's commission.

Gen. Dougherty was the pilot of Louis Burleson's crew on a famous bombing raid there Schriever used the B-17 as a dive bomber, destroying a large Japanese cargo ship in an act of extreme heroism.

My father designed the flare racks and volunteered to fly on this mission as flight engineer, manning the top turret gun on the B-17.

This recollection of the dive bombing B-17 is from an article about General Schriever in "Air Force" magazine:



Gen. Bernard Schriever

"They flew in a formation of about a dozen B-17's in a night raid on Rabaul.

Their airplane carried the flares and half the regular bomb load.

The flare system worked well, but Schriever wanted to check on the bombing results, so they made another circuit over the target area. Flak was heavy but ineffective at the 10,000-foot altitude from which they were bombing."



Gen. Jack Dougherty

After the Doolittle raid, the destruction of this ship was one of the first major American victories in the Pacific war and Louis F. Burleson was awarded his first Distinguished Flying Cross for his achievement in this dangerous mission.

Here is the Distinguished Flying Cross citation of the B-17 dive bombing raid from Louis Burleson's military record. John Dougherty and crew bombed Rabaul harbor using parachute flares designed by Louis Burleson, using a B-17 Flying Fortress as a "dive-bomber," destroyed a large cargo ship and damaged a 10,000 ton troop ship. Rabaul harbor was still classified and was blanked-out from the original release:

"For meritorious achievement as gunner while participating in an aerial flight over ****, New Britain, on 23 September 1942. This officer and these enlisted men were crew members of a B-17 dispatched to drop flares and bombs in a night raid on a concentration of shipping at this enemy stronghold. After the flares were released, at least thirty vessels were observed in the harbor.

The crew made eight bombing runs at 8,000 feet, but during each attempt, vision was obscured by a thin strata cloud. Despite a barrage of anti-aircraft fire from numerous ships and shore batteries, the B-17 dived to 1500 feet

and released three bombs over a group of four vessels.

A direct hit was scored on a large cargo ship and a near miss on a 12,000 ton transport. Although the plane sustained six damaging hits by shell fragments, it managed to escape from the hail of fire. The courage and devotion to duty displayed by these crew members is worthy of commendation."

Pulitzer Prize winning author Neil Sheehan describes the daring raid of September 23, 1941 in his bestselling book "[A Fiery Peace in a Cold War](#)". However, there are a few facts that were not quite correct:

"Schriever was not content just fixing B-17s for other men in the 19th Bombardment Group to fly. He and Major John Dougherty, a wild streak of an Irishman who was the group operations officer, put together a headquarters strike crew. Daylight raids on Rabaul were halted after the B-17s proved too vulnerable to the Mitsubishi Zeros stationed there. (The Zero was the most advanced fighter in the Pacific in 1942, only the twin-engine Lockheed P-38, of which Kenney had a mere handful of then, came close to matching it.)"

This is true. The Japanese Zero was faster in large part because it was not weighted-down with the gummy fuel tank sealant that protected the plane from explosion when hit by incendiary bullets. Louis Burleson said that the gunners would deliberately aim at the wings of an attacking Zero and the fighter would explode in a huge fireball.

"The 19th switched to night attacks with flares for illumination. The Zero was not originally meant to be a night fighter and for some reason the Japanese never attempted to retrain the pilots and send them aloft after dark. Schriever rigged up a flare-dropping device for the B-17 he and Dougherty flew. They would first drop flares for the other bombers and then they themselves would bomb."

Actually, Louis Burleson rigged the flare devices, according to specs from Schriever. Sheehan continues describing the raid:

"On the night of September 23, 1942, they were after ships assembling in the harbor. Jack Dougherty, who was to end his career as a brigadier general working for Schriever, had had a lot of experience at combat flying and thus was, by mutual agreement, the pilot and aircraft commander. Bennie flew as his co-pilot, even though he was senior by date of promotion. A survivor of the Java disaster, Dougherty was doubly fortunate to have escaped in that he had been shot down and by good luck rescued from a small island off the Java coast. The narrowness of his encounter with eternity had not intimidated him.

At Mareeba, in addition to plenty of flares, they loaded four 500-pounders into the bomb racks "to be sure that we had our amount of fun," as Schriever put it in his after-action report. They stopped at Port Moresby to top off their fuel tanks, then headed with the rest of the raiding formation north across the Solomon Sea for Rabaul. They made several passes at 4,000 feet over the wide harbor, formed by the remnant crater of an ancient volcano after it had erupted and exploded, dropping a sequence of five flares to enable the other B-17s to pick out one of the estimated thirty Japanese ships anchored there that night.

After they realized the moon was so full and bright that night that flares were unnecessary, they decided to try their own hand at bombing and climbed to 10,000 feet. The new and still top secret Norden bombsight required long minutes of level flight to focus on a target, suicide against anti-aircraft fire at 4,000 feet. Unfortunately, a cloud bank right at that lower altitude where they had been dropping flares now obscured the ships and made it too difficult for the bombardier to aim.

In a moment of insane inspiration, Dougherty suddenly said, "Let's dive-bomb the bastards."

In reality, this was not a spontaneous as Sheehan would like us to think. I know that it was the dive bombing was planned in advance because Louis Burleson specifically mentioned outfitting the B-17 with special armor plating.

"Although Schriever later admitted he was not the type to have thought of anything so rash and hair-raising, he did not object. "I'll watch the air speed and altitude," he replied, so that they would not dive too rapidly and tear off a wing. They could not actually dive-bomb a ship with a B-17, but they did the next best thing to it. To keep the Japanese from hearing the noise of the engines as they descended and gain an element of surprise, they cut back the throttles.

Then Dougherty pushed the wheel forward and down the big four-engine bomber went, leveling off at 1,500 feet as Dougherty raced straight for four large ships he could see lined up in the middle of the harbor. "To say that AA [antiaircraft fire] was ample would hardly cover the case," Schriever later wrote in his report. "Every ship in the harbor and most ground installations were firing at us. Tracers were converging [from] so many directions that it is a wonder they didn't collide with each other." The Norden bombsight was useless at this speed and altitude. Schriever glanced at the airspeed indicator and it was registering 260 miles per hour. In fact, no one was ever known to have attempted bombing with a B-17 in this harum-scarum manner.

But the bombardier, another Irishman, Lieutenant Edward Magee, who had also escaped undaunted from the debacle on Java, had sufficient expertise to be up to the challenge. He eyeballed the bomb release range and angle and, when his instinct said "Now," let a 500-pounder fly. The first bomb turned out to be a dud. With the second, Magee scored a direct hit on a freighter estimated in the 8,000 ton class. The ship was probably destroyed instantly, as a secondary explosion erupted from within the hull right after the bomb struck. Magee then tried for a troop transport in the 12,000-ton class, but he had a near miss.

As soon as the third bomb was away, Dougherty threw the B-17 into a series of violent, evasive maneuvers, turning, sliding from one side to another, dancing around the sky while climbing to 4,000 feet to clear the ridge on the other side of the harbor. Schriever was convinced afterward that Dougherty's skill at aerial acrobatics was what saved them from being shot down. As they topped the ridge and were headed back out over the sea they spotted a Japanese destroyer anchored in a bay along the island's shore.

They had one 500-pounder left and Magee, crouched in his little compartment under the flight deck in the nose of the B-17 and caught up in the same frenzy of combat that possessed Dougherty, did not want to waste it. "Let's get the son of a bitch," he urged over the intercom. Dougherty turned, dropped to 1,000 feet and bore down on the Japanese warship. Unfortunately, the bomb hung up in the rack- its release was delayed- and it sailed over the destroyer and exploded harmlessly on the shore."

In his book, Sheehan only notes the six shell fragments that hit the B17, but does mention that the bomber was riddled with hundreds of bullet holes from small arms fire. Louis Burlinson used to joke that the machine gun fire sounded like rain on a tin roof and that the metal plate he placed under his seat had a bullet hole in it after the mission, saving him from a real "pain in the ass".

Bombing with flare

However, these improvised B-17 flare racks has some issues, as noted in this [TIME magazine article](#) from 1958. In a test of the new flare racks, B-17 (41-2434) of the 30th Squadron of the 19th Bombardment Group at Mareeba crashed into the sea near Cairns while testing a new flare dropping mechanism. The rack malfunctioned and the flare exploded inside the B-17 causing it to crash into the sea, exploding on impact on 16 August 1942. The B-17 crash occurred just inside the Great Barrier Reef a few miles north and East of Mareeba Queensland:

"He (Gen Schriever) learned something of the shoestring tragedies of R and D when a B-17 fitted with a new flare dropping rack that he had designed caught fire mysteriously over Cairns, Australia and crashed, killing its crew.

The investigation did not establish conclusively that his rack was responsible, but thereafter the device was regarded with open suspicion; no one but Ben and a co-designer felt nervy enough to fly with it."

Recommendation for field commission

General Schriever later became the father of missiles and space in the Air Force. General Schriever's recommendation for Louis Burleson reads:

Technical Sergeant LOUIS F. BURLESON, 6882468, has been directly under my command for over three months. During this time his performance of duty has been superior. He has shown a keen interest in all projects which, in any way, might improve our effectiveness against the enemy.

He not only installed the first flare rack in B-17 aircraft but also went on the first two combat missions on which flares were used. His habits and character are excellent and his attention and devotion to duty unquestioned. It is my opinion that he is well qualified to perform the duties of commissioned grade.

Major Bernard Schriever - November 10, 1942

During his time in Australia, Louis flew fifty-two combat missions as a gunner and flight engineer in the remaining B17 bombers. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross on two occasions, each time for meritorious valor in combat, and also received the Air Medal. Louis F. Burleson's second Distinguished Flying Cross commendation reads:

LOUIS F. BURLESON, 6882468, Technical Sergeant, Headquarters Squadron, 19th Bombardment Group (H), Air Corps, United States Army.

For extraordinary achievement while participating in the aerial flights in the Southwest Pacific Area from December 8, 1941 to November 9, 1942. During this period, Sergeant Burleson participated in more than fifty operational flight missions during which hostile contact was probable and expected. These flights included long-range bombing missions against enemy airdromes and installations and attacks on enemy naval vessels and shipping.

Throughout those operations, Sergeant Burleson demonstrated outstanding ability and devotion to duty.

Louis Burleson was transferred to Pyote Texas in November of 1942 as a newly-minted lieutenant to serve as an instructor of aircraft mechanics. Being a very creative fellow, Louis invented several tools for aircraft warfare, and was transferred to the Pentagon in Washington, DC where the Army Air Corp patented several of his inventions.

Louis F. Burleson unit patches



5th Army Air Corp



2nd Army Air Corp.



315th Air Division (Korea)



19th Bomb Group
In Alis Vincimus



30th Squadron 19th Bomb Group



15th Air Force



3rd Maintenance Squadron



Far East Air Force



6127th Air Terminal Group (Korea)

Supplying the Korean War effort

Louis Burleson volunteered to fight in Korea, and served as detachment commander for the 6127th Air Terminal Group. The 6127th Air Terminal Group was organized at Ashiya AFB, Kyusho, Japan on 7 February 1951, being attached to 315th Air Division, Far East Air Forces (FEAF).

For his service in Korea as Commanding Officer of Detachment 15 and Detachment 12, of the 6127th Air Terminal Group in Korea, Louis Burleson was recommended to receive the Distinguished Service Medal, for commanding the air supply lines to the Army that delivered over 400 tons of supplies per day. The DSM, usually given only to generals, was offered to Louis for his outstanding contribution to the war, but he declined, stating that he was not worthy of such a great honor. Instead he was awarded the Bronze Star. Here is the original text of the Citation:

By direction of the President, Major Louis Francis Burleson, AO 514246, United States Air Force, has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

CITATION

Major Louis F. Burleson (then Captain) distinguished himself by performing service in connection with military

operations against an enemy from 21 January 1951 to 4 May 1951 as Commanding Officer, Detachment 15 and Detachment 12, 6127th Air Terminal Group in Korea.

Though hampered by adverse weather conditions and a shortage of personnel and equipment, Major Burluson was able to on load and off load four hundred tons of Combat Cargo from aircraft per day, assist in the air evacuation of the sick and wounded and assist in the transportation for the Rest and Recuperation program.

It was through Major Burluson's ingenuity, initiative, knowledge of his hard and demanding job, and his devotion to duty by undergoing many personal hardships and long hours of work that made the Combat Cargo mission successful at these front line air strips thereby brining great credit upon himself, the Far East Air Forces, and the United States Air Force.

Louis F. Burluson was then assigned to Muroc AFB in California where he was in charge of aircraft maintenance. It was there that he became friends with Chuck Yeager, the first person to break the sound barrier.

Military medals

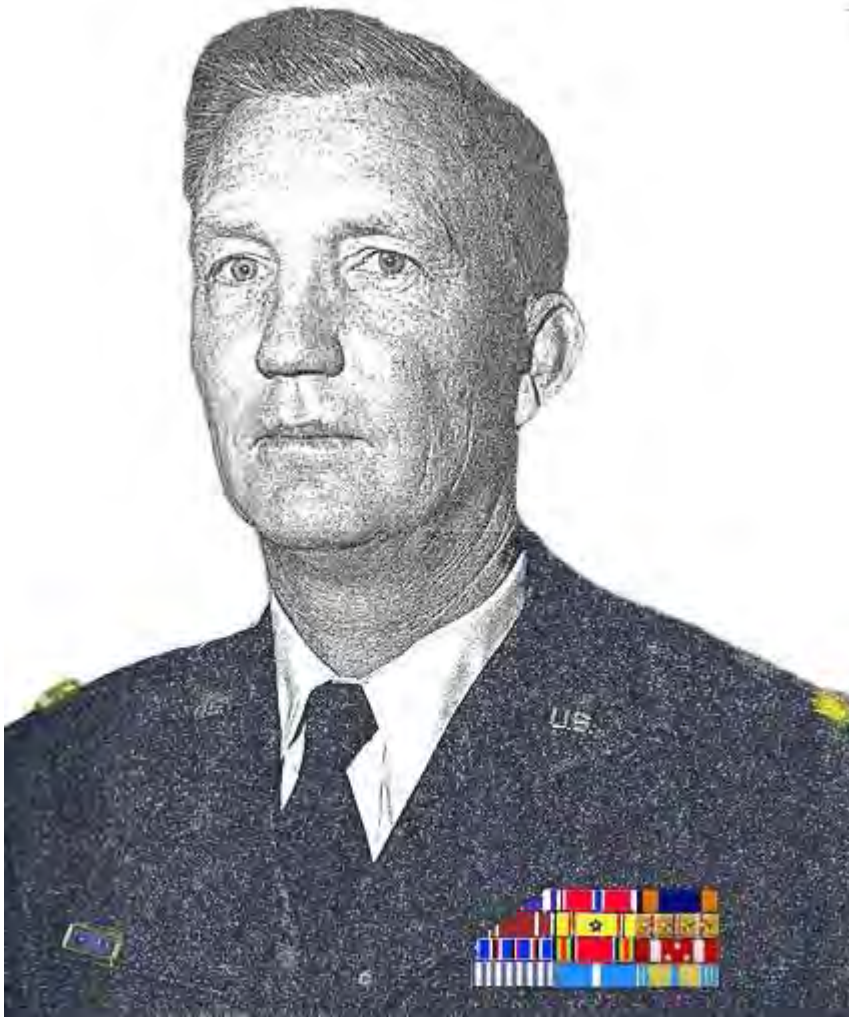
Louis Burluson also volunteered for service in Korea and was the project officer for the 6127th Air Terminal group where he was promoted to Major and won the Bronze Star for his Valor during an attack. His brother Vincen Burluson also served in Korea and received the Air Medal for distinguished aerial achievement in B-29 bombing missions.



- [Bronze Star citation](#)
- [First Distinguished Flying Cross citation](#)
- [Second Distinguished Flying Cross citation](#)

Louis F. Burluson was injured numerous times in WWII and Korea, most notably a back injury and a loss of hearing from being near an explosion. His selfless devotion to duty was apparent when he refused to seek treatment for these injuries for fear of losing combat status, even though he could have been awarded the Purple Heart and transferred to a non-combat role.

His last assignment was with the 3415 Field Maintenance squadron at Lowry AFB in Colorado.



Louis F. Burleson in 1955, at age 41

Louis Burleson was forced to accept a medical retirement in 1958 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. As a disabled veteran, he spent the rest of his life championing the rights of those who were injured in service to their country.

Louis F. Burleson ribbons



Distinguished Flying Cross (1 cluster)	
Bronze Star	
Air Medal	
Presidential Unit Citation (3 oak leaf clusters)	
Army Good Conduct Medal	
American Defense Service Medal (1 star)	
American Campaign Medal	
Army in the Pacific Campaign Medal (4 stars)	
Victory WWII	
Occupation of Japan medal	
National Defense Service Medal	
Korean Service Medal	
Armed Forces Reserve Medal	
Philippine Defense medal	
UN Korea Service Medal	
Republic of Korea War Service Medal	



Four Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal battles:

1. Philippine Island 7 Dec 41 - 10 May 42
2. Air Offensive, Japan 17 Apr 42 - 2 Sep 45
3. Papua New Guinea: 23 Jul 42 - 23 Jan 43
4. Guadalcanal 7 Aug 42 - 21 Feb 43



Louis Francis Burbison
M. Colonel, US Air Force
1964-1975
"There's always more at the top"



Louis F. Burleson Service History Summary:

1935 - 1941: Crew Chief, 18th Pursuit Group, Oahu Hawaii

1941 - 1943: B-17 Air Crew Member, Flight Engineer, Pacific Theatre WWII

1943 - 1944: Technical inspector: Alexandria LA

1944 - 1945: Technical Inspector, Pyote TX

1946 - 1946 - Technical Inspector, Clovis NM

1947 – 1950: Supervisor of Maintenance Security: Muroc Air Force Base California

1950 – 1952: Detachment Commander, 6127th Air terminal Group, Korea

1952 – 1957: Squadron Commander, Lowry Air Force Base Colorado

Louis F. Burleson Service History Details

- **15 March 1935 - 29 March 1941:** 18th Pursuit Group, Hawaii, service as Crew Chief for P-36's and P-40's.
- **12 March 1941 - 3 March 1943:** The 19th bomb group (30th squadron) in WWII:
 - March Field, Calif, 25 Oct 1935;
 - Albuquerque, NM, 7 Jul 1941 to 29 Sep 1941;
 - Clark Field, Luzon, 23 Oct 1941;
 - Batchelor, Australia, 24 Dec 1941;
 - Singosari, Java, 30 Dec 1941;
 - Melbourne, Australia, 2 Mar 1942;
 - Garbutt Field, Australia, 18 Apr 1942;
 - Longreach, Australia, 18 May 1942;
 - Mareeba, Australia, 24 Jul-23 Oct 1942;
- **3 March 1943 - 7 December 1943:** 19th bomb group HQ: Served as Group Technical Inspector
- **10 December 1943 - 20 December 1943:** 517 Base HQ, Alexandria La.: Air Inspector
- **20 December 1943 – 3 March 1944:** 469 CombTngSchMaint Sec1 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU) Alexandria LA: Production line maintenance inspector
- **3 March 1944 – 30 June 1944:** 221 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU), Alexandria LA: Assistant Technical inspector Aircraft Eng O
- **30 June 1944 – 22 July 1944:** 221 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU), Alexandria LA: Assistant Technical inspector Aircraft Eng O
- **27 July 1944 – 7 November 1944:** 220 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU) Ardmore OK.: Technical Inspector
- **7 November 1944 – 31 December 1944:** Sec. A, 236 Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTs), Pyote TX: Technical Inspector
- **1 January 45 – 30 June 1945:** Sq A, 236 Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS), Pyote TX: Technical Inspector
- **1 July 45 – 14 November 1945:** Sq A, 236 Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS), Pyote TX.: Technical Inspector
- **15 November 1945 – 20 November 1945:** Sq A, 4141 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU), AB, Pyote TX: Technical Inspector
- **21 November 1945 – 31 December 1945:** 234 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU), Clovis NM: Technical Inspector

- **1 January 1946:** 234 Army Air Force Base Unit (AAFBU), Clovis NM: Technical Inspector
- **1 August 1946 – 4 September 1946:** 7536 TDY HQ 15 AF 234 AAFBU AAF Clovis NM
- **5 September 1946 – 30 September 1946:** 7536 technical inspector air inspector SEC Headquarters 15th Air Force 234 AAFBU AAF Colorado Springs CO
- **1 October 1946 – 321 December 1946:** 7536 technical inspector air inspector SEC Headquarters 15th Air Force 234 AAFBU AAF Colorado Springs CO
- **20 September 1950 – 19 June 1952:** FEC
- 21 May 1952: Aircraft Maintenance officer PAM 32, 6127 ATCAP 075
- 7 December 1953: Supply Officer PAM 27, 3415 Maintenance squadron
- **25 July 1953 – 23 August 1953:** 4311 Assistant Chief of Maintenance, 3416 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado
- **24 August 1953 – 16 September 1953:** 4311 Assistant to Chief of Maintenance, 3416 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado
- **17 September 1953 – 6 December 1953:** 4311 Assistant to Chief of Maintenance, 3415 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado
- **7 December 1954 – 28 February 1954:** 6421 Supply Liaison 0, 3415 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado
- **1 March 1954 – 20 April 1954:** 6421 Supply Liaison 0, 3415 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado
- 21 April 1954: 4344 3415 Field Maintron acftshops officer, 3415 Field Maintenance squadron, 3415 Tactical Training Wing, Lowry ABF Colorado

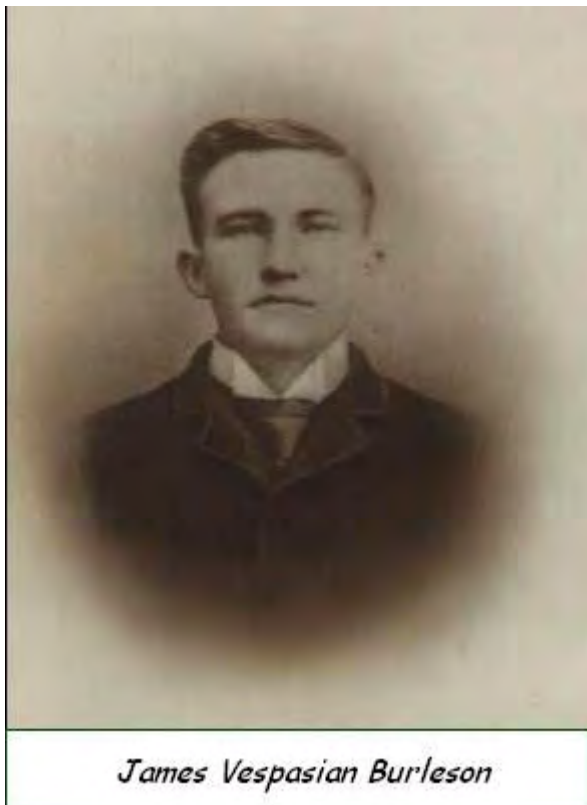
DATE	TO	NO. (GSN)	DUTIES	NO. OF CONDUITY DAYS	UNIT OR ORGANIZATION AND STATION OR THEATER	TYPE OF REPORT SUBMITTED
15 Mar 43	29 Mar 43		EM, Mech & Crew Chf, P36 & P40		18th Pursuit Gp, Hawaii	None
30 Mar 43	2 Mar 43		6 mos in ZI, then to Phillipines for 3 mos, Java 1 mo, Australia 10 mos, Aerial Eng Gunner		Gp Tech Insp	None
3 Mar 43	7 Dec 43	7536	Gp Tech Insp		19 Bb Gp (H), Pyote, Tex	MOPR
8 Dec 43	20 Dec 43	2260	Air Insp		517 Base Hq & AB Gp Sq AAB, Alexandria, Ia	None
21 Dec 43	3 Mar 44	7536	Prod Line Maint Insp		469 Comb Tng Sch Maint Sec I AAF, Alexandria, Ia	MOPR
4 Mar 44	22 Jun 44	7536	Asst Tech Insp Acft Eng O		221 AAFBU, Alexandria, Ia	MOPR
23 Jun 44	7 Nov 44	7536	Tech Insp		220 AAFBU, Ardmore, Okla	MOPR
8 Nov 44	14 Nov 45	7536	Tech Insp		Sec A, 236GCTS, Pyote, Tex	MOPR
15 Nov 45	20 Nov 45	7536	Tech Insp		Sq A 444 AAFBU, AB Pyote, Texas	MOPR
21 Nov 45	31 Jul 46	7536	Tech Insp		234 AAFBU AAF Clovis NM	67
1 Aug 46	4 Sep 46	7536	TDY Hq 15 AF		Same	MOPR
5 Sep 46	30 Sep 46	7536	Tech Insp Air Insp Sec		Hq 15AF, Colo Spgs, Colo	MOPR
1 Oct 46	31 Dec 46	7536	Tech Insp Air Insp Sec		Same	67
1 Jan 47	19 Jan 47	0001	No dy TDY		146 AAFBU, SF, Mich	None
20 Jan 47	30 Apr 47	7536	Asst Air Insp Sup & Maint		Same	67
			"Rdsgd 2nd Combat Airdrome Gp (Prov) GO 1, Hq SF, Mich 27 Jan 47"			
1 May 47	20 Aug 47	7536	Tech Insp Air Insp Sec		215 BU, WAFB, Utah	67-1
21 Aug 47	4 Sep 47	0001	Enr to jn & Awtg asgmt		444 AAFBU, MAFld, Muroc, Calif	None
5 Sep 47	31 Mar 48	4823	Asst Acft Br Off	8	Same	67-1
			"Transferred to Department of the Air Force per Transfer Order #1, NMC, 26 Sep 47"			
1 Apr 48	30 Sep 48	4823	Asst Acft Br Off	11	Same	67-1
1 Oct 48	4 Feb 49	4823	Asst Acft Br Off	7	2759 AFB, MAFB, Calif	67-1
			"444th AFBU Muroc AFB, California, rdsgd Hq & Hq Sq, 2759th AFB, Muroc AFB, California eff 28 Aug 48"			
5 Feb 49	30 Jun 49	7536	Tech Insp	16	2759 AFB, MAFB, Calif	ER
1 Jul 49	4 Aug 49	7536	Tech Insp	0	Hq & Hq Sq, 3077 Exper Gp, MAFB, Calif	None
5 Aug 49	16 Aug 49	4823	Asst Supv of Maint Sec	0	Same	None
17 Aug 49	31 Aug 49	2136	CO	0	Same	ER
1 Sep 49	30 Jun 50	2136	CO	0	Same	ER
1 Jul 50	6 Sep 50	2136	CO	5	Same	ER
7 Sep 50	15 Oct 50	0001	Atwg Asgmt O/S	40	Pipeline to FEC	None
16 Oct 50	16 Nov 50	4823	Aero Repair Recl Flt Test	0	3d Maint Sq, APO 328	None
17 Nov 50	4 Dec 50	2110	Adjutant	0	FEAF (CG), APO 970	None
5 Dec 50	27 Dec 50	2120	Unit Commander	0	6127 ATU, APO 75	None
28 Dec 50	4 Jan 51	4000	Asst Unit Supply Off	0	Same	None
5 Jan 51	20 Jan 51	0910	Detachment Commander	0	6127 ATU, (K-5), APO 970	None
21 Jan 51	8 Apr 51	0910	Detachment Commander	0	Det 15, 6127 ATGp, APO 970	None
9 Apr 51	3 May 51	0910	Detachment Commander	0	Det 12, 6127 ATGp, APO 75	None
4 May 51	12 Jun 51	0913	Dir of Traffic	0	Det 14, 6127 ATGp, APO 970	None
13 Jun 51	31 Aug 51	0913	Prior & Traf Off	0	Det 1, 6127 ATGp, APO 75	ER
1 Sep 51	30 Sep 51	0913	Prior & Traf Off	0	Det 1, 6127 ATGp, APO 75	None
1 Oct 51	23 Feb 52	0913	Detachment Commander (Sk Hosp)	102	Det 6, 6127 ATGp, APO 929	None
24 Feb 52	14 Mar 52	0001	Patient - Hospital	20	USAF Hospital, APO 1054	None
15 Mar 52	27 Mar 52	0001	Pndg Rsgmt to 6127 ATGp, APO 75	13	6403d PFSq, APO 959	None
28 Mar 52	26 May 52	0913	Projects Officer	0	Det 1, 6127 ATGp, APO 75	None
27 May 52	22 Jun 52	0913	Projects Officer	0	Hq Det, 6127 ATGp, APO 75	CER
23 Jun 52	17 Jul 52	0001	Proc, Lv & Trl.	29	Enroute to ZI	None
12 Jul 52	11 Mar 53	4344	Maint Off, 3417 Maint Sq.	507	3415TTWG Lowry AFB, Colo	CER
12 Mar 53	5 Apr 53	4344	Sq CO, 3417 Maint Sq	0	3415TTWG, Lowry AFB, Colo	None
16 Apr 53	24 Jul 53	4344	Acft Maint O, 3417th Maint Sq	7	3415TTWG Lowry AFB, Colo	CER

James Vespasian & Corrina Hardister Burleson



The third child of John Wesley Burleson was James Vespasian Burleson, also known as J. V. or "Pace" Burleson. Pace was the first Burleson in our line to have an advanced education, but no evidence of a College education has been located. We do know that Pace was a teacher in the New London school in the 1890's. It was here that he met his wife, Corinna P. Hardister, who also taught school in the 1890's. Family tradition says that Corinna had a college degree, but only listed her formal educations as "read and write" on the birth certificate on her son, Louis Burleson.

Corinna Pauline Hardister was the daughter of Jonathan W. and Julia Hardister. Jonathan Hardister served in the Civil War in a cannon brigade from Salisbury North Carolina, and was wounded in the buttocks at Pickett's charge in Gettysburg. Jonathan recovered in a Confederate hospital and was re-assigned to tend to the wounded until the end of the War.



James Vespasian Burleson

James Vespasian & Corrina Hardister Burleson New London Cemetery, New London NC



John Wesley & Sarah Page Burleson



Seated L/R, John Wesley
Burleson, Sarah Page, Louise
Jane, ?
Middle Row, Ira Benjamin,
Lander David, Carrie C., Delphia,
Back Row, Philas Lee (Bud) ?,,?,
Brantley, Jason Burleson

PLEASANT GROVE BAP CH,
FROGPOND, STANLY CO NC



John Wesley Burleyson by Donald Keith Burleson **The childhood years**

John Wesley Burleson's name has been recorded under a variety of spellings and forms, including Joseph Wesley Burleyson, J. W. Burleson, and Wesley Burleson. Documents refer to him by both Joseph and John, and his headstone reads *J. Wesley Burleyson*. He signed his name as John Wesley Burleyson on his marriage certificate, yet he is referred to in Alex McLester's will as Joseph Wesley Burleyson. We know from the 1880 census that his wife referred to him as Wesley, and all his friends knew him as JW.

John Wesley Burleson was the son of Joseph and Nancy Burleson. Joseph Burleson was born in 1805 in Montgomery County, and married Nancy Page about 1828. Joseph and Nancy had four sons:

Isaac Burleyson	(1827-1897)
David Derrick Burleyson	(1835-1896)
John Wesley Burleyson	(1839-1926)
Joseph Benjamin Burleyson	(1842-1900)

According to land records of Montgomery County (Note that [in 1841 Stanly County was formed from Montgomery County](#)), by 1841 Joseph and Nancy had acquired a farm of 173 acres, and one year later increased their land holdings to 515 acres. With substantial acreage and a blossoming family, Joseph and Nancy were prosperous.

However, tragedy soon struck. Joseph Burleson died when John Wesley Burleson was only four years old, sometime between January and November of 1843. Only 33 years old at the time of his death, Joseph Burleson left behind Nancy and four young sons. A record of Joseph's death appears in the Montgomery (Stanly) County records in 1843, but it only states that Nancy was to receive his estate. Apparently, Joseph did not leave a will because none was filed into probate.

While the cause of Joseph Burleson's death will never be known, 1842 was the beginning of what was became known as the Great Epidemic. This epidemic caused deaths from chills and fevers, and culminated in 1846-48 with the death of hundreds of [Stanly County](#) residents. In October of 1842, the [Mecklenburg Jeffersonian](#) reported: "*Never within the recollection of our oldest citizens has our village and county been so sickly as in the past two months*".

Because Joseph Burleson died without a will, a neighbor named John M. Rogers was appointed administrator of Joseph's estate by the court. It was common practice at that time to appoint a relative to be the executor of an estate, and it is unclear why he was appointed instead of Nancy. A court case in 1849 was found in which a judgment was made concerning the estate of John M. Rogers paying a share to Nancy Burleson's estate as her legal dower.

Court records show that small amounts were reported by the administrator as being due the estate. In 1845 the court appointed a committee to untangle some affairs of the estate, and it found that the administrator owed \$56.66 to the estate. John Rogers died prior to October 1846, and by 1847 the land was transferred back in Nancy's name.

Along with Thomas Roland, Nancy Burleson also witnessed the signing of William Hatley's will in April 1847. Hatley died shortly thereafter, and Nancy Burleson appeared in court in May of 1847 to attest to the validity of Hatley's will. The witnessing of Hatley's Will should have served to remind Nancy Burleyson of the necessity of preparing a last will and testament, but the possibility of her imminent death must have seemed remote to her because she died intestate.

John Wesley had another tragedy when he lost his mother in 1848, at the age of nine only years old. An entry in the Book of Wills for Stanly County in 1848 records the death of Nancy Burleyson. This document appointed Isaac Burleson, John Wesley's Uncle, as his legal guardian, and he apparently lived with Isaac for two years, until 1850.

Another entry for Stanly County dated July 15th, 1850, shows Uncle Isaac Burleson returning assets of \$181.14 to the three youngest orphans. The oldest son of Joseph and Nancy, Isaac Burleson, was already 23 years old in 1850, and probably did not go to live with Uncle Isaac at the time of his mother's death.

While Isaac went out on his own, David Derrick, John Wesley, and Joseph Benjamin Burleyson were sent to adoptive families in 1850. David Derrick (age 15) went to live with Davidson Lowder, Joseph Benjamin (age 8) went to live with Adam Richey, and John Wesley Burleson (age 11), went to live with Alexander McLester.

David Derrick Burleyson and Joseph Benjamin Burleyson went on to become prominent farmers and businessmen, and their homes are featured in a book of homes in Cabarrus County. It is interesting to note that all four of Joseph Burleyson's sons fought in the Civil War as Confederate infantrymen.

John Wesley Burleyson

The military years

Following the tragic death of his parents, Wesley went to live with Alex McLester, a neighboring farmer. John Wesley Burleyson apparently endeared himself to his adopted family, for upon the death of Alex McLester in 1892, his will gives Wesley 56 acres of land and forgave a \$200 loan that Alex had made to Wesley (see appendix).

When considering the state of North Carolina during the 1850s, we must remember that while the railroads and public schools had come to North Carolina, most people seldom traveled more than 50 miles from their place of birth.

Upon the outbreak on the War of Northern Aggression, John Wesley enlisted in the Confederate Army on July 29th, 1861 joining the *Stanly Yankee Hunters* as a Private in Company D, 28th North Carolina Infantry (see appendix).

Company D of the 28th NC also contained cousins Ebin and Adam Burleson. Wesley's brother, Joseph Benjamin Burleyson served in Company C of the 37th NC of Lane's Brigade, also known as the Mecklenburg Wide Awakes". On July 3, 1863, Gen. Lane led his brigade all the way to the rock wall at Gettysburg, but had to fall back. On the wall the 28th NC lost their regimental flag to the 126th NY Infantry. Ebin Burleson and John Wesley were among the lucky ones to return alive to the Confederate cannons to take up a defensive position. Joseph Benjamin was left on the field wounded for the third time and captured by the Yankees.



This is the flag of the 28th N. C., Infantry. This flag was one of the 33 Confederate colors captured with the repulse of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. Of the 349 men, 104 fell during Pickett's charge.

Wesley fought with a battle-hardened unit of Confederate infantrymen in the [Branch Lane Brigade](#) serving at bloody first Manassas (Bull Run) and in the Petersburg Virginia siege lines. During that period the 28th N.C. Reg. was badly outnumbered and short on food, clothing and medical supplies.

Wesley Burleyson fought in the bloody battle of Waterloo, Virginia and was captured by the Union in July of 1863 following his participation in the legendary Pickett's charge at Gettysburg PA, on July 3rd 1863. Upon capture, Wesley Burleson was then sent to the Old Capital Prison in Washington DC.



The Old Capitol Prison in Washington DC

In both the North and South, Civil War POW camps were horrible places. Food was scarce, sanitation was non-existent, and wounded soldiers were often left to die. Disease killed more soldiers in the Civil War than bullets, and any major wound was regarded as a death sentence. Fortunately, Wesley Burleyson was not wounded and he was released from the POW camp after he signed an Oath of Allegiance to the United States on September 26th, 1863. (See appendix)

Although there are no known photographs of Wesley Burleyson during his younger years, his military records describe him as standing five feet seven inches tall, with light hair, light complexion, and blue eyes.

Upon signing the Oath of Allegiance to the United States, Wesley was sent to Philadelphia to bide his time until the end of the Civil War. Wesley's Confederate Army record lists him as missing and a possible rebel deserter, but we know that this entry was made because the Confederates did not know that he had been captured in battle.

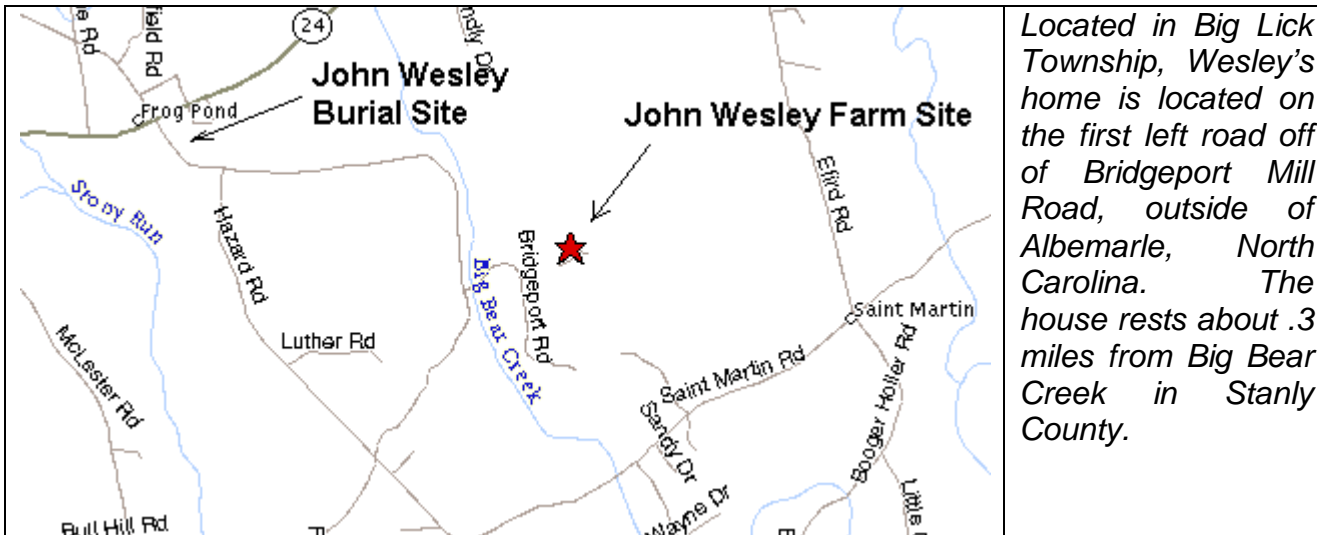
John Wesley would tell stories of his journey from Pennsylvania back to North Carolina following the Civil War. Wesley traveled on foot for more than 500 miles without food or provisions. Wesley mentioned that he relied on eating wild honey from beehives and other foraging to survive his journey home. Upon Wesley's return from the Civil War in 1865, he married Sarah L. Page, daughter of Dempsey Page. Sarah and Wesley were married on the 14th of November, 1865, the same day that they applied for a marriage license. (See appendix)

They built a home on land owned by Alex McLester (later bequeathed to John Wesley) and this home survived for over 100 years before being destroyed by fire in 1995.

THE WILL OF ALEX MCLESTER

Sixth-, I give and bequeath to Joseph Wesley Burleyson a fifty acre track of land lying on Big Bear creek known as the Laban Smith track of Land to have and to hold to his own forever. I will and bequeath to Joseph Wesley Burleyson another track of land containing about sixteen acres. Lying between and adjoining the above named track of fifty acres and J.W. Burlerson and Allen Barbee lands to have and to hold to the said Joseph Wesley Burleyson his heirs and assignees forever. Except the life estate of my wife in said land devised in a former item of this my will in the meadows in the fifty acre track that I have bequeathed to the said Joseph Wesley Burleyson. I will and bequeath to Joseph Wesley Burleyson one certain note I hold of against him to the amount of two hundred dollars. If not collected during my life time to have and to hold to the said Joseph Wesley Burleyson on his heirs and assignees forever.

John Wesley's barn still stands and is used to house livestock. Upon his death, John Wesley left this house to his son Brantley, who lived in it until his death in 1944.



Wesley and Sarah Burleyson had a total of eleven children.

- Caroline Burleyson (1866-1908)
- Cornelius "Neal" Burleyson (1868-1935)
- James Vespasian "Pace" Burleyson (1869-1949)
- Josephus Alexander Burleyson (1872-1909)
- Francis Burleyson (1874-1918)

Magga "Maggie" Burleyson (1876-19??)
 Delphia Burleyson (1877-1950)
 Lille Belle Burleyson (1877-1950)
 Brantley David Burleyson (1889-1944)

Their last two children, Travis Wesley Burleyson (1883-1885), and Ella Malinda Burleyson (1885-1885), died as toddlers and did not survive to see their third birthdays.

Below is the 1900 Census showing Wesley Burleson (at age 60) and family. This entry was written by his son, James Vespasian Burleson.

		- Lewis C	Daughter	W	7	June	1839	22	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Mary	Daughter	W	7	Aug	1840	15	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Alice	Daughter	W	7	Dec	1845	14	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
61	61	Smith Wm J	Husband	W	28	Nov	1870	30	11	8		North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Ella	wife	W	7	June	1862	37	5	4	3	North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Ransom	Son	W	20	Mar	1874	26	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Clara V	Daughter	W	7	May	1875	25	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Dewey	Son	W	10	Dec	1879	20	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		Hartwell John	Brother	W	20	Feb	1870	30	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
62	62	Burdycan Wm	Husband	W	20	Apr	1879	21	11	35		North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Sarah	wife	W	7	Apr	1845	54	20	11	9	North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Francis C	Daughter	W	7	Oct	1876	23	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Delphy R	Daughter	W	7	Jan	1877	23	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Cola Bell	Daughter	W	21	Oct	1872	27	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Brantley D	Son	W	21	Sept	1878	22	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
63	63	Barber Matthew	Husband	W	20	Jan	1860	39	11	14		North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Rebecca	wife	W	7	Dec	1861	38	15	5	5	North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Charlie S	Son	W	14	June	1874	26	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Tim J	Son	W	10	Apr	1885	15	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Mary Jane	Daughter	W	7	Nov	1887	12	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Joseph W	Son	W	6	Sept	1890	10	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Sara C	Daughter	W	4	Sept	1894	7	5			North Car	North Car	North Car
64	64	Burris Jno. J	Husband	W	20	Dec	1870	30	11	9	0	North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Pratie Jane	wife	W	7	Nov	1870	30	11	9	0	North Car	North Car	North Car
65	65	Barber Robert J	Husband	W	20	Oct	1878	22	11	12		North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Laura E	wife	W	7	Dec	1875	25	11	10		North Car	North Car	North Car
		- Madia R	Daughter	W	7	Jan	1876	24	11	10		North Car	North Car	North Car

On December 4, 1920 John Wesley Burleson filed his last will and testament at the Stanly County courthouse. This will provides that Sarah Burleyson inherited the whole estate, with additional provisions upon her death. John Wesley left his son Brantley David Burleson, all of his personal property, including the Burleson family Bible and his beloved cap lock musket. John Wesley's musket remained in the family until it was sold at auction in 1951 by Joseph Lee Burleson, Brantley's son. Joseph Lee was fighting for the US Marine Corp in the Korean War and was unable to keep the family heirlooms. Other personal property of John Wesley was locked in a concrete safe at the abandoned family homestead, but all was lost when the safe was opened during his absence overseas.

John Wesley lived to be 87 years old, and remained very active until his death on August 23, 1926. He was remembered by his grandchildren as a loving old gentleman. His granddaughter, Sara Burleson Bock, remembered sitting on his lap at the old homestead, making braids in his long white beard. Wesley's obituary in the Stanly News (Aug 27th, 1925), lionized him as a strong farmer who could do the work of two men.

Eight of Wesley's children are buried next to him and Sarah at the Pleasant Grove cemetery in Frogpond, North Carolina. John Wesley was a dedicated Baptist, and donated the land for the Pleasant Grove church where he is buried alongside many of his children.

*Obituary of John Wesley Burleson
Stanly News-Herald
Tuesday, August 24th, 1926*

ANOTHER OLD VETERAN GOES TO HIS REWARD

Mr. J. W. Burleson, 88 years of age, and a Confederate war veteran, died at his home near St. Martin's Church Sunday morning at 7 o'clock. He was one of the leading farmers of the county and it is said of him before he became decrepit with age, that he could do as much work as two ordinary men.

Funeral services were held Monday at 2 o'clock at Pleasant Grove Church, where the deceased was faithful member. The funeral was largely attended by people from all over the county and Albemarle.

He is survived by six children; three sons and three daughters. They are — Mrs. J. A. Huneycutt, of Albemarle; Misses Belle and Delphia, of home; J. V. Burleson, of near New London; Branton (Brantley), who lives at the old home place, and Cornelius, near St. Martin's Church.

Mr. Burleson was one of the remaining few of those venerable old Confederate veterans who came back to Stanly County after the war and by their hard work and thrift, helped to rebuild a poverty stricken country that had been devastated by four years of war. With the passing of Mr. Burleson, Stanly County has lost one of its older and substantial citizens. He fought through the entire Civil War.

PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH BURIAL MAP RECORD

(Joseph) Wesley Burleyson—Sept. 28th 1839—Aug 22nd 1926 wife-Sarah L. (page)—Aug. 4th 1845—Jan. 20th. 1924 (dau of Demsey Page dau.-Francis Burleyson-Nov. 5th.1873-Mar. 3th. 1918 son-Travis Wesley Burleyson—Oct. 19th. 1833—June. 7th. 1885
dau-Ella Malinda Burleyson—Sept. 2nd. 1885—Nov. 13th. 1885
W.C. (William) Burleson—Aug. 3rd. 1868—Jan. 8th. 1935
(death certificate states that William was born July. 31st. 1869 (and died Jan. 10th. 1935)
(son of Joseph Wesley & Sarah L. Page Burleson) wife-Mary C (Kate) Boone—Sept. 7th. 1867—May. 29th. 1950
son-Arthur M. Burleson—Sept. 27th. 1889—Sept. 17th. 1899
Joseph A. Burleson—Jan. 27th. 1872—Nov. 12th. 1909
Wife-L. Jane Eudy—Sept. 24th. 1874—Aug. 28th. 1956
son-Lander D. Burleson—Mar. 14th. 1906—Mar. 28th. 1922
son-Vibert J. Burleson—Sept. 24th. 1908—Dec. 23rd. 1911
Magdalene (Smith) Burleson—Jan. 23rd. 1876—Jan. 15th. 1930 (wife of John L. Burleson & dau. of Jonah & Maggie Hatley Smith)
Delphia (Rona) Burleson—Jan. 23rd. 1876—Dec. 10th. 1950
(Cora) Belle Burleson—Sept. 25th. 1880.—Sept. 16th. 1950
(dau. of Joseph Wesley & Sarah L. Page Burleson) Brantley David Burleson—Sept. 6th. 1899—Oct. 30th. 1944 wife —Myrtle S.
son-Brantley David Burleson Jr.—born & died June 7th 1945
dau.-Ruby Evelyn Burleson—Mar. 25th. 1940—Mar. 26th. 1940
John Quincy Burleyson—June. 17th. 1891—Apr. 21st. 1945
Jason L. Burleyson—Aug. 8th. 1894—May. 24th. 1968
Cromer F. Burleson—Dec. 6th. 1894—May. 29th. 1933

Will of J. W. Burleyson.

North Carolina, Stanly County.

I, J. W. Burleyson, of the aforesaid county and state, being of sound mind but considering of my earthly existence, do make and declare this my last Will and Testament.

First- My executor, hereinafter named, shall give my body a decent burial suitable to the wishes of my friends and relatives, and pay all my funeral expenses, together with all my just debts, out of the first moneys which may come into his hands belonging to my estate.

Second- I give and devise to my beloved wife, Sarah L. Burleyson, all my property, real and personal, so long as she shall live.

Third- After the death of my wife, Sarah L. Burleyson, I give and bequeath all my personal property to Brantley David Burleyson, except as hereinafter devised.

Fourth- After the death of my wife, Sarah L. Burleyson, I give and bequeath to my son, Brantley Burleyson, and to my two daughters, Cora Bell Burleyson and Delphia Burleyson, for the terms of their natural lives only, three tracts of land as follows: The home tract where I now live, consisting of fifty (50) acres; The Allen Barbee tract, consisting of sixteen (16) acres; the Laban Smith tract, consisting of fifty (50) acres; in case of the death of either of the said devisees, with children, she share of the deceased shall go to said children, but if either of them should die without children, then the survivors, or their bodily heirs shall take the interest of the deceased.

Fifth- After the death of my wife, Sarah L. Burleyson, I give and devise to the bodily heirs of J. A. Burleyson a one hundred acre tract of land known as the Fannie Robbins tract, on condition that the said devisees shall pay to J. V. Burleyson or his heirs. One Thousand (\$1000.00) Dollars, the same to be a lien on said land until the same is paid.

Sixth- After the death of my wife, Sarah L. Burleyson, I give and bequeath to Mary Madeline Huneycutt during her life, and then to her bodily heirs a one-half (1/2) undivided interest in the Farrington Burris lands, consisting of thirty-one (31) acres more or less; and I give and devise to the bodily heirs of Mrs. Caroline Tucker the other one half (1/2) undivided interest in the Farrington Burris lands, consisting of thirty-one (31) acres, more or less.

Seventh - I have heretofore deeded to my son, W. C. Burleyson a tract of land in the fork of the creek, consisting of one hundred and fifty (150) acres, more or less for the nominal sum of Three Hundred (\$300.00) Dollars, and I consider that he is entitled to nothing further out of my estate, and neither he nor his heirs shall have anything more out of my estate.

Eighth- I hereby constitute and appoint my son, J. V. Burleyson, my lawful executor to all intents and purposes to execute this, my last Will and Testament according to the true intent and meaning of the same, and every part and clause thereof, hereby revoking and declaring utterly void all other Wills and Testaments by me heretofore made.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, the said J. W. Burleyson, do hereunto set my hand and seal, this the 4th day of December, 1920.

J.W. Burleyson (SEAL)

James Vespasian Burleson

The third child of John Wesley was James Vespasian Burleson, also known as J. V. or "Pace" Burleson. Pace was the first Burleson in our line to have an advanced education, but no evidence of a College education has been located. We do know that Pace was a teacher in the New London school in the 1890's. It was here that he met his wife, Corinna P. Hardister, who also taught school in the 1890's. Family tradition says that Corinna had a college degree, but only listed her formal educations as "read and write" on the birth certificate on her son, Louis Burleson.

Corinna Pauline Hardister was the daughter of Jonathan W. and Julia Hardister. Jonathan Hardister served in the Civil War in a cannon brigade from Salisbury North Carolina, and was wounded in the buttocks at Pickett's charge in Gettysburg. Jonathan recovered in a Confederate hospital and was re-assigned to tend to the wounded until the end of the War.



Pace Burleson and Corinna Hardister were married on the 30th of May, 1900 in New London, North Carolina. (see appendix) Corinna quit her job at the school and Pace began working a farm just south of New London. Pace was a very deliberate mathematician, and witnesses stated that Pace pre-cut every single board of the family homestead and barn before starting construction. Pace's home stands on a small hilltop about 1.5 miles southeast of where he is buried.

The first two years of marriage was very tragic for Pace and Corinna as their first born son died in 1901 after living less than four weeks. He was not named and is buried at St. Martin's Cemetery. In 1902, Pace and Corinna had a second son who they named Robert Lee. Robert Lee died at 18 months of age, and is buried at New London Cemetery, next to Pace and Corinna.

Despite the tragic loss of their first two children, Pace and Corinna had seven more children.

Mary Elizabeth Burleson Williams (1905-1973)
Dorothy Louise Burleson Foutz (1907-1953)

Sarah B. Burleson Bock (1909-1985)
 Vincent Burleson (1911-1976)
 Claude & Clement Burleson (1912-1912)
 Louis Francis Burleson (1914-1975)

Pace opened a grocery store about 1920 at the southeast corner of Depot and US Route 52 in New London, North Carolina. The grocery store burned down, and Pace became a traveling salesman, selling shoes and miscellaneous house wares. He was also reported to have sold moonshine whiskey, and enjoyed chewing tobacco.

Below is a sample of the 1900 U. S. Census for Stanly County, Big Lick Township, showing the entry for William Burleson. Note that this census was taken by James Vespasian Burleson, Wesley's son and is [in his own handwriting](#).

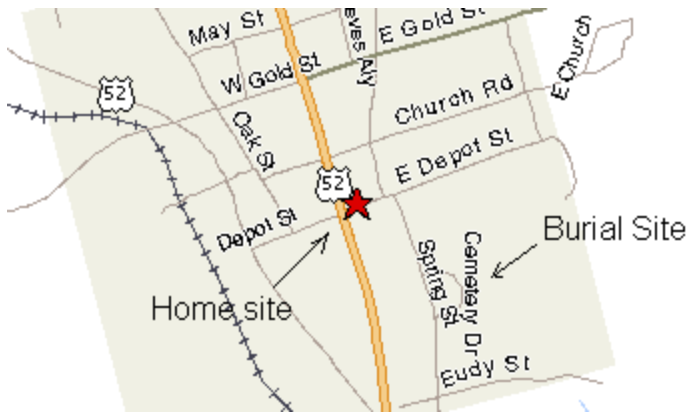
7-2864
 TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES
 SCHEDULE No. 1.—POPULATION.

North Carolina }
 Stanly }
 or other division of county. Big Lick Name of Institution, _____
(Insert name of township, town, precinct, district, or other civil division, as the case may be. See instructions.)
 * incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division, _____
 Enumerated by me on the 14 day of June, 1900, James V. Burleson

1	2	3	4	5	6	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION					NATIVITY			CITIZENSHIP				
						DAYS OF BIRTH		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
						Month	Year											
1	1	Whitley, Muel...	Head	W	M	Apr	1832	27	M	0			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Cora	wife	W	F	Oct	1851	19	M	0	11		North Car	North Car	North Car			
2	2	Burleson, Wm	Wife	W	M	Aug	1868	31	M	11			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Catharine	wife	W	F	Aug	1861	30	M	11	6	5	North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Duncy	son	W	M	June	1891	8	M	5			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Joseph	son	W	M	Nov	1896	4	M	8			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Thomas	son	W	M	Apr	1894	6	M	5			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Anna Belle	daughter	W	F	Apr	1892	8	M	5			North Car	North Car	North Car			
		— Macon	son	W	M	Oct	1895	1	M	5			North Car	North Car	North Car			
3	3	Hatten, W. W.	Head	W	M	Oct	1862	37	M	14			North Car	North Car	North Car			

The Burleson family lived on a small farm outside of New London, North Carolina, until a tragic accident caused the house to burn. It is said that one of the children was playing near the fireplace and accidentally started a fire that engulfed the home. The Burlesons then moved into the town of New London.

A deed record in the Stanly County courthouse, dated the 31st of December, 1909, shows the Burleson family purchasing their home on 175 Depot Street in New London for \$250. (See appendix) The house was torn down in the 1950's.



New London, NC, showing home site and burial site

The family lived in this home until they were grown, and Corinna continued to live there until she entered a nursing home. In her declining years, Corinna Burleson would always keep a picture of Robert Lee, her second son, with her wherever she traveled. Corinna was a very energetic woman, and was known for her fast pace and intense focus. Judging by the caliber of the children she raised, Corinna must have been a remarkable woman.

During their later years, Pace traveled Stanly County on an Army Jeep, and having been a long-time schoolteacher, knew many people in the area. Pace was said to give apples to young children in return for the proper spelling of words. Pace was an avid reader and enjoyed keeping-up with current events. Pace was seldom seen without a newspaper in his hands.

Pace and Corinna are buried at the Cemetery in New London at the corner of Spring St and Cemetery Dr. Corinna's parents, Jonathan W. Hardister and Julia Hardister are also buried at this site.

Descendents of Pace Burleson

In the 1920's, Mary Burleson went to New York City to pursue a career in nursing, and she was soon followed by Sara and Lou. They lived together in an apartment on Lexington Avenue. Mary became a registered nurse and lived in Connecticut with her husband, Jim Williams. Mary raised three children, Sue Williams Bertagna, Jim Williams, and John Williams. Mary was a very kind hearted woman, and her pleasant personality endeared her to all.

Both Vincent and Louis Burleson pursued careers in the U.S. Air Force.

Vince Burleson was a tall, muscular man with blue eyes and handsome features. During combat in the Korean War, Vince's aircraft was shot down, and Vince was forced to bail out at a very high altitude. Vince was badly injured, but survived to receive the Air Medal for his courage. Vince Burleson retired from the Air Force in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where he died from Emphysema in 1976. Vince Burleson had one son, James Vincent Burleson Jr., who was a successful stockbroker in New York City.

Louis Francis Burleson

Louis Francis Burleson was born on November 30th 1914, on the farm in New London, North Carolina. Originally named Kenneth Burleyson, his name was changed to Louis Francis after his mother converted to Catholicism in 1917. Corinna was told by the Parrish Priest to re-name him with a Catholic name, and 3-year old Louis was not enamored by the name change, complaining "Me Kenny, not Louie". His birth certificate confirms this name change, with the original Kenneth crossed-out and replaced with "Louis Francis".

Louis grew up as the youngest child of Pace and Corinna Burleson, with Pace become a new father at 45 years of age. He was very athletic as a young man, and earned high school letters in football, basketball and baseball. Louis started work at the Mill in New London, and was recognized for his skills in keeping the tricky machinery running. However, Louis became restless with the small town atmosphere of rural North Carolina, and went to New York City after his graduation from high school to stay with his older sisters Mary and Sara who lived in Manhattan.

Louis started his working career as a door-to-door encyclopedia salesman in New York. In 1936 Louis joined the US Army Air Corp and was stationed at Hickam field in Hawaii, where he learned aircraft mechanics. Louis also continued to enjoy baseball, and was the pitcher for the Army team in Hawaii (See appendix).

Gifted with a photographic memory and a natural ability in mathematics, Louis became an avid gambler and by supervising poker games he made substantially more than his meager military pay of \$36/month. Louis knew all the tricks of the card sharks, and was paid 10% from each pot to keep the game honest. By 1938, Louis had an off-base apartment, and hired a Navy Captain's wife to do the cleaning.

In 1939, Louis was transferred to Kirtland Field in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It was there in 1940 that he met Virginia Griffiths, who he married later that year.

Virginia (Ginger) Griffiths was a native of Ireland, and was born on Feb 15th, 1920 in Dublin. She immigrated to the United States with her mother Geraldine Virginia Burns (born 1903) following the death of her father Charles Griffiths. Geraldine Burns was the daughter of Dr. J. L. Burns of Dublin Ireland.

Charles Griffiths was reported to have served in the British Armed Forces and died while returning from India in 1919. He was buried at sea. Virginia moved with her mother to New York City in 1921 and lived there until they moved to Albuquerque in 1934.

Virginia attended the University of New Mexico and earned a degree in general studies in 1942. Ironically, Louis and Ginger both lived in New York City in the 1920's and lived a few blocks from each other for several years. They both remembered the construction of the Empire State Building, but it would be many years before they would meet in Albuquerque. They met while Ginger was playing with her pet rabbits on her front lawn and Louis drove by in a jeep. Louis stopped to introduce himself, and they immediately found themselves attracted to each other. They were married in September of 1941.

Several days after their wedding, Louis was transferred to Clark Field in the Philippines, and was assigned to the 19th bomb group of the 5th Air Force. It was at Clark Field where Louis first encountered combat when he fought the Japanese on December 7th, 1941.

The Japanese invaded the Philippines, and Louis fled to New Guinea, and later to Australia. Louis was on the very last ship to leave the Philippines before the Japanese invasion and he narrowly escaped participating in the Bataan Death March.



During his time in Australia, Louis flew fifty-two combat missions as a gunner and flight engineer in a B17 bomber. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross on two occasions, each time for meritorious valor in combat, and also received the Air Medal. As a gunner on the B17's, Louis expert marksmanship with the 50-caliber machine guns sent numerous Japanese Zero's crashing into the Pacific Ocean.

Louis Burleson was promoted from Staff Sergeant to Captain within a period of two years. Major Bernard Shriver, the officer who recommended him for commission, later became a 4-star general.

Louis was transferred to Waco, Texas in 1944 to serve as an instructor of aircraft mechanics. Being a very creative fellow, Louis invented several tools for aircraft warfare, and was transferred to the Pentagon in Washington, DC. The US Air Force patented several of Lou's inventions.

A document was located in which Louis Burleson was recommended to receive the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest medal awarded in the United States. The DSC, usually given only

to generals, was offered to Louis for his outstanding contribution to air warfare in the South Pacific Theatre. Louis declined the medal, stating that he was not worthy of this honor.

Louis Burleson was then assigned to Muroc AFB (now re-named Edwards AFB) in California where he was in charge of aircraft maintenance. It was there that he became friends with Chuck Yeager, who later went on to be the first person to break the sound barrier.

Louis was later transferred to postwar Japan where he resided until the start of the Korean conflict. He served in Korea as an aircraft maintenance squadron commander, and earned the Bronze Star medal. Lou's brother, Vince Burleson, also served in Korea and received the Air Medal.

Louis once remarked that the best advice he ever received from his father was the saying "There's always room at the top". He interpreted his father's advice to mean that a person could always rise to the top, and the only impediment to achievement was a lack of confidence in your own abilities.

Louis was an expert marksman, and was rated as an expert rifleman by the US Army Air Corps. Superior marksmanship was a very important skill, and was held in high regard by all past generations of the Burleson family. Louis enjoyed hunting, and at one time owned more than 15 rifles.

Louis and Ginger had one child, Donald Keith Burleson, while they were stationed in Aurora Colorado. Following Lou's retirement in 1958 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, the couple moved back to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Louis developed a severe hearing loss and crippling arthritis after his retirement from the Air Force, but he always maintained a cheerful disposition and occupied his time by doing volunteer work for the Republican Party. An avid reader, Louis spent his last days keeping up with current political and national events. As Lou's health continued to deteriorate, he was eventually confined to a wheelchair, and died on September 26, 1975 at the age of 60.

Louis F. Burleson was buried in the Santa Fe National Cemetery with full military honors, including a twenty-one gun salute. His wife Virginia (Ginger) died six months later from lung cancer, and is buried next to him.

Donald Keith Burleson

Donald Burleson was born on 3/25/1956 in Aurora Colorado, moving to Albuquerque New Mexico in 1959. He received a BA in Social Psychology from the University of New Mexico in 1979 and an MBA in Information Systems in 1983. He later taught Information Systems at the University of New Mexico, Webster University, The Rochester Institute of Technology and Empire State College.

Don Burleson is one of the world's top Oracle Database experts. He specializes in creating database architectures for very large online databases and he has worked with some of the world's most powerful and complex systems. A leading database author, Don has written a 14 books, published more than 100 articles in National Magazines, and serves as Editor-in-Chief of Oracle Internals Magazine. Don is a popular lecturer and teacher and is a frequent speaker at Oracle Openworld and other international database conferences. Don also writes the Oracle Answers column at TechRepublic.com, and publishes the weekly Oracle Tech-tips e-mail.



In addition to his services as a consultant, Don and his wife Janet are also active in charitable programs to aid visually impaired individuals. Don and Janet Burleson pioneered a technique for delivering tiny pigmy horses as guide animals for the blind and manages a non-profit corporation called the Guide Horse Foundation dedicated to providing Guide horses to blind people free-of-charge. The Web Site for The Guide Horse Foundation is <http://www.guidehorse.org/>.

As a leading corporate database consultant, Don has worked with numerous Fortune 500 corporations creating robust database architectures for mission-critical systems. Don is also a noted expert on eCommerce systems, and has instrumental in the development of numerous Web-based systems that support thousands of concurrent users.

Don's professional web sites include www.dba-oracle.com and www.remote-dba.net.

Donald Burleson also provides remote DBA support and consulting services, specializing in Oracle database tuning, Oracle data warehousing and design of Oracle databases on the Web. Don is also a former adjunct professor and has taught more than 100 graduate-level computer courses.

Don Burleson's books include:

Oracle UNIX Administration, Oracle Press, 2002

Oracle Internals, CRC Press, 2001

Oracle High Performance SQL Tuning, Oracle Press, 2001

Oracle High Performance Tuning with STATSPACK, Oracle Press, 2001

Unix for the Oracle DBA, O'Reilly & Associates, 2000

Oracle SAP Administration, O'Reilly & Associates, 1999

Inside the Database Object Model, CRC Press, 1998

High Performance Oracle Data Warehousing, Coriolis Publishing, 1997

High Performance Oracle 8 Tuning, Coriolis Publishing, 1997

High Performance Oracle Database Applications, Coriolis Publishing, 1996

Oracle Databases on the Web, Coriolis Publishing, 1996

Managing Distributed Databases, John Wiley & Sons, 1994

Practical Application of Object-oriented Techniques to Relational Databases, John Wiley & Sons, 1993

Andrew Sean Burleson



Andrew Sean Burleson was born the 7th of April 1985 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was the first child of Donald and Melissa Burleson. Andrew lived in Rochester, New York for several years and later moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, again after Don and Melissa's separation. Andrew was an average student at Eldorado High School and played trombone in symphonic and jazz bands with the school. Outside of school he took interest in playing guitar.

Jennifer Anne Burleson



Jennifer Anne Burleson was born on the 27th day in July 1986, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She is the only daughter of Donald and Melissa Burleson. Jennifer lived in Rochester, New York, for several years and later moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, after Don and Melissa's divorce. She was an honor roll student at Eldorado High School and participated in activities such as color guard through her school and had an interest in horses and other animals for an additional pastime.