

Thatcher Wyllys Benson, World War I soldier

Around 1919, the Kansas State Historical Society and the American Legion solicited biographical information from returning veterans (primarily members of the 35th and 89th infantry divisions) and the families of those who died in service, notably from the Gold Star Mothers. Each veteran or family member was asked to provide letters, photographs, a biography, and military records. This file contains information on Thatcher Wyllys Benson, Company B, 110th Signal Battalion, 35th Division. Benson died from pneumonia at Commercy, France on December 30, 1918.

Date: 1918-1919

Callnumber: World War I Coll. #49, Box 3 Kansas Soldiers

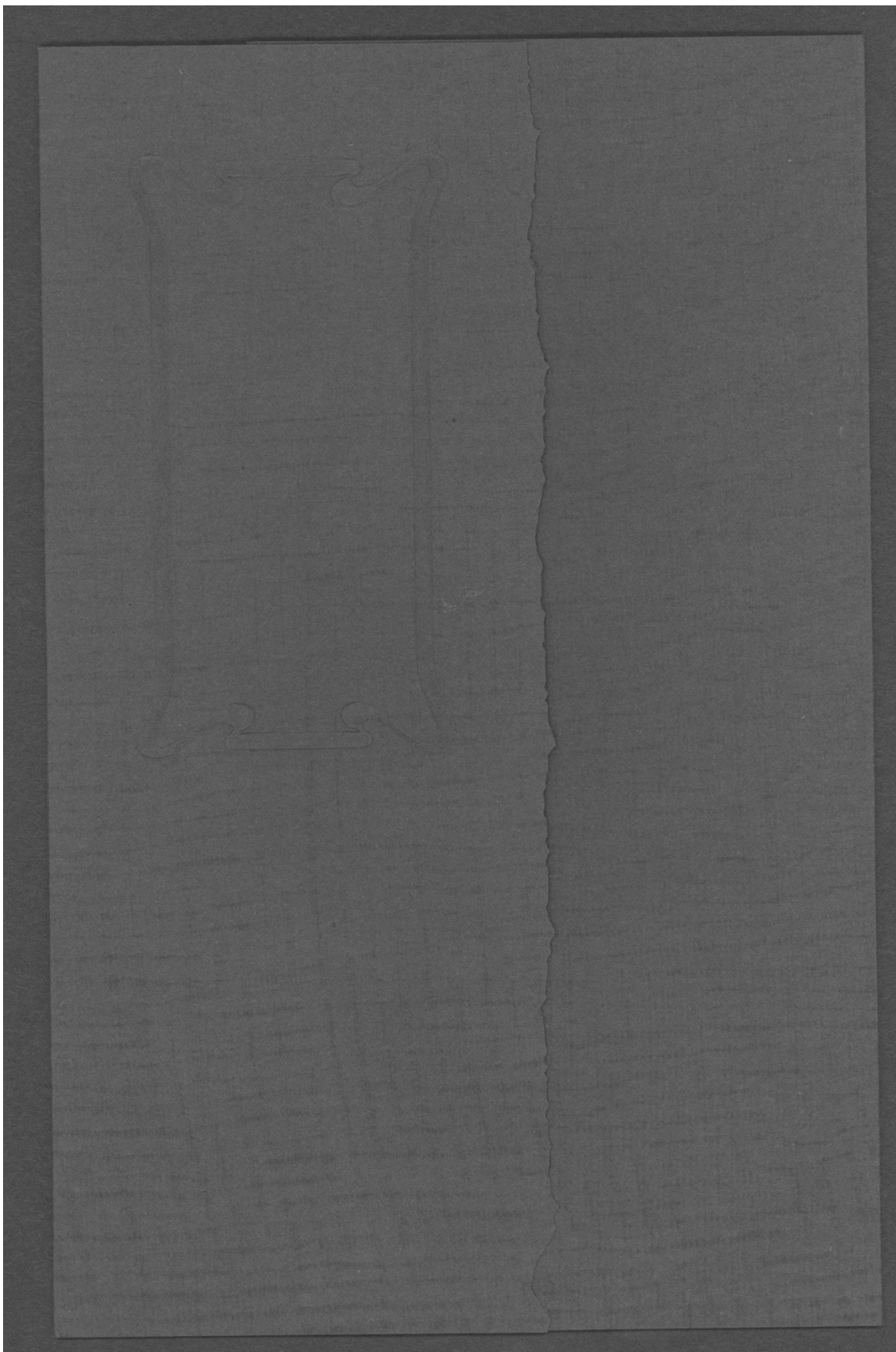
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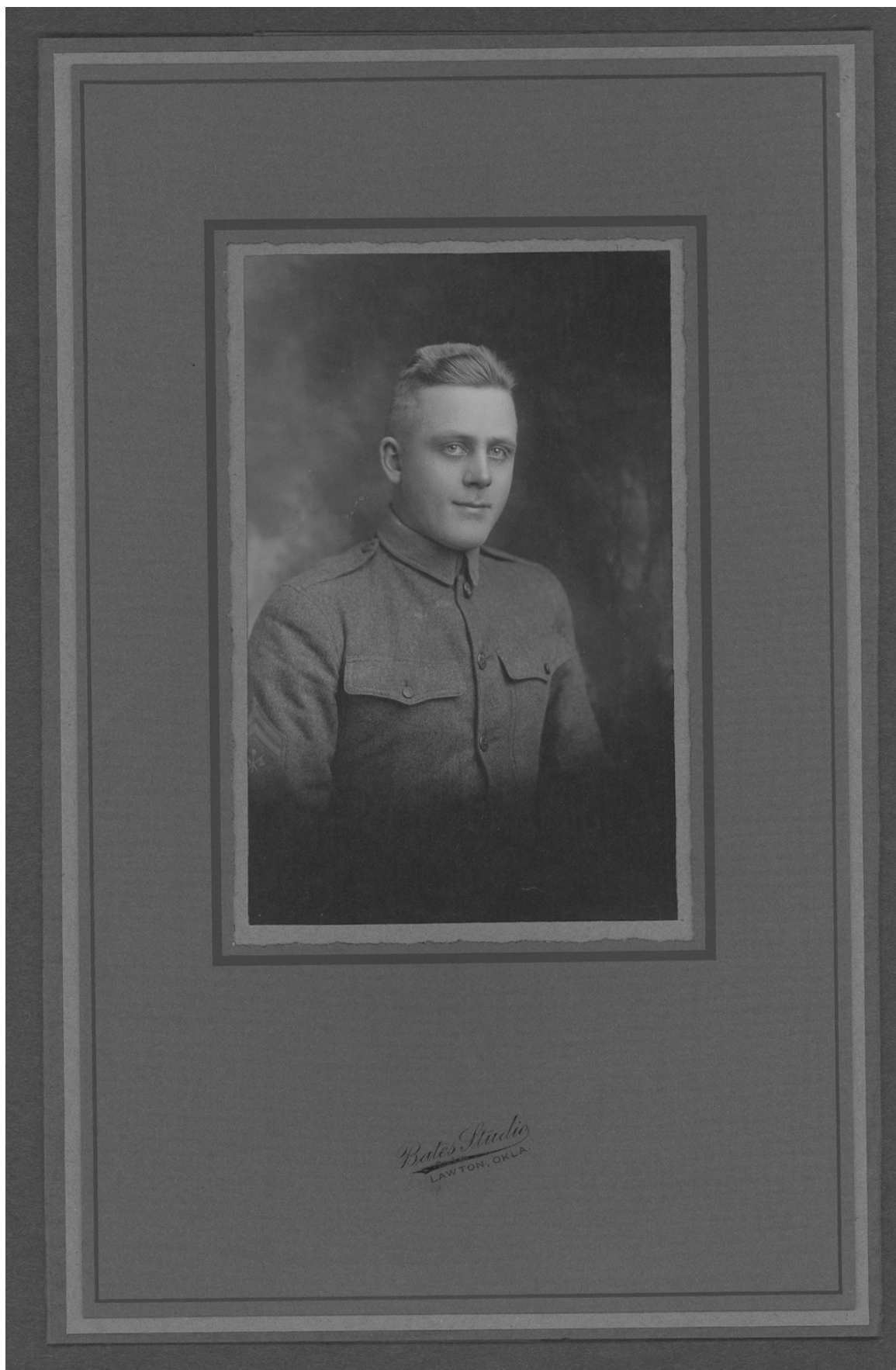
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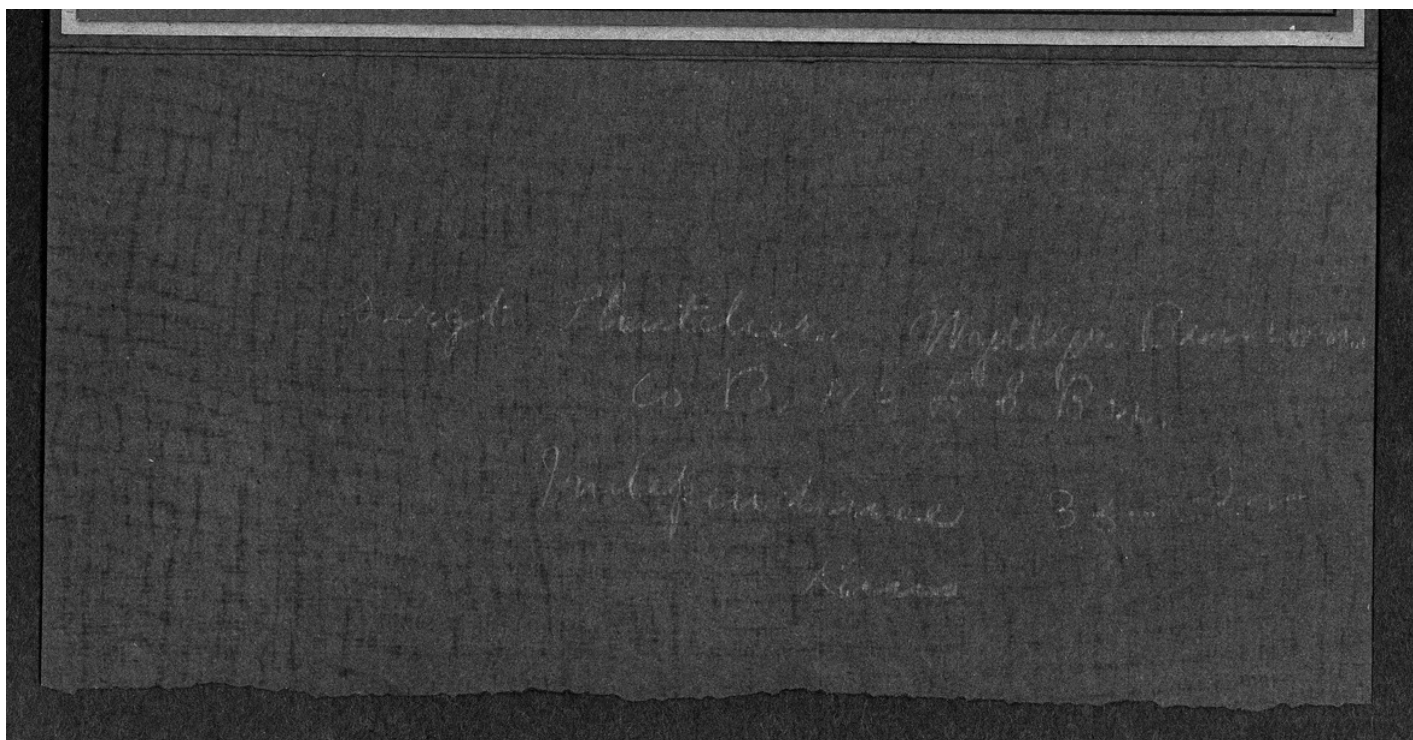
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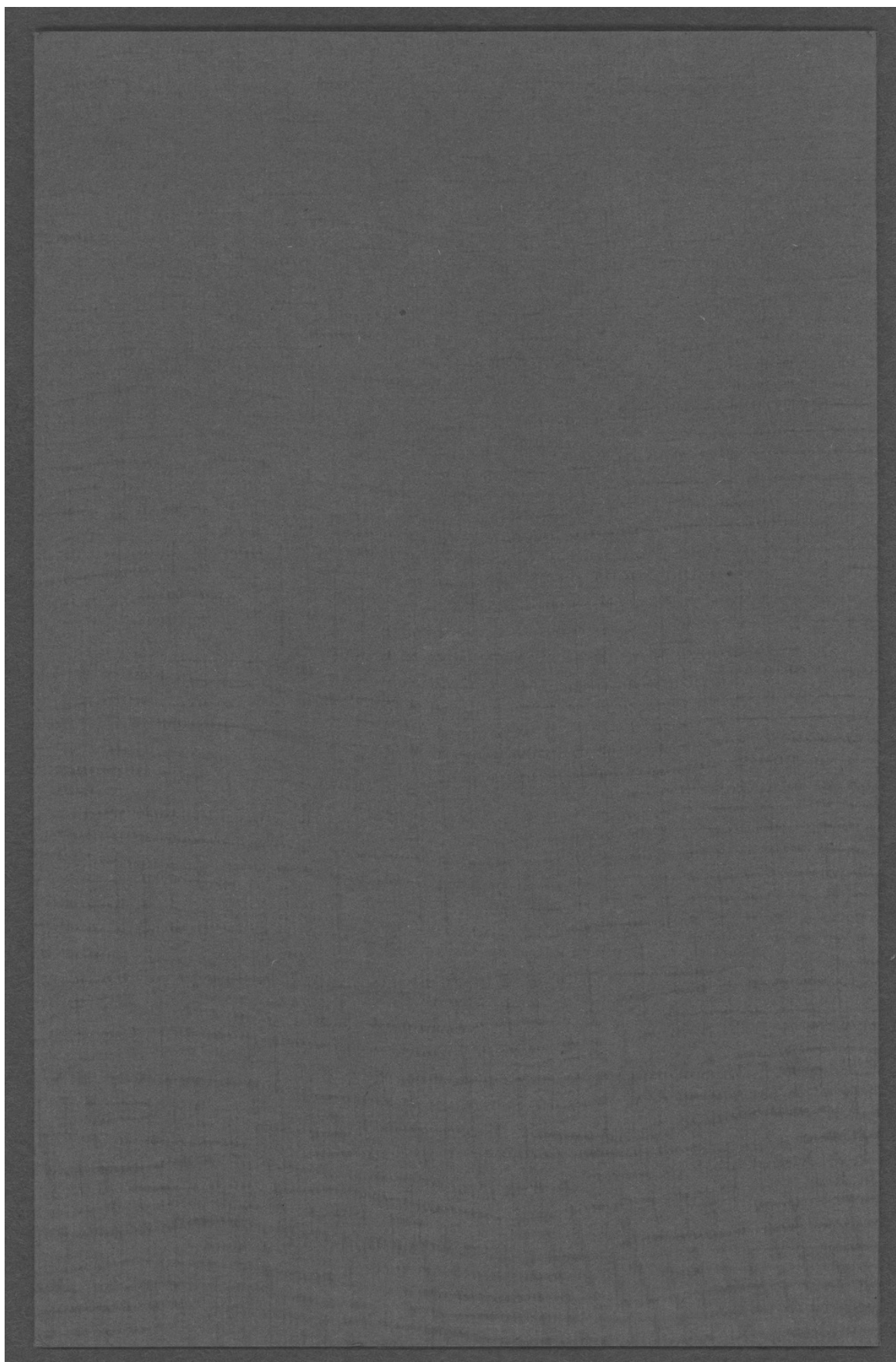
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THATCHER WYLLYS BENSON

Thatcher Wyllys Benson was born February 17, 1895 in Bradford, Pennsylvania. Moved with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Benson to Independence, Kansas, in the Spring of 1904, where he continued in the Graded schools, entering the Montgomery County High School at the age of 13, graduating from this school in 1912 and in the Fall of the same year he was admitted to the Kansas State University, taking Engineering and later entering the Law School of which he was a student at the time of enlistment in the Signal Service of the National Guards of the State of Kansas at Iola, Kansas, on May 6, 1917. Entered the Federal Service August 5, 1917, being made a Corporal of his company, - Company B. 110th Field Signal Battalion, later being promoted to Sergeant. Went overseas with his Division, the 35th, in May 1918, later being made Sergeant First Class, and died of Lobar Pneumonia at Commercy France December 30th, 1918 at the age of 23 years, 10 months and 13 days. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Independence, Kansas, and of the Sigma Nu Fraternity and of the F. & A. M. of Lawrence and the Scottish Rites of Free Masonry of Oklahoma. His Commanding Officer in a letter expresses himself as follows:-

"Our friend and comrade has won the respect, love and affection of every member of this organization. Personally, I had all the confidence in the world in him, and at no time feared to trust him even with the most important details depending upon him; and he never failed me. He was a true soldier and he gave his life nobly."

Thatcher Wyllys Benson, World War I soldier

Mr. Andrew Benson,
Independence, Kansas.

February 28, 1919

Dear sir-

I received your favor of the 26th inst., returning message of sympathy. I have made the correction of the name requested by you and am sending you the corrected certificate herewith. Please send us a photograph of this soldier and sketch of his life. Also send us copies of the letters he wrote from overseas.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

Thatcher Wyllys Benson, World War I soldier

Independence, Kans. Feb. 26, 1919.

Kansas State Historical Society,

Mr. Wm. E. Connelly, Secy.

Topeka, Kans.

Dear Sir:-

I cannot express in words my feelings upon the receipt of your message of Sympathy on the death of our Son in France. It is, indeed, good to know that the Historical Society of the Great State of Kansas remembers the men who died for their Country.

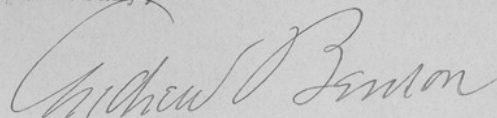
I shall be glad to comply with your request of furnishing you with photograph as well as data touching upon the life of Wyllys Benson, and shall do so in a very few days.

To show you further that I appreciate your message of Sympathy I would ask you to correct the spelling of his name, and I am returning said message for that purpose. Please spell it as follows:

"T. WYLLYS BENSON."

But, in making this change do not change the date of it, namely Feb. 17th, because this was the date of his birth. I would thank you after you have corrected the spelling of the name if you would kindly return it to me, and oblige,

Yours truly,



AB/LL

Encl.

Thatcher Wyllys Benson, World War I soldier

Independence, Kans. April 2, 1919.

Mr. Wm. E. Connelly, Secy.

Kansas State Historical Society,
Memorial Building,
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Sir:-

As per your request of February 17th, I am enclosing you herewith a photograph of Sergeant First Class, Thatcher Wyllys Benson, as well as a short sketch of his life, showing where he was born, schools he attended etc.

Yours very truly,

