

Chapter I
The First Nine Years of My Life

By Russell Banks¹

I was born September 25, [1895](#), at [Elkatawa, Kentucky](#), the year the [railroad](#) was finished into [Jackson, Kentucky](#)². My father, Samuel Henry Banks, made a living by [cutting hickory timber](#) and loading it in box cars to be shipped to [Louisville, Kentucky to make wagons](#). Each car was supposed to have two wooden malls made and put in the car to split the timber at the factory.



I don't know how long we lived at Elkatawa; the first recollection I have is living on [Tira Creek](#)³, a tributary of [Frozen Creek](#). I remember my father was walking to the [O & K⁴ Junction](#), five miles away, to help build the [O & K railroad](#). While we lived here, I had my first pair of shoes. They were [brogans](#) with brass on the toes. There was no right or left, they were exactly the same so as to be changed back and forth if they started to run over. They were made of coarse stiff leather and the soles were put on with wooden pegs. They had to be greased with beef or mutton tallow to soften them up and keep out the water.

When I was three, we moved farther up the creek to a two-room log cabin. Here my father bought my mother her first cook stove. It was a 4-cap cast step stove known as a "rail burner." It cost \$12.50. While we were living here, Mother had a hen setting near the house and the hen was found dead on the nest from snake bite. Mother put the eggs in with an old cat and kittens and hatched every one.

I remember they heated water to make up the clay to daub the cracks in the house to make it warm. The house was underpinned with mud and rocks for warmth. We lived at this place until the fall of 1898, at which time we moved over the mountain to the [Still House Branch](#). At this time there was a lot of talk about the [Spanish American War](#)--1898.

¹ This account was originally hand-written by Russell Banks. His daughter, Gladys Banks Dietrich, typed it into manuscript form. It is unknown where the hand-written account is, but multiple copies of the typed manuscript survive. Only minor typographical errors have been altered from the original text.

² If he is referring to the Kentucky Union Railway, that railroad was completed from Elkatawa to Jackson, KY 15 July 1891. That railroad was reorganized as the Lexington and Eastern Railway Company in late 1894. Conceivably, this reorganization may be what he means in this passage. Sources: <https://www.breathittcounty.com/BreathittWeb2/Railroad.html> & <https://nyx.uky.edu/fa/findingaid/?id=xt73bk16mf8w>.

³ Tyra. Spellings will not be altered in the text. Where needed, footnotes will identify correct spelling.

⁴ Ohio and Kentucky. Construction of the railroad began in Oct. 1899 at the O & K Junction, which was on the Lexington & Eastern Railway 1.3 miles west of Jackson. It was completed in 1901. Sources: <https://berea.libraryhost.com/index.php?p=collections/findingaid&id=33> & <https://goo.gl/q68iT6>.

We lived at this place until 1900, the year my brother Walker was born, and we moved away from here to Wolf⁵ County on [Rose Fork](#). We only lived here a short while and moved back to Jackson on account of my grandfather's illness.

I remember seeing people with mules, and wagons driving in the edge of the river during ice tied and pulling the wagons full of chunks of ice and hauling it to the barns and covering it with saw dust to keep it from melting. A large pile of ice would last till the middle of summer.

In 1901, while we lived in Jackson, there were several killings brought on by [Jim Hargis and Cockerel](#)⁶ feud. The County Judge⁷, Ned Marcus⁸, was killed and [Dr. Cox](#), Edgar Brown and many others. I remember the wagon passing our house taking the body of [Dr. Cox](#) to the cemetery.

Judge Ned [Marcum](#) was killed in the court house door. [Curt Jett](#) was convicted for this and served a sentence for it. A few years after this, [Beech Hargis](#) killed [Jim Hargis](#), his father, and this slowed the killings up somewhat.

About this time my father and mother⁹ were having trouble. OB¹⁰ had come between them. My parents separated at this time and during the winter following we all had the measles from which my older brother, William¹¹, never fully recovered. He died later in the summer from meningitis. From this time on I was shifted back and forth from my mother to my father until my father died in 1904¹². I was ten years old.

Chapter II

From this time on I was shifted about from one place to another as my step father was so mean to me I couldn't stay there with my mother. In 1907, when I was 13 years old, my mother bought me a 20-gage shotgun, and I never went without this gun at any time. When I slept I had the gun hid in the bed with me and when I worked I had it hid near me so I could get to it quickly if anybody tried to abuse me. I took no more beatings after this.

I still had to work for what I ate and I would catch opossums for the fur and sell the pelts at from 10 to 25 cents each. I went almost naked most of the time. I caught fish to sell to buy clothes and

⁵ Wolfe.

⁶ Cockrill.

⁷ Marcum was not county judge, it was Jim Hargis.

⁸ Marcum.

⁹ Samuel Henry Banks (6 May 1856 – 6 Mar. 1905) and Amanda Lockard (17 July 1876 – circa 1933).

¹⁰ Redacted for privacy considerations.

¹¹ According to the 1900 census, William was born in September 1896. Source: <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ky/breathitt/census/1900/1900Magdist1.txt>.

¹² According to Ancestry.com, Samuel Henry Banks died 6 March 1905.

ammunition for my gun. About that time my stepfather did a lot of logging and it was my job to feed a lot of oxen. I would get a sack of corn and run the oxen up and stand in the warm place where they were laying. I fed them the corn an ear at a time and their breath kept my hands warm. I was barefooted and sometimes frost on the ground.

When I was 14 I was hired to stay with my stepfather's brother to help log and raft some timber to be run down the river to [Bell¹³ Point](#) and sold. My pay was to be some new clothes in the spring, but when the work was done I was run off and I got no clothes.

Being the oldest of my mother's children, I was made to wait on the rest of the children as long as I was there¹⁴. I left home with I was 16 years old and went to [Letcher County](#) and worked in a saw mill one winter. I also went to [Cannel City¹⁵](#) and worked in the coal mines, when I was 17. Livestock ran at large then and our sheep went everywhere and dogs killed a lot of them. I remember one man had a dog that killed sheep and we tried to buy it to kill it, but the owner wouldn't sell it, so I went to where they kept the dog and found the owners gone and the dog ran under the floor and I crawled under after him and shot it with my shotgun. I never heard it mentioned after that.

At the age of 17 I remember my first trip down the river on a log raft. We had to start from home, at Jackson, at day light to get over the [dam at Beattyville¹⁶](#) before dark, and when we went over the dam the front end of the raft would go under the water, so we stayed in the middle of the raft until the front end came up and ran on to the front end until the rear end came up. Of course, we never started down the river except in high tide. I made several trips down after that. On one trip we tied up below Beattyville and stayed all night with a man known as Stiller Jim Smith. We slept three to a bed and my stepfather slept in a bed on my left with me and two other men sleeping on a bed made down on the floor. My stepfather had a quart of whiskey in his coat pocket hanging on the bed post which I stole and passed on to the others. When it came back empty, I put it back in his coat pocket and when morning came he hustled out to take him a dram. He almost died. He poured some [asafetida](#) in the quart bottle and told everyone we had drunk his medicine up. When we got home, my mother asked him who ever heard of anyone keeping asafetida in a quart bottle. He never mentioned it again.

I remember working in the coal mines at Jackson for 50 cents a day and board. During my 17th year I walked twenty miles up the Kentucky

¹³ Belle, in Lee County.

¹⁴ Amanda's children from her second husband; they had seven.

¹⁵ Morgan County.

¹⁶ Lee County.

River and spent the summer with my older brother at Wolf Creek¹⁷. This was the year after the railroad was started up on the Kentucky River to [McRoberts](#).

In 1916 I went to [Berea, Kentucky](#) and stayed until spring and was back in Berea in 1917, and then came home and helped plant corn. (Most of these dates are to the best of my memory). On May 2, of that year, I [joined the Army](#). The company I joined was all [volunteers](#) and we were boarded in rooming houses in Jackson for two weeks before we went to a [camp just outside of Winchester, Kentucky](#)¹⁸. Here we were outfitted with clothes and some of us were issued rifles and side arms. We drilled here for two months, quartered in tents and slept on cots and were sent [to a place just outside Lexington, Kentucky](#)¹⁹, in what was then Blue Grass Park. Here we were taught the manual of arms along with squad and company drills formation and we learned to fist fight and swear and gamble.

We didn't have much money; we were paid 50 cents per day until July 1st, at which time we were mustered into the regular army and received \$1.00 per day. While we were stationed here, I was chosen with several [other boys to assist Miss Cora Wilson Stewart to teach some of the boys to read and write](#). This was known as the [Moon Light School](#). Some of the boys didn't know the whole alphabet and we tried to teach them to write so they could write home later and I am sure some wrote, though very poorly. During this time Miss. Stewart took her volunteer teachers to Frankfort to see the capital. We went on a street car. We stayed here until about the first of September at which time we boarded the Southern Railroad train at [Southern Depot in Lexington](#) on our way to [Camp Shelby, Miss.](#) This camp was named for [Governor Isaac Shelby](#).

We were a long time on the road, the "camp" was nine miles from [Hattiesburg, Mississippi](#). It was [a complete wilderness](#)²⁰ and had been cut over by lumber companies and we started to clean the land up for camp and parade grounds. In about three months' time we had several square miles of land cleared and graded down. We piled everything up and burned it, including the large stumps, which we dynamited out of the ground. There were six regiments, twelve companies each, 250 men to the company, located here which meant several thousand men. During my stay here, I

¹⁷ "Wolf Creek" is in Meade County, west of Louisville, 208 miles from Breathitt County. It is possible he means [Widecreek](#), which is in Breathitt County, within 20 miles of Jackson and close to the Kentucky River.

¹⁸ Morn Hill Camp.

¹⁹ Camp Stanley.

²⁰ In the DeSoto National Forest.

was one of the company cooks for about four months for F Company, [149th Infantry](#)²¹.

During the time we were at Camp Shelby, Courtney Miller, Charles Gillum and I went over to [Leaf River](#), about 8 or 9 miles, and took a lot of dynamite and killed a lot of fish. We brought three sacks full back to camp and had a fish feast. During our stay at Camp Shelby, when two boys started a fuss in the mess hall, the Sgt. in charge would take them in back of the company street and make them fight it out.

We had one boy who came down with [Spinal Meningitis](#) and we were taken four miles out in the wilderness and quarantined for three weeks. While we were here, we were given three quarts of water per day and we had to give the cook part of it if we got any coffee. There was a chained guard completely around the quarantined camp and if my friend, John Combs, or I were on the posts, the other would slip out at night to a swamp with our canteens and fill them with the swamp water and we would boil the water to wash and shave with. This was a complete quarantined camp with no one in or out without a pass. Rattle snakes were numerous there. Several were killed in the camp during our stay here.

Chapter III

Just before the 1st of June we were notified that 97 men from each company were to be sent to France to replace some outfit that had been shot up, killed and wounded²². We had been in training thirteen months and were as well trained as men could be. We had had special training in bayonet warfare by French soldiers sent over here from the war to teach us how to meet German bayonet charges and I am sure we were as tough and ready as men could be for the fighting which lay ahead. On the 3rd day of June, 1918, we boarded a train for the long trip to France to meet the full fury of the Imperial German Army.

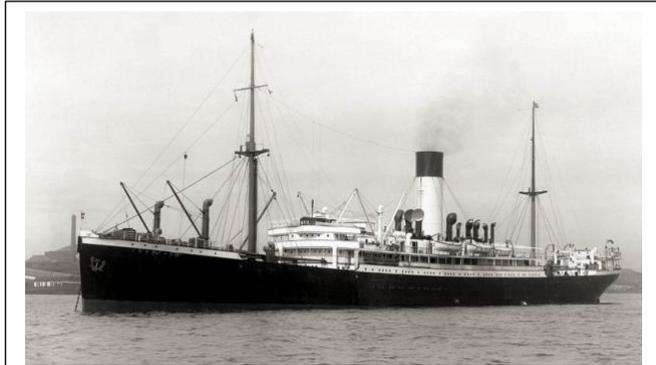
We went across Alabama, Georgia, and on up the coast to [Hoboken](#), New Jersey, where we were to board ship for France. There were no non-commissioned officers in this bunch and I was in charge of one coach coming to Hoboken and in charge of one barracks at [Hoboken](#). When we came to Hoboken, I had a boil on my knee which got so bad I couldn't walk. A doctor finally came to see me and lanced the boil. He cut a complete X in it and swabbed it out with iodine-dipped cotton. I was soon up and going. I remember I only had about 50 cents and spent it on 1 quart of milk and a large apple pie and ate it all. We were issued our dog tags

²¹ 38th Division. Eventually, the division would be nicknamed "Cyclone Division," as a result of a tornado that struck the camp on 17 April 1918. Source: <https://armedforcesmuseum.us/camp-shelby-history-1>.

²² Possibly the Battle of Cantigny, 28-31 May 1918: the American 1st Infantry Division contributes to the French counter-attack resulting in the capture of Cantigny. Casualties: 5,163. Source: <http://www.kumc.edu/wwi/index-of-essays/american-military-operations-and-casualties.html>.

here with our serial number on them. I remember mine yet 1.555.R69. Later, when any of the boys were killed, these were tied on the wooden cross at their grave.

We were here for two weeks, I guess, and finally we marched down to the harbor to board ship. The ship I boarded was the Enchise²³ Liverpool. The best I can remember, we were 16 days reaching Liverpool, England²⁴. I was so sick the first three days I couldn't stand up, but once I got over it, I made the rest of the journey okay. We went in



HMAT A68 Anchises. Source:

<http://www.shipspotting.com/gallery/photo.php?lid=1918957>

through the [Irish Channel](#)²⁵. There were twelve large ships in this convoy with destroyer escorts all the way across, and a ring of destroyers all around us. The ship I was on had figures on the side to show there 45 feet of it under water and 3 stories above the water. The crew of this ship said they had been to [Australia with wounded soldiers](#) and had stopped on the way back to England to pick us up for [Liverpool](#).

We were on the ship twenty-four hours before we got off and there were women and children standing thick, weeping and crying, saying we would destroy Germany. The English and French were all on starvation at that time, due to submarine warfare. We stayed in Liverpool a few days and crossed England by train to [Southampton](#) and were take across the English Channel by fast boat to France. We landed at [Le Havre](#) and marched to tents on a rise behind the town.

(I want to say here that this is very hazy in my memory and I may not get it all written down as it happened since it happened 55 years ago.) We were soon taken to [Tours, France](#) for our final training and finishing touches and instructions in [gas mask](#) training. We were lectured here about the fine art of fighting. One officer told us that there were just to kinds of men up at the front line--quick men and dead men. Shortly after this we boarded trains for the front-line trenches. The cars we rode on to the front were box cars and on the side of the

²³ HMAT A68 Anchises, most likely.

²⁴ A citation at <https://sites.google.com/site/chatsworthillinoismemories/our-war-heros/world-war-one-individual-records> indicates the Anchises sailed from New York on 21 July 1918, arriving in Liverpool 3 August 1918, 13 days. Additionally, a citation at <https://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwi/adminamexp/chapter24.html> indicates the same ship, on the same route departed New York on 1 Sept. 1918, arriving 13 Sept. 1918, 12 days.

²⁵ North Channel, most likely.

cars were these words "[40 men or 8 horses](#)." The 40 men in our car were soon sprawled on the floor in every shape asleep as it was night.

Just before daylight we found ourselves on a side track. We became conscious of flashes of light and low rumbles of "thunder" on the horizon. We were soon to learn that this was artillery up on the battle line, for soon a rough looking Sergeant appeared and yelled, "Everyone fall out of the cars and line up here." We were grouped in 50 soldiers groups and assigned to [different companies](#) of the [Rainbow division](#)²⁶. I went to [Company A167 Infantry](#)²⁷ ²⁸. This was around the 4th of July, 1918, and from that time on we hardly ever knew the day of the week or month till the war was over.

We got to the front about 9:00 o'clock and everything was quiet and we had time to eat and rest till six in the evening and it seemed that the enemy threw everything they had at us all at once. We got into the trenches and got ready. We had rifles, machine guns, grenades, automatic rifles, and bazookas and we knew how to use them. When the German artillery barrage rolled past us, leaving many dead and wounded, the German soldiers followed. We fired every weapon we had and the enemy was coming in vast numbers. They were cut down by the hundreds and the ones that made it to our trenches were soon taken care of. The next day the enemy came out of their trenches with spades stuck up above their heads with a white flag on the spade. They had come out to bury their dead and we watched them all day²⁹.

When night came, all was quiet and we rested on our guns and were glad for the rest we got, but the next morning we went over in a bayonet charge at day break to find the enemy trenches deserted. We were pleasantly surprised but soon left the enemy trenches as we were afraid the place had been booby-trapped and was likely to blow up at any time.

From this time on things happened so fast I couldn't tell them as they happened, but will try to touch on some of the high points of the continuous days and nights of battle for the rest of the summer and fall³⁰.

²⁶ 42nd "Rainbow" Division. It was called the "Rainbow" because the division was formed of units from 26 states and the District of Columbia. Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/10/travel/in-france-honoring-the-fallen-in-the-war-to-end-all-wars.html>.

²⁷ 167th (Alabama) Infantry Regiment.

²⁸ Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur was the brigade commander for the 167th and two other regiments within the 42nd Division. Source: http://www.indexjournal.com/news/greenwood-and-the-great-war-the-meuse-argonne-offensive/article_31e9a08e-f61c-54bf-abe5-c0a94c398edb.html

²⁹ Champagne-Marne. This was part of the German "Peace Assault" on Paris, 14 to 16 July 1918. The brunt of the German assault was taken by the 167th Infantry Regiment and the 109th French Regiment. Casualties for the US Rainbow Division in that operation were 184 officers and 5,469 men. Sources: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-42nd/> & <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

³⁰An assault northeast to the town of Château-Thierry was ordered four days after the victory on 16 July. Source: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

The next morning, we really "stormed" the enemy trenches to find them empty. The enemy had left during the night. This was on the [Chattour-Thierry](#)³¹ front and we went to the Champaign³² front next. We were sent into the enemy point blank as we neared the Ourcq³³ River³⁴. We were pinned down with a withering fire from the opposite side of the river. They were dug-in in a wheat field on a hill overlooking the river. [I saw a lot of men killed and we were pinned down](#). Orders soon came to advance, so we waded over the little river in the face of machine gun fire and advanced up the hill where they couldn't see us. During the first night we stayed in fox holes and no one slept. The bullets were coming from close range and up on the horizon there was a large dead horse we could see between us and the sky. We all shot at the horse and one man jumped up and started to run from the horse and we all fired at him and he fell³⁵. During the night we were reinforced with more men and supplies and we had lost fully half of our men, killed or wounded. When daybreak came, we went "over the top" and when we came to the enemy trenches, the Germans were gone. It was on this front I saw [Joyce Kilmer's grave](#)³⁶, the poet who wrote the poem about trees³⁷.

The next morning when we passed the horse on the hill, there were two enemy soldiers laying there and another one nearby. This was in July and the odor from the dead men and horses was awful. The next day we were taken from this front and started to another front. I remember we were fighting on one front and after three or four days we were relieved to go back for 7 or 8 hours rest. This was always at night and when we were four or five miles back we stopped and lay down with our blankets over us and in the dark we had lain down under the muzzle of some of our [305 MM giant artillery pieces](#) and during the night when they fired these [big guns](#) the draft from these shells pulled our blankets off us. We got up and moved to one side so as not to be too close to these big guns.

We dug fox holes to lay down in and during the night it rained and ran the holes full of water. We just got out of the holes and slept in the rain.

³¹ Château-Thierry.

³² Champagne.

³³ Ourcq.

³⁴ The Rainbow Division crossed the Ourcq River 28 July 1918. Source: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

³⁵ This passage could mean a German was hiding behind a dead horse on the battlefield and to flush him out, the U.S. soldiers shot at the horse.

³⁶ Kilmer was killed 30 July 1918 at Muercy Farm, near the village of Seringes-et-Nesles, in the Picardy region of France, about 70 miles northeast of Paris. He is buried in the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery. Sources: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/3363/joyce-kilmer> & <https://magazine.nd.edu/news/the-poet-who-died-fighting/>.

³⁷ The Germans retreated to the Rhine River on 2 Aug. 1918. Source: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

We went back to the front just before day break and a shell fell near a bunch of men who ran and got in the crater. I tried to get in with them but the man in charge told me there wasn't room for me as they were going to put an automatic rifle in there. I ran to a ditch and in just a few seconds a shell struck the crater and killed all 5 men. One of these men was [Martin Nickels](#)³⁸ from [Morgan County](#). These men were all covered up in this shell hole and their identification tags were put on a single cross on the grave.

At about this time [General Pershing](#) issued his famous command, "[Heaven, Hell or Hoboken, New Jersey by Christmas!](#)"³⁹

I can't remember where we went after this, but after the 12th of September we were in the trenches at the [Saint-Mihiel](#) battle⁴⁰. We hiked all night, in the rain part of the time, through shell fire, to get there before day break and we could see streams of liquid fire falling through the trees where the enemy trenches were in the dark, [a bombardment from our](#)



Rifle Pit of the 167th Infantry at St. Mihiel. Source: <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/stmihiel.htm>.

[artillery preparing the way](#) for us when we went over the top after day break came.

We met very feeble resistance on this front⁴¹. We lost a few men and captured and killed thousands. They came out of dug-outs and bunkers in hundreds to give up. The officers said we advanced 17 kilometers-- about 12 miles that day. Our artillery was pulverizing the earth in front of us. At the end of the second day we dug in and rested 3 or 4 days and were on our way to the [Battle of Argonne](#)^{42 43}, the hardest battle

³⁸ There is a "Morton Nickell" listed on the World War 1 memorial in West Liberty, Kentucky.

³⁹ According to the Hoboken Historical Museum, this statement by Pershing was made in 1917, referring to Christmas of that year. Source: <https://www.hobokenmuseum.org/exhibition/heaven-hell-or-hoboken-a-city-transformed-by-world-war-i/>.

⁴⁰ The St. Mihiel attack began on 11 Sept. 1918. Source: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

⁴¹ "The relative ease of the initial American attack came as a surprise to Pershing, and he sent orders to his commanders to speed up their advance." Source: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Saint-Mihiel-1918>.

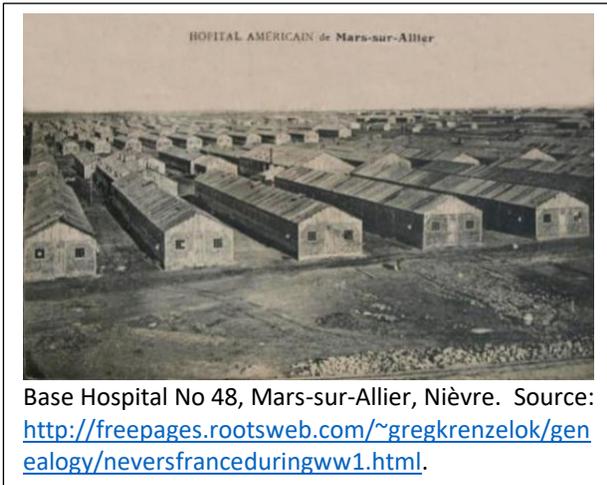
⁴² Battles of the Meuse-Argonne, 26 Sept. to 11 Nov. 1918. Source: <https://www.britannica.com/event/battles-of-the-Meuse-Argonne>

⁴³ On 11 October, the Rainbow Division replaced the 1st U.S. Infantry Division at Kriemhilde Stellung of the Hindenburg Line at the Côte de Châtillon. Source: <http://croixrougefarm.org/history-167th/>.

of the whole war. I was in this battle till October 19⁴⁴, when I got in the way of a German shell and lost part of the calf of my leg which ended all fighting for me.

I almost bled to death, and when we arrived at a small field hospital where we were patched up temporarily, the orderlies pulled one stretcher out and said, "Boy, here is one we can't do anything for." He was dead and when they pulled me out I said, "I am not better than him."

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For some time after this we were served soup beans and tomatoes twice a day. I was shipped out to base [hospital 48 in Nevers, France](#)⁴⁶ in about [2 weeks](#). We went by train and were fed our meals in a bowl, one thing at a time. Any drinks came last in the same bowl. I was in this hospital twenty-two days. Later when the [armistice](#) came, the [flu was killing many people](#)⁴⁷.

Several died in the ward I was in.

Sometime in January, 1919, I was shipped out for Southern France in route back home. I was on crutches then. I was soon on ship on the high seas for the U.S.A. The ship we came home on was the [Mongolia](#), the [largest ship I ever saw](#). The trip across was uneventful. This was a complete hospital ship. We were 3 weeks coming across the ocean, as we went the southern route. When we steamed into New York Harbor and saw the Statue of Liberty, everyone who saw it cried. We were completely washed and sterilized and given new clothes before we left the ship. We were kept in [Grand Central Hotel](#) for about one week and were wined and dined every way imaginable while in New York. Soon we were shipped out

⁴⁴ Given the specificity of this date, likely he was injured around Côte de Châtillon, where Alabama and Iowa regiments were closing on the German positions. Source: *ibid*.

⁴⁵ A family anecdote has it that Russell, when the shrapnel hit his leg, turned to tell a soldier beside him. The other soldier had a piece of metal in his throat, thrown from the same shell, and soon died. That may be what this paragraph is alluding to.

⁴⁶ The Nièvre area had 22 different hospital camps, whose military population was about 50,000. Source: <http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~gregkrenzelo/genealogy/neversfranceduringww1.html>.

⁴⁷ The 1918 Influenza pandemic is sometimes called "The Spanish Flu" because Spain, neutral in the war, reported its news about who was getting sick. At least 15,849 soldier deaths were caused in 1918 by influenza, in Europe. Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/1918-flu-pandemic/index.html> & <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4181817/>.

to [U.S. General Hospital Number 11 at Cape May, New Jersey](#). Here I was



FIG. 17A.—General Hospital No. 11, Cape May, N. J.

Source:

<https://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwi/MilitaryHospitalsintheUS/chapter26.HTM>

operated on the last time and I threw my crutches away. On June 1, I was billed out for [Camp Taylor, Kentucky](#) where I was discharged.

I am now 77 years old, have raised a large family and still have the same wife. We have been married 53 years⁴⁸.

[Russell Banks died, September 25, 1981]

- Originally composed in 1973.
- Copied from the original manuscript to electronic format by his great-grandson, Mike Esposito, December 25, 1996.
- Annotated with links and photos by Mike Esposito between Nov. 10 and Dec. 31, 2018.

⁴⁸ Russell Banks married Carolyn Dale on 10 July 1919. Carolyn “Carrie” Banks died 9 March 1998. They had nine children.

Addendum

Items Related to Russell Banks Wartime Service

(All photos herein belong to the family of Russell Banks)



Russell Banks's Purple Heart Certificate, Purple Heart Medal, World War 1 Victory Medal and a hand-written note directing the medals go to his daughter, Gladys Banks Dietrich. Gladys passed those on to her great nephew, Mike Esposito.



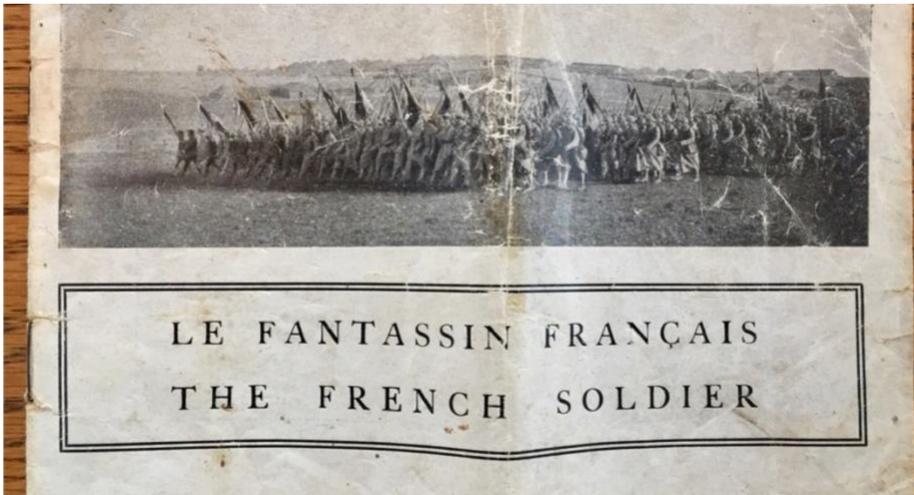
Details of the Purple Heart and Victory Medal.



Details of the certificate inscription.



A picture of a young Russell with his mother, Mandy Lockard Banks and likely his younger sister (there is no identification on the photo). Circa 1902. It is believed he carried this with him during the war.



A booklet used to help U.S. Soldiers become acquainted with their allies.



Mathieu Jouy, soldat d'infanterie coloniale, chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. « Soldat d'élite qui au combat du 1^{er} juillet 1916 a brillamment soutenu sa réputation de « héros du fort de Beausséjour »... »
 Mathieu Jouy, a soldier of the colonial infantry, knight of the Legion of Honor... « Soldier of exceptional valour, who at the battle on the 1st of July 1916, brilliantly maintained his reputation « of hero of the fort of Beausséjour »...

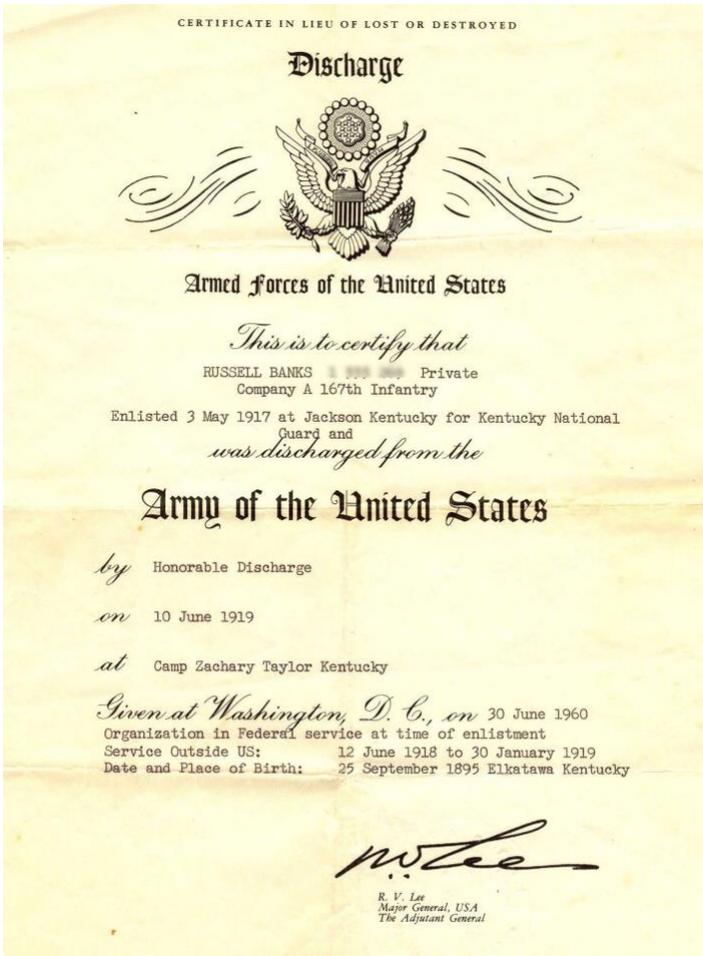
Le caporal Goussaudier, des chasseurs alpins, chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. « Audace et mépris absolu du danger; jetaut la terre dans les tranchées et abrita ennemis. A fait avec un camarade, se centaine de prisonniers dont deux officiers... »
 Corporal Goussaudier of the chasseurs alpins, knight of the Legion of Honor. « Showed great pluck and absolute contempt of danger throwing terror in the enemy trenches and dug-outs. Took with a fellow-soldier a hundred prisoners including 2 officers. »



A silk pillow cover, a souvenir often sent to loved ones during World Wars 1 and 2.



Pillow cover detail.
 "To Mother, love
 Russell. Camp Shelby,
 Miss. 1917"



A replacement certificate of Russell Banks's discharge from the Army.



The footstone of Russell Banks's grave. He passed away on his 86th birthday.