

WWI Snapshot: Oliver Banks, 1898-1964

BY NORMA ECKARD
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GUEST COLUMNISTS

Oliver Banks was born in Southport, the son of Ada Gardner.

A previous post on the website introduced the Students' Army Training Corps (SATC) and the multiple draft registrations in 1917 and 1918. Oliver did not become eligible for the draft until the registration of Sept. 12, 1918. His draft registration shows he was employed as a porter by a dry goods store, HW Hood & Sons, in Southport.

Oliver's brother, James Banks, was called to duty on April 30, 1918, but was one of three men of the 11 called who were not accepted into service that day. No details are available.

When the SATC became active in October 1918, Oliver, along with Elmer Davis and John Rivers Smith, met the physical and educational admission requirements and volunteered. All three were accepted and ordered to report for duty on Oct. 30,

1918, at the Negro Agricultural & Technical College (now NC A&T State University) in Greensboro, the only vocational section of the SATC in NC.

[Source: Ancestry.com. U.S., lists of men ordered to report to local board for military duty, 1917-1918 (database on-line), Provo, UT, USA. Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013]

Admission requirements

"Registrants who have a grammar school education or equivalent trade experience are eligible for vocational sections," read admission requirements. "Members of vocational sections will ordinarily remain at the institution for two months and will then be assigned to various branches of the service in which technicians are needed.

"Members of vocational sections will pursue such subjects as auto driving, auto repair, bench woodwork, sheet metal work and electrical work, etc., in addition to 15-and-a-half hours per week of military training.

Form 1029 FMGO. ORIGINAL. Sheet No. One

When completed to be mailed by Military Authorities to the Provost Marshal General, Washington, D. C.

Local Board of the County of Brunswick
State of North Carolina

Date, **October 30, 1918.**

The selected men herein described, having been inducted into military service on **October 30, 1918.** (Date)
have this date been entrained for **Negro Agri. & Tech., Greensboro, N. C.** (Camp or Station.)

This statement consists of **one** sheets. 13-2418

1 Order No.	2 Serial No.	3 NAME.	4 Call No.	5 Primary Industry.	6 Classification.					7 Failed to report to Military Authorities.
					I	II	III	IV	V	
3	438	Oliver Banks	A-1433	Porter	G					
885	436	John Rivers Smith	"	Cook	A					
947	461	Elmer Davis	"	Fisherman	A					

Photos contributed

Oliver Banks' report for military duty.

Members of both sections will attend courses on the 'Issues of the War.'

The Nov. 11 Armistice ended their training and the SATC was demobilized. Oliver was honorably discharged on Dec. 12, 1918.

The 1920 Census shows him living in Southport with his widowed mother.

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE

P. M. G. O. *Oliver Banks*
Form No. 1 (Red) 62-5111 (Registrant's signature of mark) (OVER)

Oliver Bank's signature on his draft registration

Oliver and his brother James are listed as fishermen. No additional census records could be located. However, his WWII Draft Registration of Feb. 16, 1942, shows he was unemployed and living in Southport. His brother James, also in Southport, was listed as his nearest living relative.

Oliver Banks passed away on June 15, 1964. He was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery in Southport. The specific location of his and the family's gravesite are unknown. According to his death certificate, he never married.

If you would like to help us honor Oliver Banks or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, email the Friends of Ft. Caswell Rifle Range at ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com or go to caswellriflerange.com.

We have been hard at work with Daniel Norris from SlapDash Publishing on the book we plan to offer this year, September 2020:

"Brunswick County in the Great War: Preserving the 1918 Fort Caswell Rifle Range and the Legacies of the Men and Women Who Served."

The book covers the history and future preservation of the rifle range, and includes profiles and snapshots of all of the courageous men and women from Brunswick County who served in WWI. These soldiers have been featured on the website and in the Beacon for nearly three years. If you can, please help.

Included in the book is the list of Brunswick County WWI veterans. Alongside each name is the name of the generous supporter who honored that veteran with a donation of any amount. As the thermometer on the right side of the website shows, 677 veterans have been honored, which leaves 41 with no recognition. Please consider donating any amount to honor the remaining 41 Brunswick County WWI veterans.

Banks, Oliver 4,455,092 Colored 1 1/2
(Surname) (Christian name) (my serial number) (Race: White or colored)

Residence: Southport Brunswick NORTH CAROLINA
(Street and house number) (City) (County) (State)

*Enlisted in Inducted at Southport N C on Oct 30/18
†Born in Southport N C Dec 10, 1898
Organizations: Negro A and T College Greensboro N C Students Army Tng Corps to disch

Grades: Pvt

Engagements:

Wounds or other injuries received in action: None

†Served overseas: None

§Hon. disch. Dec 12/18 on Demobilization

Was reported 0 per cent disabled on date of discharge, in view of occupation.

Remarks:

Form No. 724-1 1/2, A. G. O. March 12, 1920. *Insert "R. A.", "N. G.", "E. R. C.", "N. A.", as case may be, followed by place and date of enlistment. †Give place of birth and date of birth, or age at enlistment. ‡Give dates of departure from and arrival in the United States. §Give date.

Oliver Bank's NC Service Card