



*Gabriel Conklyn Banks*

*Not often does a man of Gabriel Banks' integrity and dedication come along. When he does, it is, indeed a rare gift to a church as well as the community. Here is living Christianity. His leadership has been profound in the continuing development of the Morehead Christian Church,*

*Born in Gilmore, Kentucky, in 1892, he has led a full and most interesting life, serving as a missionary to India, pastor, and professor of English at Morehead State University for nearly thirty years. He is also the author of four books recently published.*

*The Cook Book Committee of the Sunday School Class named in his honor, dedicates this book to G.C. Banks.*

*Cook Book Committee  
G.C. Banks Class  
Morehead Christian Church*



# Honorable Discharge from The United States Army



TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to Certify, That\* Gabriel C. Bouks

12003008 Private 1st Class (Last assgd - Base Hospital #106)

THE UNITED STATES ARMY, as a TESTIMONIAL OF HONEST AND FAITHFUL SERVICE, is hereby HONORABLY DISCHARGED from the military service of the

UNITED STATES by reason of convenience of the Government and for  
80.120 Hq Camp Zachary Taylor, Ky. 4/30/19

Said Gabriel C. Bouks was born in Wolf Co, in the State of Kentucky

When enlisted he was 25 years of age and by occupation a Minister  
He had Brown eyes, Brown hair, Ruddy complexion, and was 5 feet 6 1/4 inches in height.

Given under my hand at Camp Zachary Taylor, Ky this 2nd day of May, one thousand nine hundred and Nineteen

Bonus of Sixty Dollars "\$60.00"  
paid Soldier by Capt. E. L. St. Claire  
QMC USA, Camp Zachary Taylor, Ky.  
W. H. Smith 1st Lieut. Inf. USA,  
Personnel Adjutant, 190 D. B.

Robert J. M. Boyer  
1919 Lt. Col. F. A. U.S.A.  
Commanding

Form No. 525, A. G. O.  
Oct. 9-18.  
9-1136

\*Insert name, Christian name first; e. g., "John Doe."  
†Insert Army serial number, grade, company and regiment or army or corps or department; e. g., "1,820,302", "Corporal, Company A, 1st Infantry"; "Sergeant, Quartermaster Corps"; "Sergeant, First Class, Medical Department."  
‡If discharged prior to expiration of service, give number, date, and source of order or full description of authority therefor.



*C. 1964*  
"Back to the Mountains," "I suppose I broke the Supreme Court's latest ruling every Thursday in Chapel."

*Cottage*  
The little Bluestone ~~House~~ *Cottage* at 310 Sun Street, Morehead, Kentucky had ~~the~~ *its* ~~beginning~~ *beginning* ~~Genesis~~ in 1938 when Dr. Banks purchased  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre of land from Mr. Daniels who had been manager of the local stone quarry. He had used the stone ~~in~~ *already in* abundance throughout the property in sidewalks, walls, and foundation of the large ran-shacked house ~~while the Banks raised their three children Bill, Billy, and Gabriella.~~

In 1957 with their children married and on their own, Mr. Banks wanted a smaller home. It was then Opal began drawing plans for her dream home she had envisioned for many years, and they would utilize all of the stone that was so abundant on the property. After several fruitless searches for a stone mason willing to undertake the labor-intensive task, she located Melford Boggs, a master stone mason from Carter County. He and his helper spent many months just tearing out walls, sidewalks, and steps, recovering and splitting the stone in preparation for laying the walls. John Bays, one of Morehead's master builders and the carpentry and roof while Ora Cline and James Blevins did the plumbing and wiring. Chester Stanley did the plaster work. Opal Banks was on the job every day catching any deviations from her "home-made blueprints." She also did much of the hands on work such as water proofing the inside walls, serving as a

THE LITTLE BLUESTONE HOUSE <sup>COTTAGE</sup>  
AND  
GABRIEL CONKLIN BANKS  
1892-1972  
MINISTER – MISSIONARY – PROFESSOR – AUTHOR  
BY  
JACK D. ELLIS

<sup>(1892-1972)</sup>  
G.C. Banks, born in Wolfe County, Kentucky, attended Hazel Green Academy before graduating from Transylvania College. He later received a Bachelor of Divinity Degree from Lexington Theological Seminary, and a Master of Divinity from Yale University. He was a chaplain in WW I, a missionary in India, and served as a minister in the Christian Church at Brooksville and Maysville, Kentucky before accepting a position as Professor of Language and Literature at Morehead State College in 1936. Although Dr. Banks did not have a PH.D. degree, he was always lovingly referred to as “Dr. Banks” by his students and colleagues. While at Morehead he served as an interim minister of the Morehead Christian Church on two occasions.

Throughout Dr. Banks’s tenure at M.S.C., he served as an un-official “acting chaplain.” That was during an era when “Chapel” was held every Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. All students were assigned seats, attendance was mandatory, and roll was taken. Dr. Banks always opened the program with a scripture and prayer quoted from memory. He later wrote in his autobiography,



(1964)  
"Back to the Mountains," "I suppose I broke the Supreme Court's latest ruling every Thursday in Chapel."

*Cottage*  
The little Bluestone ~~House~~ *and Mrs* at 310 Sun Street, Morehead, Kentucky had the *it* ~~Genesis~~ *beginning* in 1938 when Dr. Banks purchased  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre of land from Mr. Daniels who had been manager of the local stone quarry. *Mr. Daniels* He had used the stone *from his quarry* ~~in~~ *abundantly* abundance throughout the property in sidewalks, walls, and foundation of the large *2 story* ran-shacked house while the Banks raised their three children Bill, Billy, and Gabriella.

*Mrs. Opal*  
In 1957 with their children married and on their own, ~~Mr. Banks wanted a smaller home.~~ *utilizing* It was then Opal began drawing plans for her dream home, ~~she had envisioned for many years, and they would utilize all of the stone that was so abundant on the property.~~ *sherry's* ~~After several fruitless searches for a stone mason willing to undertake the labor-intensive task, she located Melford Boggs, a master stone mason from Carter County. He and his helper spent many months just tearing out walls, sidewalks, and steps, recovering and splitting the stone in preparation for laying the walls. John Bays, one of Morehead's master builders and the carpentry and roof while Ora Cline and James Blevins did the plumbing and wiring. Chester Stanley did the plaster work. Opal Banks was on the job every day catching any deviations from her "home-made blueprints." She also did much of the hands on work such as water proofing the inside walls, serving as a~~ *throughout with her home made blue prints in hand* *already in 1950* *all*



helper for John Bays. <sup>and painting</sup> She also did all of the painting and refinishing the  
woodwork. Mrs. Banks said that throughout the construction of her little <sup>little</sup> bluestone  
<sup>little</sup> dream house, she never heard one bit of foul language spoken or even a mild oath.

Dr. MK Thomas, a professor of language and literature at Morehead State  
University, a native of India, was not only a respected colleague of Dr. Banks, but  
a dear friend. Perhaps it was because of Dr. Banks' missionary work in India  
many years ago, that drew them together, and he became Dr. Thomas' mentor at  
Morehead. Later the little bluestone house was sold to Dr. Thomas who sold it to  
St. Claire Regional Hospital in 2010.



## FORMER MOREHEAD RESIDENT SHOWS SUPPORT FOR SCR MISSION

*Submitted By: Roger Russell*

Dr. M.K. Thomas, a former Morehead resident and MSU faculty member from 1964-1994, revealed his tremendous altruism when he returned \$25,000 of the purchase price of his residence at 310 Sun Street to St. Claire Regional in support of SCR's charitable endeavors.

The Sun Street property was included in the St. Claire Regional Master Campus Plan as a parcel of land that should be considered for purchase if offered for sale, in that it would be strategically beneficial to the southward growth of campus facilities. Its obvious benefit is for additional parking to support SCR's soon to open Family Medicine Clinic – Morehead in the Center for Health Education and Research (CHER) Building. Planning is currently in process for the best use



*Picture caption: (left to right) Mr. Daniel Joy (cousin of Dr. Thomas); G.R. "Sonny" Jones, SCR VP Finance and CEO; St. Marge Mouch, SCR Director of Mission Integration; Dr. M.K. Thomas; and Manoj George, nephew of Dr. Thomas*

of the stone house that sits on this property.

Dr. Thomas told SCR leaders that he had received several offers of purchase of the property but that he wanted St. Claire Regional to own it. When he learned of the joint MSU/SCR/UK College of Medicine project, his

desire to see this property vested in support of the project became even more meaningful to him. It was in this spirit that Dr. Thomas was drawn to make the gift to SCR.

"We are overjoyed with Dr. Thomas's splendid gift in support of our charitable mission and are particularly grateful that he and his family have chosen to reveal their loyalty to the Morehead community and St. Claire Regional in this fashion," said SCR President/CEO Mark J. Neff. "This legacy gift will continue to benefit the educational and healing mission of all organizations involved in the joint CHER project."

Dr. Thomas, who is a minister, currently resides in Chicago, IL.

## SCR FAMILY MEDICINE EXPRESS SERVICES RELOCATED



Effective Monday May 17, St. Claire Regional (SCR) Family Medicine is no longer offering Express services inside of Battson's Drug. Instead patients can now receive convenient same day, walk in service at our new SCR Family Medicine – Morehead location – inside the new Center for Health, Education and Research.



About a hundred neatly groomed men were present for lunch. The local radio carried the program and a man who had tuned in on his way home called when I had finished speaking to see if I would stay over and address the Lions Club on the same subject at night. When I went to bed, I found the Christian Church parsonage a much better place to sleep than the hotel where I had spent the previous night.

I was working in my garden early that June morning when news came over the radio that D-day had begun. A committee came from town to ask me to come to the courthouse to lead a service of prayer.

In solemn mood, chastened by all the hour signified, I stood on an improvised platform and spoke slowly into the public address system's microphone. In my mind I had pictured Allied troops on the English Channel and shuddered at the thought of the carnage that would follow their attempt to gain the Normandy beachhead. For some reason, as I looked out on the crowd gathered on the lawn, summoned by a sound-wagon that had gone through town, I associated the scene with a picture I recollected from my school history. It represented the citizens of Mecklenburg County of North Carolina gathered at the center of their town to declare their independence a year earlier than did the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. It must have been the grimness the artist had placed on the faces of those pioneers which caused me to conjure it from a neglected corner of my mind and connect it with the scene of which I was a part that day.

The people around me were grim faced and silent. For all each knew, some one from his family was on the Channel, inching his body into the jaws of death that very moment. About all we could do was to trust the outcome to the God of our far-flung battle line and pray that the ammunition fail not our soldiers in the emergency. Humbly, clearly, feelingly, almost chokingly, I read inspiring Scriptural passages which had issued from the heavy hearts of beleaguered people in a time for critical action. The prayer I made was to Him who notes the sparrow's fall and promises to be with His followers when they pass through the deep waters.

Before the War ended, I had spent more than seven years of Sundays in pulpits. Four separate times I had been "acting" minister of the local Christian Church. One time was during a very serious operation the minister underwent. Another was an interim preaching ministry of five months while the congregation was searching for a new pastor.

Once I calculated the actual time I had spent on the road from Morehead through West Liberty to the upper reaches of the Licking and Big Sandy rivers. It amounted to more than three full months of eight-hour days. Some of it was used on behalf of the college, going to study centers in West Liberty, Paintsville, and Pikeville, by which we carried college instruction to in-service teachers.

Once during the War a carload of us were returning from centers we were conducting up the Big Sandy. It was Saturday night and

GABRIEL C. BANKS  
Book - "BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS"  
we had stopped for dinner at the Cole Hotel in West Liberty, famous throughout the Mountains for years for its variety and abundance of good food. Just before we came to Wrigley, the driver saw a car by the side of the road and a boy working with a tire. He pulled off behind him to give him the benefit of our headlights. We got out to stretch our legs and walk around in the crisp November air. Soon we gathered that the two boys with the car were on their way to Sandy Hook for a basketball game. The tire-changer's companion was a wee bit tipsy and no help with the tire. But he was most appreciative of our stopping and giving light. To show that, he offered us some of his "Mountain dew," saying it was just like honey, it would melt in the mouth. I walked out of the orbit of light. Then I heard one of my colleagues tell the boy he should not talk that way, that I was a preacher. When I walked near him again the boy had stopped weaving and was all impatience at their delay in getting to "Brother Harlan Murphy's revival meeting."

West Liberty and Salyersville drained my surplus energy. I was six days in the class room and up early on Sunday mornings to get to them. Riding the bus made the trip harder. When the war ended I told both congregations they would need to make other arrangements. Not until I had a day to relax, did I really discover how tired I was. I just wanted to loaf, with no thought of inviting my soul in the Walt Whitman sense. It was three years before I began to feel normal again, with a zest for anything beyond my routine duties.

## CHAPTER XCIX

Soon after my arrival in Morehead, the college started using me as a chaplain. Not by my own election but through the suggestion of some one else it had been my lot to be an "acting" something. I trust the title is not construed to mean "pretense" or "make-believe." Much of the time overseas, I was "acting" chaplain. I had been "acting" grand chaplain for the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity. Three different times when the college was without an official head for the department of English, I was "acting." As a state college Morehead could not have an official chaplain, yet in full reality, I was "acting" chaplain throughout my twenty-six years on its staff. After a year of retirement, I am still solicited to come and open the meetings of the Board of Regents with a devotional, and to do the same at baccalaureate and commencement programs.

This position into which I was eased at first, soon was taken for granted. It was not long until my name was put on the printed programs of the college without my being consulted. Also there were inaugurations and dedications and installations at which the "chaplain" invoked and blessed and gave benediction.



In his least posed mood Oscar Wilde wrote:

"I know not whether Laws be right,  
Or whether Laws be wrong."

My attitude is similar toward the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitutional principle of the separation of church and state. The college and I may both have violated that law for a quarter of a century. At most of the convocations—and we had them twice a week for a time—I was billed for the devotional. What I did was to read from memory an appropriate bit of poetry and follow it with a memorized passage of the Bible and conclude with a short prayer. I had in my repertoire enough purple passages of literature and Scripture to run a full year. After retirement, the college requested an arranged copy of these selections to put in a projected booklet.

At first I had some doubt about the value of religious exercises for a captive audience. Then I reflected that Yale had been doing that to its undergraduates for a long time and some of them had turned out very well. If it was unlawful, nevertheless it had a good constructive influence on many of the students. It was worth its wages as a device for getting the assembly quiet and settled for the program to follow. At first the buzz and hubbub was so pronounced that the best I could do was to step to the front of the stage and let my eye rove across the seated students. One by one most voices simmered down. Then the more vociferous heard their own sounds and grew quiet and a hush moved across the hall. When all were silent and the indifferent, arrested by my long pause, looked to meet my patient gaze, I projected my reading and said my prayer. Gradually there evolved a refinement of assembly manners that instantaneously brought quiet as soon as I stood up.

I could never tell just how much this reverent mood I tried to create and what I had to say meant to students. Inner processes work quietly in the individual mind and do not always publicize what is taking place there. Faculty members might speak about this or that quotation and I was occasionally heartened by a student I did not know stopping me on the walk to tell me what the devotional period meant to him. Perhaps the best reward was to have some old "grad" at homecoming come over to me and refer to my part in the convocations of his day.

## CHAPTER C

Our second year in Morehead we bought a house. One dollar out of every five of our income had been going out for rent. We cashed my Adjusted Compensation Certificates and borrowed on my life insurance to buy three quarters of an acre just a block from Main Street.

A frame house sat upon the bank and about twenty feet lower we had a garden plat. After six weeks repairing, remodeling, and restyling the interior, we moved in to spend the rest of the winter getting the place more liveable.

We bought it from the heirs of the original owner. One of the signatures on the deed stands out among the other very legible names written there. Mr. Davis was official White House penman during the Roosevelt Administration.

Mr. Daniels, who developed the place, was manager of a quarry that produced sawed blue stone and he had utilized an abundance of it in one way or another about the place. A neat pavement of broad stones stretched from the corner of the garden along the alley toward the house. Those we converted into a porch floor and a paved terrace. Beginning at the foot of the bank, the pavement became a series of steps made of long square pieces of stone resting on a foundation of two strong walls. Another flight of steps bigger than cross ties led to the high porch.

When the town grew around the house and a street was opened at its back, that porch was at the rear. It needed repairs and in time we tore it down. Bill and I rolled the big pieces of stone down the bank into as neat a pile as we well could. Then I dug a half basement the length of the house, using the dirt to terrace the slope. Buying six truck loads of scrap stone from a quarry at Farmers, I got some goggles and a stone chisel and a trowel and built enclosing basement walls up to the level of the house floor. This done, I employed a carpenter to build me a study on my homemade foundation. Bill got the basement of it for a shop. That was 1940.

We had a garden and developed an orchard. Some times we could share our produce with our friends. When the trees began to bear, I took a box of golden fruit to class. Setting it on the desk at the end of the period, I told the wondering freshmen that if any "apple-polishing" took place in my class room I would do, and then invited them to take and eat. The college photographers took a picture of my passing out apples to students and it appeared in the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and the story was reproduced in other newspapers. Fan letters came from adults who wanted to know how to get an education and from cranks and "screwballs" who wanted me to take up their hobbies and sponsor their crusades.

Opal learned upholstery to be able to mend her own furniture and to have money for things my salary could not be stretched to buy. Through her labor she gave Betty a beautiful quiet home wedding, fitting in war time. Also she provided Gabriella with an ample and elegant wardrobe when the girl went away to college and gave her the trimmings and entertainment for a more colorful church wedding when her day arrived.

With the children gone, our house was too big for two persons and far too much work for one woman. By that time Opal had had first



hand experience remodeling Gladsad and our Morehead house. All along she had been dreaming of a new house and filing away ideas and suggestions and designs for it. In 1957 she received enough money from her mother's estate to build the house she had envisioned.

After some fruitless searches, we found the stone mason we wished for. Milford Boggs came down from Olive Hill with a helper and spent three full months tearing out the stone steps along the alley, splitting and dressing and laying up the walls of our new house. Neighbor John Bays took care of the carpentry and concrete floors, while Ora Cline and James Blevins did the plumbing and wiring. Opal was on the job every day, catching any deviations from her "do-it-yourself" blueprints and making a full hand, coating cinder back-up wall blocks with tar, passing bundles of roofing up to John on the rafters or doing any other thing that needed to be done to shove the construction along. When Chester Stanley had finished plastering, she started painting and decorating the interior. Her closet and cupboard doors are made of old window shutters. Taking each of the nine hundred slats out of the frame, she removed the hard paint and sanded them.

I was the one unskilled laborer, rising early and working late to find time that did not interfere with professional duties. Digging and removing dirt from the foundation, shovelling gravel, sinking a cellar down through four layers of stone and blue clay, and breaking the huge flat stones with a sledge hammer so I could lift them out of the pit and on to a rock garden, that summer I got down to proper weight. A slight accident came very nearly cancelling all the benefit. One evening in the dark I slipped and fell against the end of the shovel handle. For a while I thought I had fractured a chest bone. There was a whelk for a long time and with it a dull pain. I kept the trouble entirely to myself but feared the injury might be permanent.

In buying the place we could hardly have suited our needs better. It had enough garden to feed a growing family when appetites were big. Now that I am retired, it invites me to moderate bodily exercise. The business center is near, yet we have a sense of being removed: we have the advantages of town and the privacy and delights of the country. A little home-made green house keeps Opal moving among and taking care of her flowers. Throughout the year, we relish the flavor of vegetables and fruits our hands have produced while stirring up the soil. Those things and the little stone house to duck into when summer showers dash over the mountains that ring the town make life still brim full of the joy of living.

The place was a bargain; we bought more than we saw, for some of its best features lay concealed at the time. Slowly they unfolded. We thought we were getting a house that needed patching; we did not then see the dream house that lay hidden in orderly sawed stone about the place. Now we have two houses here to shelter us in old age. By the side of the frame house was a stone curb over an unused

well. The curb is now swallowed up in the new house and the well covered with a paved floor; but a removed automatic pump sends cool drinks to grass and thirsting flowers on the lawn. In the center of the garden below, we dug into a heap of rubble to uncover a shaft that went deep into the ground. Another pump lifts through it an ample stream to irrigate the garden and supplement the limited supply from the well at the house. It is possible for little fountains to play throughout the afternoon, weaving tiny rainbows in our front yard.

Those were some of the unseen things we bought when we were merely looking, we thought, for a roof to shelter us. As we gained a little leisure so imagination could go to work, ingenuity called them out of hiding and now we enjoy their reality.

## CHAPTER CI

During my last decade at Morehead, the college had added many buildings and many new students. The building that meant the most to me personally was a brand new classroom building. I had become attached to the room I had occupied in the Administration Building for a quarter of a century, but being shunted about from one dormitory basement to another for office space made it inconvenient. Too, the cellarized existence made me think I was living in a dungeon.

I was in the new building but one semester and a summer term. My corner room on the first floor and office adjacent caused me to forget the former daily trots back and forth across the campus between classes, from class room to office crypt. The new room was spacious, full of light, and so clean in its brand new character. At long last I had a whole office to myself, with a telephone extension at my elbow. The ironic joker about the adjustable book shelves that filled one whole wall was that to save moving them twice I had taken all my books home except a few current texts. Those big, square, empty, gaping cavities stared at me with a Sphinx-like rebuke. The office I was in when I first came was no bigger but was shared by the then five members of the department. When we were at our desks, it had been like switching a yard engine for one to get in or get out.

I was joyfully at my post that spring when not on jury duty down at the courthouse. Knowing I would enjoy the newness and roominess of the office for only a short time, I hated to leave it at night, even though the little stone house and Opal awaited me. Never before had I felt such elbow room. With the building air-conditioned, I hardly knew when summer arrived.

But the time was approaching for my revels there to end. A letter from the Retirement Office in Frankfort notified me that I would receive a check at the end of July and thereafter "at the close of each month during your lifetime."

THE LITTLE BLUESTONE ~~HOUSE~~ <sup>COFFIN</sup>  
AND  
GABRIEL CONKLIN BANKS  
1892-1972  
MINISTER – MISSIONARY – PROFESSOR – AUTHOR  
BY  
JACK D. ELLIS

G.C. Banks, born in Wolfe County, Kentucky attended Hazel Green Academy before graduating from Transylvania College. He later received a Bachelor of Divinity Degree from Lexington Theological Seminary, and a Master of Divinity from Yale University. He was a chaplain in WW I, a missionary in India, and served as a minister in the Christian Church at Brooksville and Maysville, Kentucky before accepting a position as Professor of Language and Literature at Morehead State College in 1936. Although Dr. Banks did not have a PH.D. degree, he was always lovingly referred to as “Dr. Banks” by his students and colleagues. While at Morehead he served as an interim minister of the Morehead Christian Church on two occasions.

Throughout Dr. Banks’s tenure at M.S.C., he served as an un-official “acting chaplain.” That was during an era when “Chapel” was held every Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. All students were assigned seats, attendance was mandatory, and roll was taken. Dr. Banks always opened the program with a scripture and prayer quoted from memory. He later wrote in his autobiography,



**“Back to the Mountains,”** “I suppose I broke the Supreme Court’s latest ruling every Thursday in Chapel.”

The little Bluestone House at 310 Sun Street, Morehead, Kentucky had the Geneses in 1938 when Dr. Banks purchased  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre of land from Mr. Daniels who had been manager of the local stone quarry. He had used the stone in abundance throughout the property in sidewalks, walls, and foundation of the large ran-shacked house while the Banks raised their three children Bill, Billy, and Gabriella.

In 1957 with their children married and on their own, Mr. Banks wanted a smaller home. It was then Opal began drawing plans for her dream home she had envisioned for many years, and they would utilize all of the stone that was so abundant on the property. After several fruitless searches for a stone mason willing to undertake the labor-intensive task, she located Melford Boggs, a master stone mason from Carter County. He and his helper spent many months just tearing out walls, sidewalks, and steps, recovering and splitting the stone in preparation for laying the walls. John Bays, one of Morehead’s master builders and the carpentry and roof while Ora Cline and James Blevins did the plumbing and wiring. Chester Stanley did the plaster work. Opal Banks was on the job every day catching any deviations from her “home-made blueprints.” She also did much of the hands on work such as water proofing the inside walls, serving as a

helper for John Bays. She also did all of the painting and refinishing the  
woodwork. Mrs. Banks said that throughout the construction of her little bluestone  
dream house, she never heard one bit of foul language spoken or even a mild oath.

Dr. MK Thomas, a professor of language and literature at Morehead State  
University, a native of India, was not only a respected colleague of Dr. Banks, but  
a dear friend. Perhaps it was because of Dr. Banks' missionary work in India  
many years ago, that drew them together, and he became Dr. Thomas' mentor at  
Morehead. Later the little bluestone house was sold to Dr. Thomas who sold it to  
St. Claire Regional Hospital in 2010.



helper for John Bays. She also did all of the painting and refinishing the  
woodwork. Mrs. Banks said that throughout the construction of her little bluestone

dream house, she never heard one bit of foul language spoken or even a mild oath.

Dr. MK Thomas, a professor of language and literature at Morehead State University, a native of India, was not only a respected colleague of Dr. Banks, but a dear friend. Perhaps it was because of Dr. Banks' missionary work in India many years ago, that drew them together, and he became Dr. Thomas' mentor at Morehead. Later the little bluestone house was sold to Dr. Thomas who sold it to St. Claire Regional Hospital in 2010.



THE LITTLE BLUESTONE COTTAGE  
110 SUN ST

~~THE LITTLE BLUESTONE HOUSE~~

AND

GABRIEL CONKLIN BANKS

1892-1972

MINISTER – MISSIONARY – PROFESSOR – AUTHOR

BY

JACK D. ELLIS

LITTLE BLUESTONE COTTAGE

110 SUN ST

MOREHEAD KY

G.C. BANKS (1892-1972), was

G.C. Banks, born in Wolfe County, Kentucky attended Hazel Green

Academy before graduating from Transylvania College. He later received a Bachelor of Divinity Degree from Lexington Theological Seminary, and a Master of Divinity from Yale University. He was a chaplain in WW I, a missionary in India, and served as a minister in the Christian Church at Brooksville and Maysville, Kentucky before accepting a position as Professor of Language and Literature at Morehead State College in 1936. Although Dr. Banks did not have a PH.D. degree, he was always lovingly referred to as “Dr. Banks” by his students and colleagues. While at Morehead he served as an interim minister of the Morehead Christian Church on two occasions.

*He retired at Morehead State University in 1964. Dr & Mrs Banks had three children, Paul, Betty, and Gabriella.*

Throughout Dr. Banks’s tenure at M.S.C., he served as an un-official “acting chaplain.” That was during an era when “Chapel” was held every Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. All students were assigned seats, attendance was mandatory, and roll was taken. Dr. Banks always opened the program with a scripture and prayer quoted from memory. He later wrote in his autobiography,

**BANKS - THOMAS**  
**BLUESTONE COTTAGE HISTORY**  
**BY**  
**DR. JACK D. ELLIS**

Gabriel C. Banks (1892-1972). B.A. Transylvania College, B.D. Lexington Theological Seminary, M.A. (Divinity) Yale University. A native of Eastern Kentucky, he was a chaplain in WW II; missionary in India; a Christian Church minister in Kentucky before accepting a position as Professor of English at Morehead State College in 1936. While at Morehead, he was the “unofficial” acting chaplain at the college and occasionally interim minister at the local Christian Church. He was always respectfully referred to as Dr. Banks by his students and colleagues at Morehead.

The little Bluestone Cottage had its genesis in 1938 when Dr. and Mrs. Banks purchased an old house on  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of land from Mr. Daniels who had been the manager of a local stone quarry. He had used the stone abundantly throughout the property in sidewalks, walls, steps, and in the foundation of the old frame house where the Banks reared their three children, Bill, Betty and Gabriella.

In 1957, with the children all married and on their own, Mrs. Banks drew the plans for her dream cottage. She utilized the stone already there on the property. With her home-made blueprints in hand, she employed stone mason Melford Boggs, who spent several months tearing down walls, steps, and sidewalks, recovering and splitting stone before laying the walls. John Bays was the carpenter and Ora Cline and James Blevins did the electrical and plumbing work, while Chester Stanley did the plastering.

Opal Banks was on the job every day catching any deviation from her home-made blueprints. She also did much of the hands on work herself, including carpenter’s helper, waterproofing the inside walls, painting and finishing of the woodwork. Dr. and Mrs. Banks lived happily the rest of their life in their little Bluestone Cottage at 310 Sun Street.

M.K. Thomas, a native of India, received an A. B. and M.A. Degree at Morehead, and Ed.D. at University of Tulsa. He was appointed Professor of Languages and Literature at MSC 1964. Perhaps it was because of Professor Banks service in India, or the deep faith the two men shared, but they became lifetime friends and respected colleagues. Both were active in their church and community throughout their lifetime.

Following the death of Gabriel and Opal Banks, M.K. Thomas purchased the little Bluestone Cottage at 310 Sun Street in 1972, and lived there until long after his retirement in 1994. He later moved to North Carolina but retained ownership of the little Bluestone Cottage until 2010 when he graciously sold it to St. Claire Regional Hospital. It will serve as an informal meeting area for students and staff to the new CHER – Center for Health, Education, and Research building.



Entitled to Travel Pay:

# ENLISTMENT RECORD.

*Lexington, Ky*

Name: *Gabriel C. Bouks* Grade: *Private 1st Cl.*

Enlisted, or Inducted, *Sept 21*, 191*7*, at *Lexington, Ky*

Serving in *First* enlistment period at date of discharge.

Prior service: \* *None*

Noncommissioned officer: *None*

Marksmanship, gunner qualification or rating: † *Not Qualified*

Horsemanship: *Not Mounted*

Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions: *None*

Knowledge of any vocation: *Minister*

Wounds received in service: *None*

Physical condition when discharged: *Good*

Typhoid prophylaxis completed *April 2/18*

Paratyphoid prophylaxis completed *April 2/18*

Married or single: *Single*

Character: *Very Good*

Remarks: *Sailed Overseas July 6/18 arrived July 12/18*  
*Sailed for U.S. Apr 6/19 arrived Apr. 17/19*

Signature of soldier: *Gabriel C. Bouks*

*[Signature]*

Commanding *Casual Det*

\* Give company and regiment or corps or department, with inclusive dates of service in each enlistment.  
† Give date of qualification or rating and number, date, and source of order announcing same.