RUSSELL GOINES SR.

1928 – 1990, KOREAN WAR

U.S. ARMY, SERGEANT

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Russell Goines was born on January 26, 1928, the seventh of ten children of Edward and Clara Goines. Edward Goines was from a farming family in Virginia, but like many other southern Black citizens in the first half of the twentieth century, Edward moved his family north to find industrial employment in states less dominated by segregation and Jim Crow policies. In the case of Edward and Clara Goines, this led them to the West Virginia coalfields.

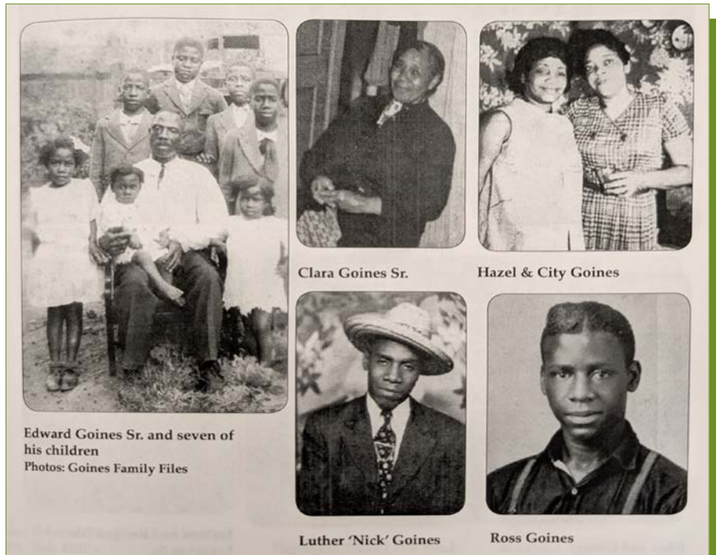
The couple first moved to Burnwell in Kanawha County. They soon relocated northward, at least in part due to the volatility of the labor environment in southern West Virginia, where martial law was frequently declared to break strikes, and armed private guards were employed by many mine operators to suppress labor disputes. After working as a coal loader in Barbour County in the 1920s, Edward moved Clara and the children to Marion County by 1930.

The Goines family settled into a small mining camp named Carolina, where young Russell grew up in the family home at 29 Sixth Street. The Consolidated Mining Company built Carolina in 1914 and named it after a company executive's daughter. Located in a valley 11 miles west of Fairmont, Carolina supported new mining operations between the towns of Monongah and Worthington.

When the family moved to Carolina it was a segregated community. The company established two sections where Black workers could live. Many of the houses in the Black sections included running water and electricity like their counterparts in White neighborhoods. Though there were outhouses outside the homes and the streets in the town were unpaved, this was not unusual for rural Appalachian towns of the era, especially in more remote areas where some coal mines were located. Carolina also boasted a church, school, recreation center, and playground. The company store and town doctor's office were located on Main Street.

Edward worked as a loader throughout his mining career, using a pick and shovel up to the introduction of longwall and continuous mining in the late 1940s. Clara, Russell's mother, was a homemaker for their ten children, and occasionally

Coal company barracks in Carolina, Marion County, circa 1920s. *West Virginia and Regional History Center, WVU Libraries*



Edward Goines Sr. and seven of his children
Photos: Goines Family Files

Even a small snapshot from B. W. Flewellyn's local history text, *African-American Community, Carolina, WV,* demonstrates the Goines family's deep roots in the Marion County town. The full Goines family tree extends much further and includes additional veterans like Levi Goines Jr. (above). *Goines Family collection*

cared for grandchildren and other family members who shared the home intermittently. Fortunately, Carolina's Black community was supportive and close-knit, enabling a large family like the Goines to thrive. Like all of Carolina's Black children, the Goines kids attended the local Black elementary school from first to eighth grade.

On January 29, 1946, just three days after his 18th birthday, Russell registered for the draft. Russell later told his family that he wanted to protect his country—a sentiment that would not have been unusual among young men who had just witnessed World War II from a distance as teenagers, and just missed its conclusion by a few months. While millions of men were returning home from overseas theaters of war, millions more were staying put around the globe to secure the peace.

According to Russell's grandson John Goines, personal safety was a secondary consideration in Russell's military career. The young soldier felt it his duty to be the last person to leave the battlefield, and always assured the family they should not worry about him. While this may seem like youthful bravado, Russell had also spent the past seven years growing up in a world at war: reading about war in the newspaper, hearing it on the radio, and being surrounded by the patriotic trappings of communities sending their young men off to fight.

Added to this fervor, all indications point to Russell being an unemployed teenager living at home before he registered for the draft. Reflecting on this time in his father's life, Russell's son Frank Goines explains that his father joined the Army to get out of farm work. Much of Carolina's Black community had migrated from agricultural regions and worked together during harvest time to provide themselves and their neighbors with food. Driven by this mixture of patriotism and restlessness, Russell Goines signed his forms and was inducted into the U.S. Army on March 6, 1946.

He traveled first to Fort Hayes outside Columbus, Ohio, where he underwent basic training. While there, he joined the 9301st Technical Service Unit storing ordnance—weapons, ammunition, and

LEFT TO RIGHT: Russell Sr.'s dog tag, Japan Army of Occupation medal, and Purple Heart. *Goines Family collection*

explosives—on the base or shipping it to other locations across the country. Following the closure of Fort Hayes, Russell's unit moved to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. This was a good fit for the 9301st, since Aberdeen had served since World War I as a test site for artillery and explosives. Russell completed his first enlistment at Aberdeen in 1949, now a private first class with the occupational specialty of heavy truck driver.

Russell served his second tour of duty in the Headquarters and Service Company of the 95th Infantry Battalion (Separate). The unit was permanently billeted at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, but frequently served across the Pacific in Japan as part of the Allies' post-World War II occupation. Rather than being part of a larger regiment like most infantry battalions, this segregated all-Black battalion was retained as an independent command.

Russell's was one of only six such infantry battalions in 1949, though the list of Black units at this time runs to over 200. Transportation companies were still, by far, the largest block of all-Black units remaining, since Black soldiers were overwhelmingly barred from combat roles following several decades of discriminatory practices. At least now, Russell was serving as an infantryman instead of a heavy truck driver.

During his assignment with the 95th Infantry Battalion, Russell spent 14 months in Korea between 1949 and 1952. He may have joined the unit in Gifu, Japan, where it was stationed as part of the U.S.'s post-World War II occupation force. While with the unit, Russell earned the Japanese Occupation Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Korean Service Good Conduct Medal.

To earn the Combat Infantry Badge, Goines would have deployed to Korea in the early—and most violent—stages of the war that began in June 1950. His Purple Heart also probably originates from this period. Unfortunately, combat records for his segregated battalion are elusive. To make matters more difficult, the 1973 National Archives fire that destroyed many individual Army personnel files wrought its damage on Goines' personal history, too—a number of his surviving records are visibly burned. More research is required to shed light on this crucial period of his service.

His third and final tour of duty was as part of the 3359th Headquarters and Service Company of the 94th Engineering Battalion, headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground. As part of this unit, Russell spent 17 months overseas as part of the U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR). During this time, Russell earned the Army of Occupation Medal and was promoted to sergeant.

Despite reenlisting multiple times, the U.S. Army was not always smooth sailing for Russell. Like other African-American soldiers, he witnessed—and probably experienced—discrimination as the military transitioned from segregation to integration. Russell told his son Frank about an episode in Korea when a White officer caught a Black soldier trying to make a fire during a freezing winter night. According to Russell, the officer upbraided the soldier and pushed him into the fire as punishment.

Despite Black troops performing gallantly in the two World Wars, they were often disproportionately blamed for defeats in Korea, and accused of lacking courage or discipline. Nevertheless, civil rights agitation from the general public and within the federal government gradually broke down the obstacles to integration.

Official integration for America's armed forces did not arrive until the late 1940s, two years after Russell enlisted. President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 in 1948, mandating integration in the ranks as quickly as possible, and Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson vigorously pressured military officials to execute the president's mandate. Despite these orders, a number of segregated units were still operating when the Korean War broke out, including Russell's 95th Infantry Battalion, and some remained until after the war ended.

In short, even if Russell never encountered racism personally during his military service, one or more of his units almost certainly did. But Russell was not afraid to stand up for rights he believed belonged to all citizens. In 1949, while on leave from his unit, Russell helped his brother Levi's United Mine Workers local fight back against a strike by dumping out coal mined by scabs. Russell was also disciplined by the Army in Europe, losing almost a year of days served after being charged with "apathy, defective attitudes, and inability to extend effort constructively" which led to his punishment. These were common accusations leveled at Black troops, and given Russell's excellent service record at all other times it is difficult to imagine that prejudice of either a personal or racial nature did not play a role in the charge.

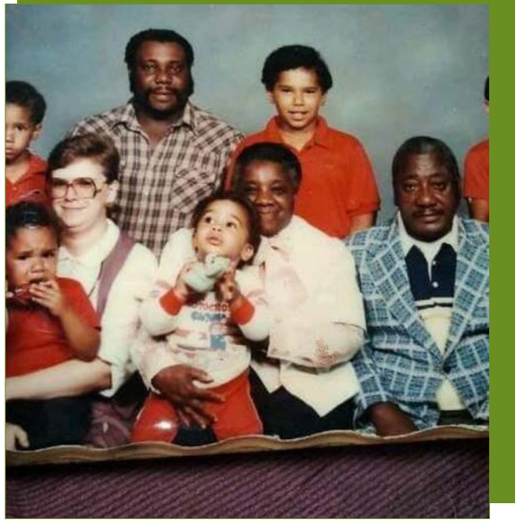
Towards the end of Russell's military service, he sustained a serious injury impeding his ability to walk. Having already achieved the rank of technical sergeant, Russell might otherwise have made the Army his lifelong career, but the unknown incident made this impossible. His grandson John Goines states that he never saw his grandfather without a cane or wheelchair. Russell was honorably discharged at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, on December 14, 1954.

His time in the military continued to influence the direction of his life, however. Sgt. Calvin Lawrence McDonald, a friend whom Russell had met in Korea, was likewise from a large West Virginia family, and their friendship had a profound impact on Russell. During a leave period at home, Russell and his brother Ed visited the McDonalds in Kingwood, Preston County. Not long after, both brothers married McDonald sisters: Russell wed Marietta McDonald, and Ed wed Sarah McDonald. Russell moved to Kingwood to start a family with Marietta.

In Kingwood, Russell found work as a coal miner. He and Marietta raised two sons, Russell Jr. and Frank. Extended family members and in-laws lived nearby. Marietta was deeply involved with the Love Chapel Church, a fixture of the Black community in Preston County. There, she helped form a traveling choir, and operated a food pantry out of the church building. Russell Jr. played football and baseball at Kingwood High School, later making the football team for Fairmont State College. When Russell Jr. returned home to Kingwood, he worked in both the mining and cement industries but was able to turn his barbecue hobby into an award-winning business. Frank also stayed close to home, keeping the Goines legacy alive in Kingwood.

The old veteran was a strong presence in his family, sneaking candy and cola to his grandson John while insisting on the importance of discipline and education. "If I'm there at your [high school] graduation, I'll be proud," Russell told John shortly before his death. "If I'm not there, I'll be proud in heaven and watch over you." Russell died a few months before John's graduation, but the grandson remembered a bird flying into the building during the ceremony. John believed it was his grandfather honoring his promise.

Russell Sr. (blue jacket, far right) and Marietta Goines (center front) with son Russell Jr. (standing in plaid) and grandchildren. *Goines Family collection*



Russell Goines Sr. died in Kingwood on November 15, 1990. According to his son Frank, their father was initially buried in Kingwood until arrangements could be made with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He was reinterred in the West Virginia National Cemetery on March 10, 1993, taking his well-deserved place among thousands of brave veterans.

PLACE OF INTERMENT:
West Virginia National Cemetery
SECTION 1
SITE 1638

Private John Adams (right) of the 9th Infantry Regiment—one of the last segregated units in the U.S. Army—guards a comrade carrying mortar ammunition near the front in Korea. More information on Goines's Korean War combat experience is still forthcoming. *National Archives*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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As home to one of the nation's first national cemeteries—founded shortly after the Civil War—the community of Grafton has longstanding traditions of honoring America's veterans, including the longest continuously celebrated Memorial Day parade in the United States. The Grafton National Cemetery, located in the heart of the city and founded in 1867, is typically the endpoint of each year's parade. Since the Grafton National Cemetery began to run short of space during the 1960s, the West Virginia National Cemetery was dedicated in 1987, just a few miles outside of Grafton.

The West Virginia Humanities Council is proud to thank the following organizations for their participation in the West Virginia National Cemeteries Project: West Virginia Archives and History, the West Virginia University history department, Taylor County Historical and Genealogical Society, Taylor County Public Library, Grafton High School, and University High School, among many others.

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SOURCES AND COPYRIGHT

For readability, bibliographies have been omitted from this publication. Student research for these biographies relies heavily on primary sources—census records, city directories, draft cards, muster rolls, and more—made available digitally through Ancestry and Fold3. Yearbook repositories and the digitized collections of many universities and archives have been invaluable resources. Most newspaper research was conducted digitally via Newspapers.com, NewspaperArchives, and the Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* database.

Servicemembers' Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) and Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs) are another essential part of project research, provided free of charge in most cases by the National Archives through standard records requests.

As the West Virginia National Cemeteries Project has grown and matured, the team has found that new sources sometimes surface for veterans researched in prior project years. To better maintain a "living bibliography" of all its veterans, a single master document is kept up on the project's webpage under the "Programs" tab at **www.wvhumanities.org**.

Views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Archives of the United States, or any other federal agency. For more information about the Veterans Legacy Memorial and the Veterans Legacy Grant Program, visit **www.vlm.cem.va.gov**.

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