

William Barker  
WWII Veteran  
Banfora  
October 1942



I was born on Sept. 15th  
1920 in Cobalt Ontario

Canada, a Silver Mining Camp. After leaving school I went to work in the gold mines of Kirkland Lake and Timmins. After joining the army in Timmins in the summer of 1942, I did basic training in Chatham Ont. and advanced training in Petawawa Ont. We left there on a troop train for Halifax, after having the last good food I was to have for the next four years.

When we arrived in Halifax we were parked on a siding waiting to be shunted to Pier 21. People came by the train to wish us good luck and brought along some cheers such as black horse beer & bottles of rum runner's top of the line rum. You could stick your finger in the bottle, pull it out, lick it and use tears for a chaser, Sure could have used some of that on the voyage to Scotland. We drank tea that was made in a 100 gal. vat, I don't think the wool was removed from sheep before cooking (I have never tasted it since or my family). I could go on forever about conditions on board ship but you can guess the rest. One more little item: as soldiers do all their training on they get calluses on their feet. Cockroaches on board had our feet cleaned up in two nights. Pier 21 was a very nice place going overseas, but a more enjoyable Pier coming back.