

Fay Lee Bracken

Fay Bracken was born on July 26, 1899 in Sumner, Wisconsin to William R Bracken (1869-1903) and Ellen (Ella) Philips Bracken (1879-1950). Fay's parents were young in 1900 when his Dad worked for the sawmill in Sumner. His Mom is 22, home with brother Earl, age 2 and Fay who is 10 months. His father would die just three years later. In 1905, Ella would marry Frank Desair who worked as a carpenter. The family moved to Rice Lake, Wisconsin. By 1910 they were living in Richland, Kansas but the marriage does not work out so at about age 12, the family moves to South St Paul, Minnesota to live with relatives.

At age 23, Fay is working as brakeman for the Minneapolis/St Paul & Sioux St Marie Railroad. He enlists in the Marine Corps on June 25, 1916. He is a bugler at the First Minnesota Infantry Headquarters but he gets tuberculosis and is discharged on June 3, 1917 in Duluth. On December 17, 1917, he re-enlists and trains at Paris Island, South Carolina. He is assigned to 139th Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Corps and on March 12, 1918 leaves for Brest, France on the USS Henderson. They arrive on March 26th and trained for two months on the Verdun Front before their first campaign. Fay participated in the Belleau Woods, Aisne Marine Offensive, St Mihiel Offensive and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. He was shot in his left side on October 2, 1918 at Mount Blanc. He was taken to Base Hospital #57 in Paris France. The war ends but Fay is not sent home until August 3, 1919. From Hoboken, New Jersey they head for Camp Mills, now a demobilization center. He is discharged at Quantico, Virginia on August 31, 1919.

Fay returns to South St Paul and marries Sophie Marie Utecht (1898-1994) on May 26, 1921. He is admitted to the National Home for Disabled Soldiers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and stays there from September 12, 1923 to February 2, 1924. He is at this time receiving a pension in the amount of \$95. He works in the newspaper engraving business until he retires in Pennsylvania and Ohio. The couple have two children. Fay dies on December 10, 1985 at St Ann's Hospital in Westerville, Ohio at the age of 86. He is buried at Sunset Cemetery in Galloway, Ohio.

Fay had an older brother, Earl who also served in WWI as a US Marine. He was also injured and received the Legion of Honor award for saving Paris in the Belleau Woods campaign.