



Don Lafler

Jun 26, 1924 - Dec 26, 1998

BIRTHPLACE: North Tonawanda, NY

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: PFC

DIVISION: Army

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Nov 1, 1943 - Jun 1, 1946

HONORED BY: Daughter, Kathleen Lafler Bird

BIOGRAPHY

Don attempted to enlist upon high school graduation in 1942 but was rejected because of flat feet. He was drafted in 1943, receiving basic training at Camp Crowder, MO. In early Nov. 1944 he was transported to England, where he met his future wife, Phyllis Hope. He was transported to France on Dec. 24, 1944. He completed service in Stuttgart, Germany. PFC Don Lafler sent regular letters to his family in Niagara County, New York. The following excerpts are gleaned from those letters, now in possession of his daughter, Kathleen Bird of Liberty, MO. 'Thursday P.M. February 1, 1945-It is not permissible to tell you my location except somewhere in France. As to my outfit of which I am a part, I cannot say at the present time. I am driving my jeep every day and night and spend my free moments in maintenance of course. It's my baby and I take very good care of it because it may save me some day. Saturday P.M. May 12, 1945-Here is something that may be of interest to some of January 11, five months from yesterday I got my jeep. We were in Sarreguemines, France then. Well, those five months I have driven ten thousand miles. You can tell from that that I have seen some country although many roads were traveled more than once. My only regret is that I don't have any pictures of what I have seen. Well, I suppose the excitement of peace over there has died down. It really is wonderful isn't it? Can't say as yet how things will affect us but we can only hope for the best. Sunday evening April 14, 1946-Dearest Family, This is going to be my last letter to you while in the Army. ..My outfit left Stuttgart, Germany last Wednesday bound for Le Harve, France. We traveled by train and had rather a rough time of it. We were divided in groups of seventeen and assigned to a box car. We would have frozen to death each night if it weren't for the little stove we were lucky enough to find. We are finishing our processing here and then will be ready to take that last long jump. The setup here isn't as bad as we expected but it could get a heck of a lot better. We are living in plywood shacks, 26 men per shack. It gets cold as blazes at night. They took away our sleeping bags today so we will have to get along with just two blankets now. German P.W.s does all the cooking and are they stingy with the food. I must close now as we have a formation at seven- thirty. See you at the bus station in

Lockport very soon. Love to all, Don'