

## A Veteran's Story

Web Site Creator: Dalton Heiland

<http://aveteransstory.weebly.com/index.html>

Transcription of Personal Notes: Dalton Heiland

The following notes were taken by hand during conversations with Mr. Leon I. Lock either over the telephone or when he spoke to a school club at Cumberland Valley High School called SHOUT (Students Honoring Our Uniformed Troops). I do not have the dates of the conversations or speech, but they occurred between November 2010 and March 2011.

- Born on August 2, 1924 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
- Mr. Lock said that an awful lot of people were killed in Europe, about 400 per week.
- That is why many of his fellow soldiers only had three to five weeks of basic training. They couldn't use a weapon. Then they were put on the Queen Mary and sent to France, spent 3 to 5 days in France and moved into Brussels.
- There were many divisions in the Battle of the Bulge and a terrible amount of people were hurt or lost but they just weren't trained.
- Mr. Lock thought he was lucky because he had 13 weeks of training, infantry training. He was with a light maintenance company. He was the only one who had light infantry training.
- Mail was really slow or non-existent while he was in Europe. It took about 30 days for mail to reach the troops from the US.
- Mr. Lock joined the 76<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Europe.
- He carried a 1916 Enfield rifle made by the English for WWI; others carried carbine rifles which no one liked or grease guns which were .45 caliber sub machine guns which were considered the worst guns to have.
- Mr. Lock had no galoshes or long johns. He sewed his blanket shut to use as a sleeping blanket. He got frostbite on his hand.
- Mr. Lock found a German periscope and tripod which he carried with him. He still has the periscope to this day. Also carried two grenades with him at all times.

-K-rations consisted of pork fat, lemonade powder, a biscuit and "hard as rock" candy bar. Soldiers were also given cigarettes (Mr. Lock didn't smoke), toilet paper and salt tablets to take each morning. Drinking water was scarce.

-The Red Cross would not give Mr. Lock anything unless he paid for it. Luckily, a young lady touring with Fred Astaire bought him a sandwich and a coke.

-At basic training Mr. Lock was given a service number to identify him. His Army enlisted number started with a one. He eventually had three service numbers.

-At basic, he was with soldiers who had enlisted, been drafted or had gone to school at VMI or the Citadel.

-Ft. McClellan (basic training) was also a POW camp for Germans. The Germans ate better than the recruits (given whole milk, not powdered) and looked really strong and healthy. Germans played volleyball a lot to pass the time.

-Mr. Lock trained on the bayonet and thought he "would rather just shoot them than use the bayonet" on the Germans.

-Recruits had to dig their own trenches and crawl through a field with a machine gun firing at them. They got tear gas training with gas masks.

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