



173RD
AIRBORNE
BRIGADE



1ST BATTALION
50TH INFANTRY



"HQ" COMPANY



SCOUTS
PLATOON



CORPORAL



INFANTRYMAN

JEROME LISTON COLLINS

"HQ" Company, Scouts Platoon, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry
Private First Class, E3, Posthumous Promotion to CPL, US67112278, MOS 11B10

Home of Record: Magnolia Springs, AL

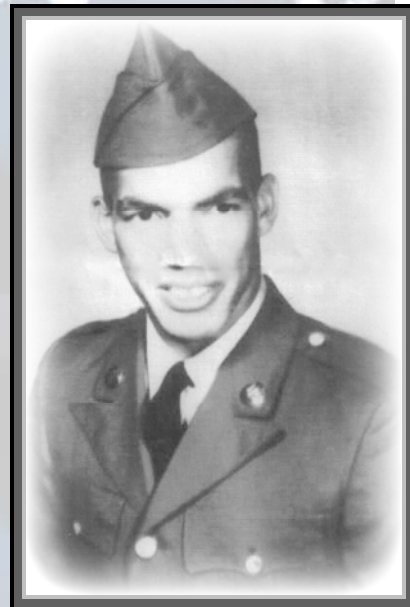
Date of Birth: May 11, 1948, Age at time of loss: 21, Single

173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), Binh Dinh* Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: January 31, 1969, Date of Casualty: May 30, 1969, Days in Country: 119

Casualty Type A2, Hostile OED, Panel 23W - Row 020

Jerome Collins was killed in an ambush in which an enemy Claymore Mine was detonated as his Scout Platoon, Point Element moved out, heading North, from a small village they had just swept in a search operation. Seven soldiers were dusted off via Med-Evac helicopter, 2 of whom were killed...Virgil Hamilton was killed outright and Jerome Collins died of his wounds shortly after. Of the 5 others who were wounded, Steven Owen died the next day of his wounds.



The remaining Scout Platoon elements fired on two Viet Cong to the Southwest, killing one and capturing the 2nd. The 50th Infantry's Short Range Ambush Platoon (SRAP) moved two of their machine gun equipped boats into a blocking position on the nearby Lake Dam Tra O to cut off the lake as an escape route. The SRAP elements received 4 or 5 rounds of sniper fire from the West with no casualties and returned fire with unknown results. A second adult male with no ID was detained and removed for questioning.

A map of the location where Hamilton, Collins and Owen were killed is shown below:



Continued...

Jerome L. Collins is buried at St. John's Catholic Church Cemetery in Magnolia Springs in southern Alabama. Seeking a photo of "Romey", as he was known to friends in this wonderful southern Alabama area, Your Association historian visited this peaceful and serene cemetery in June of 2012. The church Staff: Msgr. Guido Calleja and church secretary Wanda Tyson graciously made phone calls to locate family members for me. Former platoon mate Terry "Goat" Gauthier provided the portrait photo used on this memorial's first page.

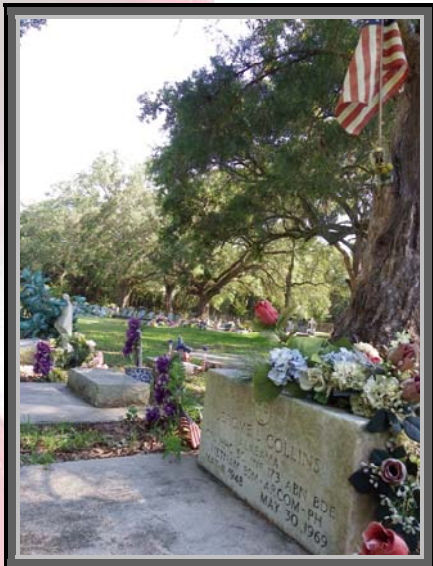
I finally received a photo contributed by the Collins family...of our man in training before Vietnam (Below).



After not hearing from the family for months, I finally received a message from Helen Trammell a childhood friend, and her sister Faith Kaiser. Both spoke fondly of this man who gave his life for his country long ago. Helen sent me this note:

"I just came from a visit with 'Romey' (As he was called in our childhood)) at the cemetery, my hunting and fishing partner of so long ago. He was a fine young man, gentle, kind, patient, funny. He taught me how to hunt squirrel and rabbit. He gave me his 410 shotgun, a treasure, sadly, that was later lost. Romey's favorite exclamation was 'Shakespeare'!...and I still can hear him shouting that at the top of his lungs...or in a whisper when I bulls-eyed a target from a long distance. He brought a croaker sack full of oysters one evening, tied it to the mailbox. (Our mail was

delivered by boat: Water Route Boat 1) The sack was so heavy that I could not pull them up! There's nothing so wonderful as barbequed rabbit, shot, dressed, cooked over a fire and eaten the same evening while giggling over hunting at night illegally! Such innocent fun. What glorious memories. I last saw him before getting married and moving to Atlanta. I was pregnant with my daughter when he died. No one would tell me of his death for fear I might lose the baby. Thank you for all you are doing to remember Romey and all the young men killed so long ago".



Association Historian Jim Sheppard at the grave of Jerome Collins in Magnolia Springs, Alabama.

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AWARDS AND DECORATIONS OF JEROME COLLINS:



Combat Infantry Badge



HQ 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)

GENERAL ORDERS

1969

CORPORAL JEROME COLLINS DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF BY OUTSTANDING MERITORIOUS SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH GROUND OPERATIONS AGAINST A HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO MAY 1969. THROUGH HIS UNTIRING EFFORTS AND PROFESSIONAL ABILITY, HE CONSISTENTLY OBTAINED OUTSTANDING RESULTS. HE WAS QUICK TO GRASP THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEW PROBLEMS WITH WHICH HE WAS FACED AS A RESULT OF THE EVER-CHANGING SITUATIONS INHERENT IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATION AND TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS. THE ENERGETIC APPLICATION OF THIS EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE HAS MATERIALLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO ASSIST THAT COUNTRY IN RIDDING ITSELF OF THE COMMUNIST THREAT TO ITS FREEDOM. CORPORAL COLLINS' INITIATIVE, ZEAL, SOUND JUDGMENT AND DEVOTION TO DUTY WERE IN THE HIGHEST TRADITION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT ON HIM AND ON THE MILITARY SERVICE.



Bronze Star



Army Commendation



Purple Heart



National Defense



Vietnam Service



Vietnam Campaign