



**Robert
Collins**

Navy

Robert Collins

Apr 5, 1921 - Sep 23, 2010

BIRTHPLACE: Jamestown, KS

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Navy, USS Antietam

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Oct 2, 1942 - Apr 26, 1946

HONORED BY: Mark W. Collins

BIOGRAPHY

ENTERED SERVICE IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI ON OCTOBER 2, 1942 AND WAS IMMEDIATELY PROCESSED TO THE HUTCHINSON NAVAL AIR STATION. THE NAVY WAS IN THE PROCESS OF BUILDING A NEW PRIMARY FLIGHT AIR STATION SOUTH OF HUTCHINSON. PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF THE BASE, HE STAYED AT THE KANSAS STATE FAIRGROUNDS 4-H BUILDING FOR SEVERAL WEEKS OF BOOT TRAINING. WAS IN COMPANY B WHICH FOLLOWED COMPANY A BY TWO WEEKS. AS MORE COMPANIES ARRIVED, HE STAYED IN PRIVATE HOMES, AND HOTELS. IN THE SPRING HE WAS MOVED TO THE NEW BASE. GOT A FEW STEARMAN TRAINING PLANES WHICH HAD BEEN OPERATING FROM THE HUTCHINSON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT. HIS JOB WAS TO HELP GET THE PLANES READY FOR FLIGHT BY DEFROSTING THE PLANES IN FREEZING WEATHER. HE ALSO HAD DUTIES OF MESS COOKING AND SEAMAN GUARD. FOLLOWING THAT, HE WAS IN BUILDING AND GROUNDS WHERE HE DID A LOT OF FURNITURE MOVING AND INVENTORY WORK. WAS AT THE HUTCHINSON NAVAL AIR STATION UNTIL MID-DECEMBER, 1944. SENT TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, ON DECEMBER 19, 1944, WHERE HE WAS PLACED IN HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON ORDNANCE ON NORTH ISLAND DRIVING A BOMB TRUCK. THE THIRD WEEK IN JUNE, 1945 THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER, USS ANTIETAM ARRIVED AT NORTH ISLAND. HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE CARRIER'S MACHINE SHOP WHICH HAD FOUR TURNING LATHES, A MILLING MACHINE, A RADIAL DRILL, A DRILL PRESS, GRINDERS, METAL SAWS, PLUS MANY OTHER TOOLS. THE MACHINIST'S THERE TAUGHT HIM HOW TO OPERATE THE MACHINES. EVENTUALLY, HE WAS MADE A MACHINIST'S MATE 3RD CLASS. HEADED FOR PEARL HARBOR AND INTO DRY DOCK TO HAVE MOUNTS WELDED ON THE CARRIER. AFTER THE FIRST A-BOMB WAS DROPPED ON JAPAN, HE HEADED FOR THE BATTLE ZONE, JAPAN, WITH THE USS INTREPID AND USS CABOT. HOWEVER, WORD WAS RECEIVED THAT JAPAN HAD ASKED FOR SURRENDER; AUGUST 15, 1945. PROCEEDED ON TO ENIWETOK. FROM THERE, WENT THROUGH THE SAN BERNARDINO STRAITS TO THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS. WENT TO MANILA AND HAD OVERNIGHT LIBERTY. SAW CORREGIDOR WHERE THE DEATH MARCH

STARTED. FROM MANILA, HE WENT TO OKINAWA, THEN TO THE YELLOW SEA. ANCHORED OFF TSINGTAO, CHINA. WENT TO YOKOSUKA, JAPAN, AND HAD LIBERTY THERE. MADE SEVERAL TRIPS BACK TO THE YELLOW SEA. CHRISTMAS 1945 AND NEW YEAR'S 1946 WERE SPENT IN YOKOSUKA, JAPAN. FROM THERE HE HEADED FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS. WAS IN GUAM SEVERAL TIMES. AT GUAM, HE GOT OFF THE USS ANTIETAM AND BOARDED A TROOP SHIP, THE USS PRESIDENT JACKSON, HEADING FOR THE STATES. STOPPED AT WAKE TO PICK UP SOME ARMY MEN AND IN 16 DAYS WAS IN SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA. WENT BY TRAIN TO NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, WHERE HE RECEIVED HIS DISCHARGE ON APRIL 26, 1946.