

# St. Boniface Boy Killed In Africa

Word has been received by Mr. and Mrs. Elere Collette, 279 Provencher ave., that their son, Pte. Donat J. Collette, was killed in action in the North African battle area Aug. 7. Another son, Pte. Richard J. Collette, was recently listed as wounded.

The two brothers were together and were serving in the American army.

Born at Elizabeth, Man., and educated there and at St. Boniface schools, the brothers joined about the same time in the United States.

There are four other sons on service: Sgt. Wilbert and Pte. Jean Paul, American army; Anthony, R.C.N.V.R.; Tom, Canadian army.

Three other brothers: Rodolph, Pat and Leo, live in Winnipeg. A sister, Therese, is at home.

Likely from a 1943 Winnipeg Newspaper.

## Pte. Donat Collette Is Killed in Action

Private Donat Collette, 27, formerly of Morris, Man., was killed in action, Aug. 7, while serving with a United States infantry unit in the North African area, which includes Sicily, according to official word



PTE. DONAT COLLETTE

received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alire Collette, now residing at 279 Provencher avenue. His brother Private Richard J. Collette, 25, serving with the same unit, was wounded in action, according to an announcement from the U.S. war department, Washington, Tuesday.

Donat and Richard are two of six brothers who are with the armed forces. Of the other brothers, John and Wilbert are both with the American army in the United States; Tony is with the navy in H.M.C.S. Chippawa; and Thomas is



SGT. WILBERT COLLETTE



PTE. 1st CLASS J. P. COLLETTE



PTE. THOMAS COLLETTE



ORD. SMN. TONY COLLETTE

four of six sons of Mr. and Mrs. A. Collette, 279 Provencher avenue, St. Boniface, who have served in the armed forces. One son, Private Don, 27, was killed in action August 7 in the North African campaign and another son, Private Richard J., 25, was seriously wounded August 3 in the same campaign. Private Don who was with headquarters company, 3rd battalion, 15th infantry, United States army, was in the armed forces for four years. Private Richard was in the same battalion as his brother Don, and has been in the U.S. army for four years. Sergeant Wilbert, 32, is with the U.S. army signal corps and is stationed at Camp Adair, near Portland, Oregon. He is a cook and has been two years in the service. Private First Class John Paul, 22, is with quartermaster signal corps, U.S. army. He has been one year in the armed forces and is at Camp Adair. Private Thomas, 20, is with the Royal Canadian Artillery. He enlisted four months ago and is now at Montreal. Ordinary Seaman Tony, 21, R.C.N.V.R. is in training at H.M.C.S. Chippawa. He enlisted six months ago.



PTE. RICHARD COLLETTE

with the army in Canada. They have three brothers here, Leo, 19, Bertrand street; Pat, 389 Travers avenue; and Rudolph, 136 Goule street; and one sister, Terry, at home.

The brothers were all born and educated at Morris, Man., where their father operated a farm for many years, before moving in 1933 to St. Norbert, and later to St. Boniface.

Richard attended St. Boniface college, 1934-1935, taking an active part in hockey. He was recently promoted to first-class private. He and Donat went overseas last November

# Family served nations as few others have

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By Tim Harper  
Tribune Staff Writer

The Collette brothers have married and gone their separate ways over the years.

But during the Second World War the family banded together as few others have to serve two nations.

Recently Leo Collette of St. Boniface recalled how seven brothers in his family, ranging in age from 18 to 30, served in the American and Canadian Armed Forces.

He remembers the pride within a family which gave so much of itself, and the joy of their reunion at the war's end.

But he also recalled that one brother was missing from that reunion. His death was a memory that no family cherishes. The circumstances surrounding the death of the third eldest brother, Don, who died in Sicily in 1943, lent an air of even greater tragedy to an already sombre occasion.

The news of Don's death, delivered by telegram, came within 24 hours of an earlier telegram telling the Collette family that the fourth eldest son, Richard, had been wounded in Sicily but had survived.

While the family was celebrating its good fortune over Richard's survival, news of Don's death arrived.

"We received the telegram that one (Richard) was wounded while in the 15th Infantry Division in Sicily," Mr. Collette said.

"The next day we learned that Don was killed.

"I remember my mother could hardly take it."

Because the Collette family was originally from Grafton, N.D., four of the brothers enlisted with the U.S. Army and the other three, including Mr. Col-



Leo Collette

lette, served with the Canadian Armed Forces.

The oldest brother, Wilbert, and another brother, J. P., who was decorated, also served with the U.S. Army along with Richard and Don.

In addition to Mr. Col-

lette, served with the Canadian Armed Forces. brothers Tony and Thomas (Butch) served Canada. Tony was in the navy.

Mr. Collette spent the war days in Kingston where he was primed to be the fifth of the seven to serve overseas.

Because he was married with children at the time, he was among a low priority class during conscription

and was not called to duty until a few months before the end of the war.

"I don't regret never having gone overseas," he said, "because I was married and had children. The family was very important. Although when I look back I suppose I would have liked the experience.

"You see, the others were all single and liked the adventure, I guess."

An older brother in the family did not see duty.

There were 10 members of the Collette family and following the Armistice they had a huge, boisterous reunion.

"What a relief when it was all over," Mr. Collette said. "They all came back, some had married during the war, and we had a big family reunion.

"That's something that you remember for a long, long, time."

The six remaining brothers who served during the Second World War are still living today, three in Winnipeg and three in Salem, Ore.

Mr. Collette works in the city at the provincial attorney-general's office.

The Collette reunion was only part of a frenzied celebration in Winnipeg and throughout the world.

Minutes after the announcement that the war had ended on Aug. 1, 1945, thousands poured into the downtown Winnipeg area clogging the streets on that joyful Tuesday.

At Portage and Main, cars lined up for blocks, streaming red, white and blue ribbons. A Salvation Army band marched along Portage Avenue and servicemen on leave were mobbed by the throng.