T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Ronald J. Guerin   **COLLECTION:** 4700.0954

IDENTIFICATION: Vietnam veteran

INTERVIEWER: Bert Magruder

SERIES: Americans in Vietnam

INTERVIEW DATES: 4/30/74

FOCUS DATES: June 14, 1952-1974; Aug 20, 1965-June 20, 1966; Jan. 2, 1969-Feb. 7, 1970

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1391
Louisiana resident; family background; always wanted to join military; enlisted in Army Airborne in 1952; training; stationed in Germany in 1953; Special Forces; in 1956, re-assigned to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where began nine-year stint with 101st Airborne Division; decision to make Army a career; went to Vietnam first time in 1965; re-assigned to 1st Cav at Fort Benning; 31-day ocean trip to Vietnam; assignment as mortar platoon sergeant; type of combat in Vietnam; second tour January 1969-February 1970; became first sergeant of a rifle company; then became 1st sergeant of Ranger company; getting Purple Heart for taking shrapnel from an ROPG rocket; first tour was more difficult; high opinion of American youth, especially in combat; didn't witness any serious misconduct; little contact with Vietnamese; good opinion of ARVN soldiers; heard that ARVN leaders were corrupt; opinions on the war; US as international defender of democracy; could have fought better war if allowed to be on offensive; US has only won wars when on offensive; access to US media in Vietnam; family tries not to burden you with their problems in letters; feelings against anti-war protestors; neither tour was voluntary but would have volunteered if he felt his services were necessary; racial problems in military; Army's adaptation to war in Vietnam; Guerin did recruiting for Rangers in Vietnam; screening and recruiting process; Ranger training; Rangers usually operated as 4-5 man patrol teams; collecting information on enemy plans; atrocities in war; war based on body counts; accuracy of body counts.

TAPES: 1 (T1391)   **TOTAL PLAYING TIME:** 45 minutes

 # PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 17 pages

RESTRICTIONS: None