

## Lt Kenneth Elvin Eaton

August 25, 1910 - January 10, 1944



Kenneth Elvin Eaton was born August 25, 1910 to Edward W and Dora E Eaton in Indian Valley, Idaho. Kenneth Eaton was married to Carol A Eaton on November 2, 1938 in Vancouver, Washington and they had two children. Census investigation shows Kenneth Eaton living in Oregon in 1930 employed as an engineer at a sawmill. Photo shown was taken September 1942 and extracted from John Tsukano's BRIDGE OF LOVE.

Kenneth Eaton [O-1289709] entered service November 22, 1933, and was assigned to the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion consisting of Japanese Americans from Hawaii at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. The former 298<sup>th</sup> National Guard unit from Hawaii were shipped to the mainland and activated as the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. The 100<sup>th</sup> trained from June to December at Camp McCoy in the summer heat and winter snow. In February 1943, the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion was transferred to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and attached to the 69<sup>th</sup> Division and went through advanced combat training maneuvers in Louisiana. By June 1943 the 100<sup>th</sup> had finished their combat readiness training and returned to Camp Shelby, Mississippi to find the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat beginning their training.

In August 11, 1943, the 100<sup>th</sup> shipped out of Camp Shelby, Mississippi and landed in Oran, Africa on September 1943 and attached to 34<sup>th</sup> Red Bull Division. After a beachhead landing at Salerno, Italy on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup> fought their way into military history books, to become known as the "Purple Heart Battalion" as they battled the German Military Machine, such terrible casualty causing weapons as the "Screaming Meenies) 6 barrel rocket launchers, "Bouncing Betties" (S Mines) 88's, machine guns and machine pistols, defensive lines and battles, as the Salerno. Gustav Line, Cassino, Volturno River, Rapido River, and Anzio.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt Eaton endured with his men, all the misery of war, being shelled, the minefield, the snow, freezing cold and wet, going without rice, as they fought their way from Salerno to near the Rapido River and the Cassino. The One Puka Puka boys were truly living up to the name as the Purple Heart battalion as they suffered heavy casualties. Lt Eaton was killed January 10, 1944 as the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion was flanking the Cassino. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Kenneth Elvin Eaton was killed in action on January 10, 1944 in Italy fighting with the Japanese American 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion from Hawaii with the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

The Caucasian officers who trained these National Guard men from Hawaii at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, at Louisiana, at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, and at Tunisia deserve special mention for their loyalty to the boys from Hawaii and to their country as they overcame racism and distrust, and to die alongside these Japanese Americans that they trained, lived and fought with for over two years, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Kenneth Elvin Eaton was survived by his wife Carol A. Eaton and son, Kenneth James. (Carol A. Eaton, wife remarried a Marine Sgt 9/9/44), Edward Lester, brother and Ethel E, sister. His parents were both deceased.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt Kenneth Elvin Eaton was first buried at Marzanello Nuovo Cemetery in Italy next to Hideyuki Hayashida and was returned to the United States to be buried at the I O O F Cemetery in Eugene, Oregon.

*ABMC Info*

*Dept of Army, US Army Human Resources Command, Alexandria, VA, Burial data FOIA Roger Eaton*

*Bridge of Love by John Tsukano*

*Revised 9/1/06*

