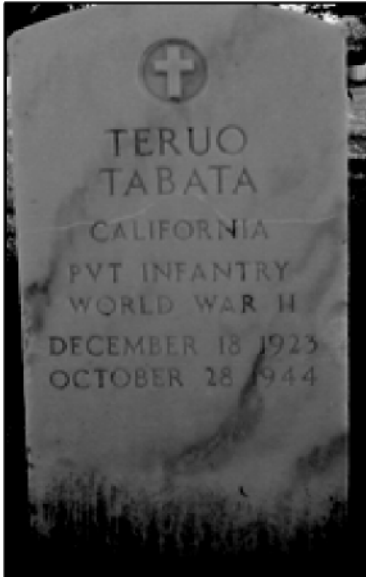


## Pvt Teruo Tabata

*December 18, 1923 - October 28, 1944*



First reported as missing in action, Pvt Teruo Tabata, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. Yataro Tabata, was listed as killed in action in France on October 28, 1944. Teruo Tabata, a former resident of San Mateo and Oakland, California, attended Oakland Technical high school and the San Francisco Junior College. The Tabata family was initially incarcerated in the horse stalls of Tanforan Assembly Center near San Francisco and later interned at the Topaz Relocation Camp near Delta, in the desert of Utah. Teruo Tabata, while in the Topaz Relocation Camp, was sports writer for the Topaz Times.

Pvt Tabata (ASN 39919479) volunteered to join the newly formed segregated all-Japanese American 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat and he was inducted at Salt Lake City in August 1943 and sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Following his training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, Pvt Teruo Tabata was assigned to Company B 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, which was known as the "Purple Heart Battalion" from their days with the 34<sup>th</sup> Division from Salerno, Cassino and Anzio. The 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion became the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. The 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for their brilliant attack on the Germans near Belvedere, Italy on June 26-27th, 1944, the first two days of combat for the Combat Team. The Combat Team, despite suffering crippling casualties, pursued the Germans to Pisa and the Arno River. In late September 1944, the Combat Team was transferred to the 36<sup>th</sup> Division 7<sup>th</sup> Army in eastern France in their drive to St. Die and Germany. Following the liberation of the French town of Bruyeres, in the Vosges forest, Pvt Teruo Tabata was killed on October 28, 1944 during the bloody and costly battle to rescue the LOST BATTALION of the 36<sup>th</sup> Texas Division.

Pvt Terry Tabata, ex-sports reporter of the Topaz Times, now a soldier serving overseas in Italy wrote his first V-mail letter to the staff which was published June 21, 1944 in the Topaz Times. His letter written from the Anzio beachhead, expresses his pride in being associated with the hard fighting 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry which is with the 5<sup>th</sup> Army. He writes:

*Since I'm bumming around up here in the perimeter to date (as yet not committed to front line action) I thought it'd be a good idea to sit down and write a line or two. I won't bother to add any additional words of praise for the 100<sup>th</sup> because its fame with the folks back home and with the boys of our division is "tops". After hearing of the battalion's hardships, spirit, and honors from front line sources I feel that it's a privilege to be in such an outfit. As one of the (Caucasian) engineers put it, "I'd rather work with your outfit than with any other." And that about sums up the universal opinion of the whole division which is composed of GIs from Iowa and Minnesota. While investigating some abandoned Nazi dugouts I found the "Kraut" army paper, "Die Sudfront" (the Southern Front), the field paper for the German soldiers in Italy. It's a 4-page job with about 6 columns. It has about*

*the same material as our “Stars and Stripes” plus an “Aryan” pin-up girl. The famous German mechanical precision on most cuts and some large bold type was very disappointing. Another paper I discovered was “Das Reich” (The Reich) the official mouthpiece of the Nazi party.*

Pvt Teruo Tabata was awarded the Purple Heart, Distinuated Unit Badge, Combat Infantryman Badge, American and European–African–Middle Eastern Campaign Medals, and the World War II Victory Medal.

Pvt Teruo Tabata was survived by his parents, Yataro and Sho Tabata; brother Nobuo Tabata, his wife Shizuko and their son Jeffrey; and brother, Yoshio Tabata. He is interred at the Golden Gate National Cemetary (D 4) in San Bruno, California 10 miles south of San Francisco.



**Pvt Teruo Tabata and his nephew Jeffrey; and the final salute at Topaz**

Prepared for AJA WWII Memorial Alliance by Mits Kojimoto and Lisa Terao Blum Photos furnished by Saye Noguchi - other Resources:

*Topaz Times 11/18/44 National Japanese American Library –San Francisco Pacific Citizen  
11/8/44 National JACL office, San Francisco*