

Sgt. Thomas Tamotsu Takao

March 31, 1921 - April 5, 1945



Thomas Takao was born March 31, 1921. He was residing in San Francisco when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Pursuant to Executive Order 9066, Takao was in the first group to evacuate San Francisco on April 6, 1942, and was placed behind barbed wire at the Santa Anita Race Track Assembly Center for six months. On October 28, 1942, he was shipped inland to the Topaz Central Utah project.

Takao (SN 39913686) was inducted at Fort Douglas, Utah on May 5, 1943. He was in the first group of volunteers from Topaz Internment Camp to enlist in the U.S. armed force and swear allegiance to the U.S.

He was then sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi to join the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) for combat training. Upon completion of combat training, some members of the 442nd RCT were sent overseas to the Italian Campaign as replacement for the depleted 100th Infantry Battalion.

In June, 1944 the 100th Infantry Battalion was combined with the 442nd RCT (as the 1st Battalion) but allowed to keep its unit designation in recognition of its distinguished fighting record.

Takao displayed exceptional courage and determination in rising to the occasion. His rise from Private to Sergeant was to lead his men by his deed, and to prove to all he was a brave and loyal American. He fought in at least four campaigns; Rome to Arno, Battle of Bruyeres and the Lost Battalion, Champagne Campaign and the Po Valley Campaign.

.He was awarded the Bronze Star on July 12, 1944, and the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster for action of October 17, 1944 and October 28, 1944. His other awards include the Purple Heart, Distinguished Unit Citations with Oak Leaf Cluster, Combat Infantryman Badge, African Middle East European Campaign Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.

Sgt Thomas Tamotsu Takao was killed in action cracking the Gothic Line on April 5, 1945. The initial objective was to scale the "Georgia" peak near Mt Cerreretta and overcome the heavily armed emplacement and heavily mined area. This feat was accomplished in thirty two minutes where other units had been stymied for five months

His remains were shipped to Japan for burial at his parent's plot. Though he is buried in the country of his father, I am sure that they are proud of this American Samurai.

THOMAS T. TAKAO (39913686) Private First Class, Infantry, AWARD OF SILVER STAR

United States Army. For gallantry in action on 12 July 1944, in the vicinity of Pastina, Italy. As a member of a reconnaissance patrol, Pfc. Takao advanced to within ten feet of the enemy outposts in order to gain information. Disregarding the platoon leader's instructions to withdraw when almost surrounded by the enemy, Pfc. Takao continued observing the enemy movements. Finally, in withdrawing, he was forced to fight his way back against a numerically superior force. The courage and initiative displayed by Pfc. Takao and the valuable information he had gained were of inestimable value to the battalion's successful attack on the town of Pastina. Entered military service from Salt Lake City, Utah.

AWARD OF THE FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE SILVER STAR

THOMAS T. TAKAO (39913686), Sergeant, Inf., Company C 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, for gallantry in action near Biffontaine, France, on 28 October 1944. While a member of a four man reconnaissance patrol; charged with the mission of obtaining information on the disposition of the enemy, Sergeant Takao moved under the cover of darkness around the enemy's left flank and to within ten yards of their position. Opening fire at point blank range, the patrol caught the defenders completely by surprise, killing three of the enemy and forcing ten others to surrender. Sergeant Takao's display of courage determination of purpose, and disregard for personal safety in helping to neutralize an enemy strong-point and in obtaining vital information regarding the enemy, is exemplary and a credit to the armed forces of the United States. Entered the service from Salt Lake City, Utah.

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