

T/Sgt. Katsumi Leonard Takasugi

November 1, 1919 - April 5, 1945



Four brothers in 442nd RCT. Photo taken a month before LEONARD TAKASUGI (right) was killed in northern Italy. Also shown are brothers George (middle) and John (left). Knox Takasugi—not in photo.

Katsumi Leonard Takasugi (nickname “Kats”), son of Wakamatsu Frank Takasugi and Tono Kenmotsu Takasugi, was born on November 1, 1919 in Ventura, California. He was the eldest of eleven children followed by George Joji, Knox Haruo (deceased), John Hiroshi (deceased), Thomas Goro (deceased), Jim Shoichi (deceased), Herbert Hoover, Frank Hideto, Ida Etsuko (deceased), Frances Keiko, and Abe Masamichi. He attended Mound Elementary School in Ventura, Ventura Junior High School, Ventura Senior High School, and Ventura Junior College. His goal was to work in the air conditioning and refrigeration field. Leonard was a member of the Boy Scouts and Nisei Methodist Church of Oxnard, California.

Leonard and his brothers and sisters grew up on a lemon ranch owned by Leonard Corbett, where Leonard’s father Frank was the ranch foreman. Before his induction into

the Army, Leonard packed lemons at the Ventura Citrus Association. Leonard was selected in the first peacetime draft in 1941, entered the service in October (Serial No. 39 166 854) and received his basic training at Camp Roberts Military Reservation in Paso Robles, California. He was also stationed at Camp Robinson, Arkansas and Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Leonard served in the Northern Apennines Campaign, the Rhineland Campaign where he fought in the Battle of Bruyeres and the Lost Battalion Rescue in France, and in the Po Valley Campaign in Italy.

When Leonard came back to say goodbye to his family before going overseas, it was an ironic situation for him to go visit his parents and brothers and sisters who remained in camp in Gila River, Arizona under armed guards who wore the same uniform as he did. He was fighting for his country, while his country’s government had forced his family, along with 120,000 other Japanese Americans, into internment camps surrounded by barbed wire when President Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942.

Leonard’s brothers George and John entered the service in the summer of 1944, followed thereafter by his brother Knox. All four brothers were in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team—T/Sgt. Leonard Takasugi (Company C/100th Battalion), T/5 George Takasugi (Company A/100th Battalion), Pfc. John Takasugi (Company G/2nd Battalion), and Pfc. Knox Takasugi (Company D/100th Battalion). They were in four different companies of the 442nd RCT, but all four brothers were fighting the same battle not far from each other. On April 5, 1945 Leonard was killed in action during the attack of the Gothic Line on “Georgia Hill” during the last push. His brother George was wounded on the same day.

T/Sgt. Leonard Takasugi is the recipient of the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Distinguished Unit Badge with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Combat Infantryman Badge and is buried at the Ivy Lawn Memorial Park, 5400 Valentine Road, Ventura, California.