Private First Class Yaichi Miyashiro

Hometown: Kukui’ula, Kōloa, Hawaii
Entered Service: January 19, 1948
Unit: 71st Signal Service Battalion, Company A
Rank: Private First Class, U.S. Army
Cemetery: Section Court 3-J, Row 500, Site 542
National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific
Honolulu, Hawaii

September 20, 1927 - March 11, 1995

RESEARCHED BY AMY BOEHNING
Before the War

In the early 1900s, Yaichi Miyashiro’s parents, Teiki Miyashiro and Oshi Agina, migrated from Okinawa, Japan to Kōloa, Kauai, Hawaii as employees of the McBryde Sugar Company, as laborers. Together the couple had six children, including twins Tomoyoshi and Yaichi. Tragically, Oshi Miyashiro died in 1939 leaving her husband and eldest daughter Amy to raise the children. Mr. Miyashiro worked to provide his children the best education possible at Kōloa School.

The World War II Homefront

Residents of Kauai were notified of the bombing of Pearl Harbor over the radio the morning of December 7, 1941. The government declared martial law and residents were given ration cards for food and gas. Almost 40% of Kauai’s population consisted of Japanese plantation workers. Round-ups occurred and some Japanese Kauai residents disappeared into internment camps on the island of Oahu.

A large number of young Japanese-American men volunteered to fight. Miyashiro’s older half brother, Private First Class Masa Agina, received a Silver Star serving with the segregated 442nd Infantry Division. At home a lack of labor hampered food harvesting. Sugar plantations hired high school students for light canefield work.

During the war, Miyashiro attended a training school on Oahu. Afterwards he returned to Kauai to work at the American Factors lumber yard. He separated lumber by hand into piles by size.
Military Experience

Occupation of Japan

After the defeat of Japan in World War II, the United States led the Allies in the occupation and rehabilitation of Japan. Miyashiro’s oldest brother, Private First Class Masa Agina, returned home, but three more Miyashiro brothers joined the U.S. Army. In December 1945, Miyashiro’s twin, Tomoyoshi, enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as part of the occupation Army in Japan until 1948. Returning to Hawaii, Tomoyoshi worked as a sugar cane worker but re-enlisted less than a year later. Yaichi Miyashiro enlisted January 1948 and his younger brother, Daniel, enlisted in December that same year. Both served in Japan. Daniel was stationed with the Etajima Command School, Hiroshima, Japan, with the 24th Infantry Division, 19th Infantry Regiment, Heavy Mortar Company.

After basic training, Private First Class Yaichi Miyashiro sailed for Japan via Guam on the USAT General William Weigel on June 21, 1948. He arrived in Japan on July 12, 1948 and was stationed with the 24th Infantry Division, 24th Signal Company in Fukuoka, on the Japanese island of Kyushu. He received additional training in the Signal Corps at Keio School Command of the Eighth Army. In August 1949, Miyashiro transferred to the 71st Service Battalion in Tokyo, Japan, with Company A of the 71st Signal Service Company.
Brothers Fighting North Koreans

Shortly after North Korea’s invasion of the south all three Miyashiro brothers were transferred to Korea.

Daniel Miyashiro’s unit faced the advancing North Korean Army. He was listed as Missing in Action on July 19, 1950, when his location near the Kum River was overrun.

Yaichi’s twin, Tomoyoshi, arrived with the 5th Regimental Combat Team July 31. On August 4, he suffered a gunshot wound at Fox Hill and was transferred to a hospital in Japan. In a letter home he wrote, “I expect to be leaving with two weeks and am asking to rejoin my buddies again at the front… I hope all of you are fine and my other two brothers are also doing O.K. When I get to the front again. I am going to look both of them up.” Not long after rejoining the 5th Regimental Combat Team RCT, Tomoyoshi died manning a roadblock in Yang-ni October 2, 1950.

When Yaichi transferred from Japan to Korea with the IX Corps, Headquarters Signal Section. He was then transferred to the 229th Signal Operation Division. His unit operated the telephone and teletype equipment. The men encountered signal problems and the rugged terrain made it difficult to maintain a secure communication system. On October 15, 1950, the 229th Signal Operation Company was attached to the 25th Infantry Division.

Removed from the Front

By December 1950 the U.S. Army determined two of the three Miyashiro brothers were killed in battle. On December 25, 1950, Yaichi received orders to return to Japan in accordance with a U.S. Army policy based on compassionate action. Yaichi served the remainder of his service with the 71st Signal Service Company in Tokyo, Japan.

The 24th Signal Company checks communication lines in Waegan, Korea, September 21, 1950. National Archives and Records Administration (348930).

Veteran Experience

Return to Hawaii

Yaichi Miyashiro left Japan for Hawaii in October 1951, and was discharged from the U.S. Army on December 14, 1951. He remained on the island of Oahu.

Miyashiro married a woman from Japan, had no children of his own, and lived a private life in Honolulu. He worked as a plumber for Oahu Plumbing and Sheet Metal until retirement. According to his sister-in-law, he felt family was important and spent quality time with his nephews over the years. Yaichi Miyashiro died on March 11, 1995. Today family members continue to remember him with flowers on his birthday.

Commemoration

The Miyashiro brothers served their country with honor and paid a high price with the loss of two brothers. Three of the five Miyashiro brothers returned to their parents' homeland to participate in the rebuilding of Japan. Each found themselves rushed to the front line in the Korean War to protect the democratic ideals their own country of birth held dear.

Both Daniel and Tomoyoshi Miyashiro are buried at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery in Hanapepe, Hawaii, on the island of Kauai. Yaichi Miyashiro is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, on the island of Oahu.

Left: The marker for Private First Class Yaichi Miyashiro's cremated remains at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, March 17, 2018. Courtesy of Amy Boehning.

Profile: Private First Class Yaichi Miyashiro

Bibliography


Daniel T. Miyashiro, Official Military Personnel File, Department of the Army, RG 319, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.


Bibliography (con't)


Ninth Corps War Diary and Annexes Sept 1950; Records of the Army Air Forces, World War II Combat Operations Report 1941-1946, Record Group 407 (Box 1760); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.


Records for Tomoyoshi Miyashiro; World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946 [Electronic File], Record Group 64; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD [retrieved from the Access to Archival Databases at http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-description.jsp?s=3360&cat=WR26&bc=.sl, December 1, 2014].


Bibliography (con't)

Tomoyoshi Miyashiro, Official Military Personnel File, Department of the Army, RG 319, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.


Yaichi Miyashiro, Official Military Personnel File, Department of the Army, RG 319, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.


