

VETERAN OF THE WEEK 21

(5- 11 September, 2022)

L36951 Trooper Minoru Tanaka

A Squadron, 10th Armoured Regiment - Fort Gary Horse

Canadian Armoured Corps

Second World War



Images 1-3: Courtesy of the CVWM & Operation Picture Me Project

L36951 Trooper Minoru (aka Morgan) Tanaka of Wymark, Saskatchewan was born in Swift Current on the 10th of June 1919 to Taisuke and Toku Tanaka (of Wymark, Saskatchewan). He was a farmer and truck driver by trade before enlisting. Trooper Tanaka enlisted on the 17th of April 1941 in Regina, Saskatchewan. He received his training at Camp Borden in Borden, Ontario. While at training at Camp Borden, he found himself in trouble and was disciplined for the first two times of his military career. Once for being Absent Without Leave for one day, which he received 7 days detention and forfeited one days pay.

The second time for disobeying a lawful command for which he received 10 days detention. He would be disciplined a third time in the field for discharging a pistol within his unit's camp area. For that indiscretion he would receive 28 days of field punishment and forfeited 28 days of pay. He would go on to serve overseas in the European theater of war with A squadron of the Fort Gary Horse, accumulating a total of 1406 days of service. Unfortunately, Trooper Minoru Tanaka was firstly reported wounded and then later Killed in Action on the 20th of February 1945 during operations to clear the west bank of the Rhine River in Germany. He was 25 years old. He was originally buried in a garden that was surrounded by a hedge and near a house.

He would later be reburied in Plot 24, Row B, Grave 14 at Nijmegen Canadian Military Cemetery later called Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, which is located roughly 4 miles southeast of the city of Nijmegen, Gelderland, Netherlands at the village of Groesbeek. The inscription chosen by his next of kin reads: "Tis a token of love and remembrance of a son who was one of the best". As Trooper Tanaka was unmarried and had no children, he was survived by his father Taisuke, mother Toku, brothers: Harry, Sanford, and Russell. As well as his sister, Alice (GL) of Wymark and Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. For his service to Canada Trooper Tanaka was posthumously awarded the 39-45 Star, the France and Germany Star, the Defense Medal, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Overseas Clasp and the War Medal 39-45. His mother was the recipient of his medals, Memorial Cross (Silver Cross) and Memorial Bar.

Tpr. Tanaka is commemorated on page 569 of the Second World War Book of Remembrance in the Peace Tower. In addition to being commemorated in the Second World War Book of Remembrance Tpr. Tanaka is listed on an Honour Roll located in Yellow Lake and he has a lake named in his memory called Tanaka Lake, located north of Milton Lake in the North West Territories. He also was featured on a program for the 1991 Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC. Trooper Tanaka was one of the many Japanese Canadians who served in the Canadian Forces during the Second World War and is the only known Japanese Canadian who is listed on the Saskatchewan Second World War Honour Roll. This week we honour the service and sacrifice of L36951 Minoru Tanaka of Wymark, Saskatchewan who gave his life for King and Country during the Second World War. Thank you for your service, Trooper Tanaka.

Lest We Forget

