



Corporal T-5 John J. Takoch, Sr.  
U.S. Army – World War II

John J. Takoch, Sr. served in the United States Army from 1942 – 1945 serving in the European Theater – Northern France and Rhineland. He served in Company A, 718<sup>th</sup> and 726<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalions transporting heavy equipment and reconstructing roadways and railways during the European Theatre. John’s railroad battalion was responsible for clearing the rails and supplying the troops of General Patton.

Mr. Takoch fought in the Battle of the Bulge at Bastogne, experiencing all the dangers and perils that every other soldier endured in battle and knew that his life could have been taken in any of those battles. He recalls to this day the stench of death in the concentration camps their battles liberated and still tells his children and grandchildren “Never forget!”.... and..... in his 90 years he has never forgotten. “Many children today will never know what men and women of the armed forces went through so they might enjoy their freedom. Hundreds of Thousands of men and women have given their lives and suffered untold sacrifices in the many wars our country has been involved in so that battles such as these never touch our shores.”

Military medals earned by John Takoch, Sr. include: Good Conduct Medal; Meritorious Unit Citation while in the 718<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalion; American Campaign Medal; European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with 4 Bronze Stars (one of which was for the Battle of the Bulge at Bastogne; and the World War II Victory Medal. His most recent award was ‘The French Diplome’ which was awarded in July 2002 in a ceremony at Pittsburgh’s Soldiers and Sailors Museum by the French Consulate to the United States, Jean-Pierre Masseret in appreciation for his participation in the liberation of France.

On April 18, 2014, Mr. Takoch lost his wife of 67 years, Marian, who also gave to her country during World War II having served proudly with the Civil Air Patrol. Together they were the proud parents of three daughters, Roberta Anton (wife of Edward), West Middlesex; Loretta “Lori” Weston (wife of Bert), Mercer; and Marian “Mimi” Prada (wife of Jose), Hermitage; and two sons, John J. Takoch, Jr (wife Diane), Annville, PA; and Christopher D. Takoch (wife Dana), Hermitage. They have been blessed with 12 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and two more great-grandchildren due this summer.

He is also a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #6166 – Hickory Post, Hermitage, PA.