



# Howard Elmer Miller

MAY 6, 1921 - NOV 22, 1943



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FUNERAL HOME, MEMORIAL PARK & CREMATORY

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## Howard Elmer Miller

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**O**n April 30, 2020 The DPAA announced that Private Howard Elmer Miller of San Mateo, CA, has been accounted for as of 30 March 2020.

Although born to Walter and Josephine Miller in Grand Rapids, Michigan on May 6 1921, the future Marine spent much of his childhood in Chicago alongside his siblings, Wally and Charmaine. The family relocated to San Mateo County in the mid 1930s - Walter, a traveling silk salesman, was made western manager for the Belden-Hemingway importers - in time for Howard to enroll as a freshman at San Mateo High. He excelled at football both in high school and at San Mateo junior college and was reportedly "a highly popular member of the local younger set" in San Mateo and Burlingame.

After finishing school, Howard worked briefly in two very separate industries- silk sales with his father, and Bethlehem Steel in San Francisco - before volunteering for the Marine Corps on August 31, 1942. He was sent to San Diego for boot training. In October, Private Miller requested and received a four-day furlough to travel back to San Mateo; he married Elizabeth "Betty" Jane Bettinger at St. Matthews Catholic Church on the 24th. The couple enjoyed a brief honeymoon before Howard's leave expired and he returned to San Diego.

Private Miller's first assignment was training with the heavy howitzers of the 12th Marines, the artillery regiment of the 3rd Marine Division at Camp Dunlap. In January of 1943, he switched specialties and attended tank school at Camp Elliot. Learning to operate and maintain a tank took several more months, so Betty moved down to San Diego while her husband was in training. When he finally shipped out in June, Betty went back home to San Mateo, anxiously awaiting news.

On July 18, 1943, Private Miller finally arrived at the camp of the 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division. Strangely, after all of his training, he was only with the tanks for about six weeks. At the end of August, Miller was transferred to Company A, First



## Obituary

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Battalion, 6th Marines - a rifle company in an infantry regiment. The reasons for this decision aren't known, but Miller did not seem to overly mind. He set about learning the trade of yet another branch of the Corps, and found time on the weekends to visit some family friends in Wellington. In a letter that arrived shortly before his first wedding anniversary, he reported that he was "OK" and referenced the date of November 5th - but whatever he meant to say was removed by the censor.

The next word received came from the Navy Department on New Year's Eve 1943. Howard had been killed in action somewhere in the South Pacific. More information would be forthcoming. His family and his wife had no idea where he died; their best guess was somewhere in the ongoing Cape Gloucester campaign. They didn't immediately connect their loss to the brutal battle of Tarawa, fought the previous month.

Howard Miller lost his life on November 22, 1943 to gunshot wounds in the head. He was buried on the island of Betio in an isolated cemetery marked on a map with coordinates "KH 283072." Several other Marines from his battalion were interred nearby. The site was never officially marked, and when Betio became a naval base, any individual markers were destroyed. The bodies there were declared non-recoverable.

The DPAA is reporting that Private Miller was found in "Row D" of Cemetery 33, a location discovered and excavated by the non-profit group History Flight. While Miller was not on the original burial roster for the row, it is known that several unidentified Marines were buried there, and it is likely that one of these has now been connected with his case. Howard Miller was officially accounted for on April 20, 2020.

Welcome home, Private Miller. Semper Fi.

[Howard E. Miller](#)



# Events


**Howard Elmer Miller**

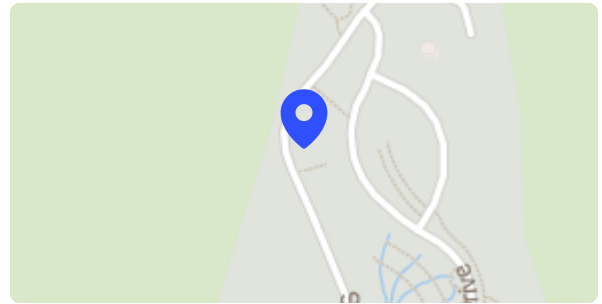
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## Graveside Service

 **Friday**, November 6, 2020

 2:00 PM PT

 **Skylawn Funeral Home & Memorial Park**  
100 Lifemark Rd, San Mateo CA 94062-4592





# Tribute Wall

**Howard Elmer Miller**

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**Skylawn Funeral Home And Memorial Park** shared an album called **Memories Album**.

October 29 at 1:05 PM





# Media

## Howard Elmer Miller

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Skylawn Funeral Home And Memorial Park shared 5 photos to the **Memories Album** album.

October 29 at 1:05 PM

**Peninsula Couple to Be Married**



**BETTY JANE BETTINGER**  
*Will Become Bride.*

**TOMORROW AT 4 O'CLOCK**  
Betty Jane Bettinger will pass the altar aisle of St. Matthew's Catholic Church in San Mateo to say "I do" to Howard K. Miller, private in the United States Marine.

Presiding her will be Mr. John DeLange, master of honor and Cardinal Bertymon, bestman. Walter C. Miller will be his brother's best man. One hundred guests will attend the reception at the Fairmont Hotel, after which the young pair will leave on a brief honeymoon before going to the bridegroom's San Diego home.

Betty Jane, daughter of the CHRY S. Bettinger of Willabrough, has a brother, Clifford Jr., a student at Belknap College Prep in San Jose.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Miller of Burlingame is the bridegroom-elect, who was a prominent footballer at San Mateo Junior College. Before joining the service, he was in business with his father.



**HOWARD ELMER MILLER**  
**PVT USMCR**

**A Co 1/6**

**KIA 22 Nov 1943**

**San Mateo, CA**





### Howard Miller Killed in Action

Sorrow came to two homes in Hillsborough and Burlingame on New Year's eve when the navy department notified the parents and wife of Private Howard E. Miller, 21, that he had been killed in action with the marine corps in the South Pacific theater of war.

The wire telling of Miller's death gave no clue as to the date but it is believed that he died in the battle for Port Gloucester.

He was the husband of Mrs. Betty Bettinger Miller of 1101 Elsie Mountain road, Hillsborough, whom he married in a local wedding ceremony on October 4, 1942, and the son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. J. Miller of 500 Dwight road, Burlingame. He has a sister, Charmae Miller, and a brother, Pvt. Walter H. Miller, U. S. M. C., now stationed in San Diego.

His family last heard from him on October 26 in an air mail letter in which he said he was "O. K." and attempted to mention something about Nov. 5 which was deleted by the censors. He was known to have been in New Zealand where he visited friends of his father.

Miller attended both San Mateo High school and the San Mateo Junior college, starring in football at both schools and being a highly popular member of the local younger set. He trained at San Diego and Camp Dunlap after entering the marine corps, later returning to San Diego for special schooling in the tank corps.

A memorial service and mass is planned for sometime later this week in St. Matthew's church in San Mateo with Father Lyne officiating. Time for the service awaits the return of his father tomorrow from Chicago. The elder Miller is western manager for the Belden-Hemingway company, silk importers.



Frosh-Soph Football

Top Row: Bill Gill (coach), Glen Chase, Jack McNally, Richard Olcese, Clarence Disney. Second Row: Fred Brooks, Donald Huff, Bob Bennett, Ed Baehr, Floyd Wimberly, Gilbert Morris, Bill Harkins, Alfred Sandretti.

Third Row: Bill Russel, Ray Honerlah, Stanley Guilmette, Warren Young, Howard Miller, Kengi Takahashi, Melvin West, Bill Soto.

Bottom Row: Edward Hurliman, Melvin Kahrs, James Mattos, Jack Darcy, George White, Clifford Pierce, Clifford McAbee.

SAN MATEO'S squad of jinx-smashing football men, with Coach Zur. L. (Brick) Williamson holding the guiding hand and with Bill Gill as an ace assistant, this year scored a successful season. The reasons: (1) They knocked Burlingame from its monopoly-pedestal (2) They ended fourth in a toughly-contested race and in every game gave a fine performance.

Thirty-four



# Media

## Howard Elmer Miller

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★ Co. "A", 1st Bn, 8th Mar, 2nd Mar Div, FMP, Gilbert Islands.  
 1-5243

Born: 6 May 1921 at Grand Rapids, Michigan. ✓  
 Enl: 31 Aug 1942 at San Francisco, Calif. ✓  
 Prior service: No. ✓

RESIDENCE: Burlingame, California.

KIN: Mrs. Elizabeth J. Miller, wife, ~~110 South Blvd.~~  
 Evanston, Illinois.

// HISTORY: 22 Nov 43 Killed in action at Tarawa,  
 Gilbert Islands. Conf Ltr fr CG, Hq, 2nd Mar Div, FMP to CMC  
 dated 12/17/43, rec'd 12/27/43. \*\*\* ✓

Body not recovered.  
 Buried in Gilbert Islands Cemetery, Tarawa, Gilbert  
 Islands. 23 Nov 43. See over. \*

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MILLER, Howard Elmer Pvt. USMC ★ 436092

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Has gov't Ins. (mk)  
 S/R rec'd 2-2-44. (mk)  
 Cert of death rec'd fr zone, 23Mar44. (see)  
 Sub. Cert. of death rec'd fr zone 4-6-44 (em)  
 " Cert of death rec'd fr zone 4-10-44 (em)  
 \*Buried in Cemetery #11, Grave #8, Row #2, Plot #1, Betio  
 Is., Tarawa Atoll, G.I. Ltr fr Is. Comdr, Betio, to CG,  
 24Mar45, FMP (reconstruction of cemetery) dtd 15 Jun  
 44 rec'd 1 Nov 44. (afm)  
 (THIS IS A MEMORIAL GRAVE) Ltr fr CG, Hq, FMP, Pac, to  
 CMC, dtd 24Apr45, rec'd 11May45. (afm)  
 \*Determined non-recoverable by field board 7Oct49. (vah)  
 \*\*\*GSW's, head. Fr. S/R.



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Howard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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