

MAJOR GENERAL CLARENCE L. TINKER

Tinker Air Force Base is named for Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker, a native Oklahoman who lost his life while on a combat mission against Wake Island in the Pacific, during World War II.

Born north of Pawhuska, in the Osage Nation, on Nov. 21, 1887, Clarence Tinker was the son of George Edward Tinker and Sarah Anna Schwagerte Tinker.

His father was the founder and publisher of the Wah-Sha-She News, Pawhuska's first newspaper; and Tinker worked in the print shop during his youth.

Young Tinker received his early schooling at the Osage Indian Boarding School in Pawhuska and at Haskell Institute, the famous Indian school in Lawrence, Kansas.

His formal military education began when he enrolled in Wentworth Military Academy, Lexington, Missouri. After graduating in 1908, he entered the uniformed service as a third lieutenant in the Philippine Constabulary. He gained a commission in the U.S. Army Infantry in March 1912.

While serving in the Hawaiian Islands in 1913, Tinker met and married Madeline Doyle of Nova Scotia. Instructor assignments took him to Arizona and Texas during World War I, and to California after the war.

In 1920, Tinker joined the Air Service and began his flying career. Graduating from the Army's Command and General Staff School in 1926, he became the Assistant Military Attaché for Aviation in London. A few months after arriving in Great Britain, he earned the Soldier's Medal for rescuing a Navy pilot from their burning aircraft wreckage.

Tinker returned to the United States in 1927 and was named Commandant of the Air Corps Advanced Flying School, Kelly Field, Texas. Beginning in 1930, he commanded various pursuit and bombardment units at Mather, March, and Hamilton Fields in California, Barksdale Field in Louisiana, and MacDill and Drew Fields in Florida. He also served for three years in Washington, D.C. as chief of the Aviation Division, National Guard Bureau.

Shortly after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Tinker was appointed commander of the Air Forces in Hawaii to reorganize the air defenses of the island. General Tinker set about to bolster his new command due to his opinion "...the Air Force will be the controlling factor in all wars, including this one." In January 1942, the general pinned on his second star and became the highest-ranking officer with Native-American ancestry in the U.S. Army.

While participating in his planned, long-range, bombing attack against the Pacific enemy, General Tinker's LB-30 fell out of formation and disappeared into the clouds below. He was the first American general lost in action in World War II. The Distinguished Service Medal was awarded posthumously to General Tinker for his gallant action in personally leading the dangerous mission. Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons, military governor of Hawaii, said, "He died knowing that he had an important part in winning a great victory."

The Oklahoma City Air Depot installation was designated Tinker Field on October 14, 1942, at the direction of Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces.

**Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker was the highest ranking
Officer of Native-American ancestry and the first general
Lost in action during World War II.**

DATES OF RANKS ATTAINED BY CLARENCE L. TINKER

Philippine Constabulary

Third Lieutenant	3 November 1908
Second Lieutenant	21 February 1910
Third Lieutenant	19 March 1912

U.S. Army, Infantry

Second Lieutenant	7 June 1912
First Lieutenant	1 July 1916
Captain	15 May 1917
Major	7 June 1918
Captain	20 January 1920
Major	1 July 1920

U.S. Army, Air Service/Air Corps/Air Forces

Major	25 November 1925
Lt. Colonel (temporary)	2 March 1935
Lt. Colonel (permanent)	1 August 1935
Colonel (temporary)	26 August 1936
Colonel (permanent)	1 November 1941
Brigadier General	1 October 1940
Major General	14 January 1942

GRADUATE

Wentworth Military Academy	1908
Philippine Constabulary School	1909
Air Service Pilots' School	1921
Air Service Observation School	1921
Air Service Tactical School	1925
Command and General Staff School	1926

RATED

Command Pilot, Combat Observer, and Aerial Observer

DATES OF ASSIGNMENTS OF CLARENCE L. TINKER

November 1908	The Philippines---Philippine Constabulary		
November 1912	Fort Lawton, Washington---25th Infantry	April 1940	MacDill Field, Florida---29th Bomb Wing
January 1913	Schofield Barracks, Hawaii---25th Infantry	October 1941	Drew Field, Florida---3rd Interceptor Command
March 1917	Camp Harry J. Jones, Arizona---18th Infantry	December 1941	Hickam Field, Hawaii---7th Air Force
July 1917	Camp Fremont, California---62th Infantry		
June 1918	Camp Travis, Texas---165th Depot Brigade		
July 1918	Yuma, Arizona---35th Infantry		
September 1918	Camp Travis, Texas---35th Infantry		
April 1919	Riverside, California Polytechnic High School		
August 1920	March Field, California---Air Service Pilots' School		
February 1921	Post Field, (Fort Sill) Oklahoma---Air Service Observation School		
February 1922	Marshall Field, (Fort Riley) Kansas---16th Observation Squadron		
August 1924	Langley Field, Virginia---Air Service Tactical School		
September 1925	Fort Leavenworth, Kansas---Army Command and General Staff School		
July 1926	London, England---U.S. Embassy		
March 1927	Washington, D.C.---staff, Chief of Air Corps		
November 1927	Kelly Field, Texas---Air Corps Advanced Flying School, assistant commandant		
October 1930	Mather Field, California---20th Pursuit Group		
December 1932	March Field, California---1st Pursuit Wing, 17th Pursuit Group, 2nd Bomb Group		
December 1934	Hamilton Field, California---7th Bomb Group		
November 1936	Washington, D.C.---National Guard Bureau		
November 1939	Barksdale Field, Louisiana---27th Bomb Group		