

## Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor  
Foundation



### Personal info

Full name

**RETAN, George Owen**

Date of birth

**1 February 1923**

Age

**21**

Place of birth

**Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York**

Hometown

**Onondaga County, New York**

### Military service

Service number

**O-887980**

Rank

**Second Lieutenant**

Unit

**A Company,  
1st Battalion,  
506th Parachute Infantry Regiment,  
101st Airborne Division,  
2nd Platoon**

Awards

**Bronze Star,  
Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster**

### Death & Grave

Status

**Killed in Action**

Date of death

**17 September 1944**

Cemetery

**American War Cemetery Margraten**

Plot	Row	Grave
A	4	8

## Immediate family

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### Members

**George M. Retan (father)**

**Emily B. (Weller) Retan (mother)**

**Geraldine J. Retan (sister)**

**Lucile M. Retan (sister)**

## More information

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George O. Retan attended college when he volunteered for the Army of the United States in Syracuse, New York on 25 August 1942.

One of the 57 names carved on FUMA's Veterans Memorial wall is that of George Owen Retan. Retan came to Fork Union Military Academy as a freshman in 1937 and attended the Academy four years, graduating in 1941. After one year at Cornell University, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that caused the U. S. to enter World War II, Retan volunteered for the army and joined the paratroopers.

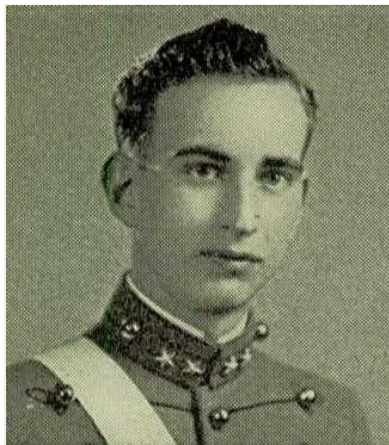
S/Sgt Retan jumped with his unit as part of the D-Day Invasion and was wounded within the first few minutes of the battle. Despite his wounds, Retan fought on and was awarded both the Bronze Star Medal and a battlefield commission to Second Lieutenant for his actions.

Now an officer, Retan parachuted with his company into the Netherlands on the first day of Operation Market Garden. Their objective was to secure an important bridge crossing at Son. While moving through the Son Forest toward their target, they came under heavy fire from German 88mm artillery emplacements at the bridge. Their only option was to attack head on into the massed fire of these cannons and capture them. The guns were overrun and the crossing secured. Retan was at the head of the charge leading his platoon and was one of the first killed in action in a battle that cost up to 30 percent of the entire company in casualties.

Before departing for the war, George Retan had left instructions that if he did not return, his savings were to be donated to the Academy. His parents carried out his wishes, and in 1949, the building now used by the band and known as Retan Flag Hall was dedicated as the Retan Library. A plaque honoring George Owen Retan can be found at the entrance door to the building.

He was initially buried at the Temporary American Military Cemetery of Son, The Netherlands.

## Photos



Source of information: Terry Hirsch, Jacob C. Hubbard, [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com), [www.506infantry.org](http://www.506infantry.org), [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) - 1925 Census, WWII Draft Card

Photo source: Ronald Ooms, Gerrie Franken - SOHE, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) - Fork Union Military Academy Yearbook 1941, Roger Zoontjens