



**John  
Raaen**  
*Army*

## **John Raaen**

**Apr 22, 1922 -**

**BIRTHPLACE: Ft. Benning, GA**

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### **SOLDIER DETAILS**

**HIGHEST RANK: Major Gen.**

**DIVISION: Army, 5th Rangers**

**THEATER OF OPERATION: European**

**BATTLE: D-Day**

**HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation**

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### **BIOGRAPHY**

John C. Raaen, Jr., was born into a military family. He went on to graduate from the United States Military Academy at Westpoint, in 1943. Commissioned as a 2nd. Lt. in the Corps of Engineers, he joined the newly activated 5th Ranger Battalion where he underwent extensive training in Florida, England, and finally Scotland in preparation for the invasion of occupied Europe. I was the Headquarters Commandant and Hq Company Commander of the 5th Ranger Infantry Battalion. I landed in the third wave of Ranger Force "C" on Omaha Dog Red at about 0750 on D-Day. The 5th Rangers landed INTACT as a battalion and thus became the dominant influence on Omaha Dog Beach. We fought our way into Vierville in the late afternoon, but were stopped from proceeding to Pointe Du Hoc by the 29th Division command group. Gen. Cota was probably right on that point, we were needed to secure a very fragile beachhead from expected German counter-attack, and since the German guns at PdHoc had not influenced the landings, protection of the beachhead was more important than relief of the 2nd Rangers at PdHoc. On D+1, I was with the relief force for PdHoc and ended up in command of that force the evening of D+1 as it dug in at St. Pierre du Mont for the night of D+1. The next morning, D+2, the rest of the 5th joined us with LTC Schneider in command, and we relieved the force at PdHoc. Courtesy of the American veterans center. More of his story available at <https://www.normandy1944.info/stories/john-c-raaen-jr>