

2nd Lt Masanao Russel Otake

September 7, 1920 - October 17, 1944



Masanao Russel Otake was born on September 7, 1920, in Lahaina, Maui. He was the son of Masaharu and Kikuno (Izumi) Otake. He was educated at Kamehameha III School and Lahainaluna High School in Lahaina, Maui. Before entering the service, he was a carpenter for the U.S. Army.

Otake (SN 30100217) was inducted into the Army in Lahaina, Maui on December 10, 1940. He trained at Schofield Barracks, Oahu, and at Camp McCoy in Wisconsin and later at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

He served with the 299th Infantry Regiment and the 100th Infantry Battalion, Company C, in the continental United States, in Algeria, Africa, Italy, and France.

He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, two Bronze Oak-Leaf Clusters to the Purple Heart, Distinguished Unit Badge, Combat Infantryman Badge, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal and World War II Victory Medal.

He received a battlefield commission on April 19, 1944, in Italy (Serial No. 01703069).

Second Lieutenant Masanao Russell Otake was killed in action near Bruyeres, France, during the Battle of Bruyeres on October 17, 1944.

He is interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Honolulu, Hawaii.

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AWARDS, POSTHUMOUS, OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

(GO NO. 13, HQ Sixth Army Group 13, Dec 44)

MASANAO OTAKE, 0-1703069, *Second Lieutenant, Company "C", 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment, for extraordinary heroism in action on 17 October 1944, in the vicinity of Bruyeres, France. In the 100th's attack on Hill 578, it became necessary to send some riflemen to an isolated farmhouse, situated on flat open ground, to secure the battalion's left flank. Lieutenant Otake, who was assigned the task of leading a squad of eight men to capture the enemy occupied farmhouse, dashed out toward the building, running through a hundred yards of open field raked by machine gun and small arms fire. Inspired by his example, his men immediately followed, and after a brief fire-fight succeeded in capturing the farm-house. Observing that Lieutenant Otake and his men were in a vulnerable position, an enemy platoon launched a determined counter-attack against the farmhouse. Though greatly outnumbered, Lieutenant Otake urged his men to hold their hard earned position, and while gallantly resisting the enemy assault he was mortally wounded by several machine pistol bullets and died a short while later. By complete disregard for his personal safety, gallant leadership and determination of purpose, Lieutenant Otake exemplified the finest traditions of the United States Army. Next of kin: Mrs Kikuno Take (Mother), Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii.*

Distinguished Service Cross Citation copy from National Archives-National Japanese American Historical Society/San Francisco. (Mits Kojimoto)
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