

GENERAL ORDERS  
No. 84

WAR DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON 25, D. C., 5 October 1945

**BATTLE HONORS.**—As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, WD Bul. 22, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, WD Bul. 11, 1942), citations of the following units in the general orders indicated are confirmed under the provisions of section IV, WD Circular 333, 1943, in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction. The citations read as follows:

1. The *9th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (Prov)* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy from 8 to 29 December 1944). Despite extremely hazardous weather conditions and determined enemy fighter and ground resistance, the *9th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (Prov)* executed 81 perilous missions over enemy-held territory. During the period 8 to 18 December 1944, the courageous airmen of this squadron flew 19 dangerous low-level reconnaissance missions over the Roer River dam area. Flying at times with a ceiling of only 100 feet, through heavy antiaircraft defenses and an enemy balloon barrage, the squadron secured vital weather information which was of great assistance in operations against the stubbornly resisting enemy. From 18 to 29 December 1944 during the critical Ardennes Campaign, the daring and aggressive sorties flown by the aviators of the *9th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (Prov)* kept the Allies constantly informed of weather developments. Maintenance personnel worked day and night to keep every aircraft in condition during the sustained operations of this period. The outstanding determination and technical skill of the officers and men of the *9th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (Prov)* from 8 to 29 December 1944 were of inestimable aid to the American and British air forces in striking a telling blow against the desperate German army. (General Orders 62, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 2 May 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

2. The *Military Police Platoon, 9th Infantry Division*, is cited for extraordinary gallantry and outstanding performance of duty from 9 to 15 March 1945, during which time it maintained traffic control on the Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen and in the Rhine bridgehead area, braving constant heavy artillery fire and air attacks to keep supply, evacuation, and troop movements running smoothly over this vital link. The sector in which the platoon operated was a target for 24 hours of each day for heavy artillery concentrations, air attacks, and on two occasions V-2 weapons. Under this murderous fire, the MP's stood at their posts, unable to take cover, as casualties to themselves and to passing troops and vehicles mounted each day. When one of their own number fell, another MP stepped forward to take his place. The bridgehead over the Rhine was completely dependent upon the Ludendorf span; necessary troops and supplies had to strengthen the bridgehead in a steady stream, or all would be lost. It was the coolly competent direction by the *Military Police Platoon* which insured their crossing the Rhine despite the heavy, constant shelling. Vehicles were hit and reinforcements wounded; in every case the MP's stood ready to clear the bridge, and did so quickly. When drivers of vehicles in convoy stopped to seek cover during the shelling, the MP's went out to them, forced them back into vehicles, or took over themselves to keep the vital artery clear. The high casualties on the bridge and its approaches made it necessary for the *Military Police Platoon* to take over their care, which they did quickly and competently, setting up an aid station and an evacuation system. One of the first wire lines across the bridge

was laid and maintained by the MP's, despite the great difficulties caused by shell fire breaking the wires. The first prisoner of war cage on the east bank of the Rhine was set up by this platoon, and prisoners were evacuated speedily to the rear shore. With no concern for personal safety, the men of the *Military Police Platoon, 9th Infantry Division*, maintained control of the bridge with a magnificent display of courage and devotion to duty. (General Orders 134, Headquarters 9th Infantry Division, 25 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

3. The *36th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 12 April 1945. The pilots of the *36th Fighter Group* demonstrated courage and superior aerial skill in striking a heavy blow against the Luftwaffe. During the course of a reconnaissance mission in search of enemy aircraft, an estimated 360 German airplanes were observed dispersed on the airfields at Schkeuditz and Leipzig Mockau. In a desperate attempt to stave off the attacking airmen, the enemy threw up a barrage of antiaircraft fire of such intensity that seven of the attacking airplanes were seriously damaged. Despite the intense opposition encountered, the gallant pilots dove to a minimum altitude and attacked the airfield with resolute determination and brilliant flying tactics. As a result of their skillfully coordinated attacks a total of 73 aircraft were destroyed and 19 damaged, and in addition a large hangar was destroyed. The success of this mission constituted a serious blow to the enemy's diminishing aerial might and materially aided the advance of Allied ground troops in southern Germany. The extraordinary courage and aerial skill displayed by the airmen of this organization in executing repeated attacks in the face of determined resistance from the defending artillery installations reflect great credit on the *36th Fighter Group* and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

4. The *47th Bombardment Group (L)* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations from 21 to 24 April 1945. When, after 5½ months of intensive night aerial effort against enemy communications and other key targets in northern Italy, during which more than 680 tons of bombs were dropped on vital Po River crossings in April alone, the *47th Bombardment Group (L)* was called upon to render all-out effort in coordination with the Allied drive through the Po Valley, air and ground crews responded so valiantly as to exceed expectations. In the 60-hour period from sundown of 21 April to dawn of 24 April, flying around the clock despite unquestioned weariness of air crew members and an extreme shortage of ground personnel, assigned on a basis of a day-operating light bombardment group with six less aircraft per squadron than were actually assigned, and called upon to maintain aircraft which in many cases had been in combat more than a year, the *47th Bombardment Group (L)* flew 334 sorties against the enemy at the peak of the battle, hitting his motor transport and horse-drawn vehicles with such precision accuracy that he was unable to withdraw across the Po River as an organized, fighting force. Courageous airmen, in the face of adverse weather and rugged terrain which made night flying exceedingly difficult, relentlessly attacked the enemy night and day, while ground crews, supplemented by clerks and cooks who left their duties to bomb up the A-20 and A-26 aircraft, maintained operations for 60 consecutive hours with only brief and intermittent halts for sleep. In several hundred single-aircraft attacks which taxed the professional skill and determination of the air crews to the utmost, motor, rail, and other transport in and to the

north of the battle zone were attacked with highly destructive results. During this period, the group was officially credited with destroying 55 motor vehicles, 17 railway cars, 1 fuel dump, and many other varied targets, while damaging 50 motor vehicles, 3 tanks, and 18 railway cars. Much greater damage and destruction were caused but could not be assessed in the darkness. Despite long months of training in evasive action, so intense and accurate was the antiaircraft fire encountered that three aircraft were lost and four others damaged, yet these gallant airmen, many of whom flew voluntarily, displayed such extraordinary heroism and esprit de corps that they played a major role in defeating the enemy in Italy by preventing him from reaching the mountain fastnesses of the southern Alps. The courage, determination, and selfless devotion to duty displayed by the personnel of the *47th Bombardment Group (L)* in this last battle in Italy reflect highest credit on themselves and the military service of the United States. (General Orders 178, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force, 16 August 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, Mediterranean Theater.)

5. The *48th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 6 December 1944. On that date the pilots of the *48th Fighter Group* displayed exceptional courage and aerial skill in the execution of a close support mission in cooperation with ground troops advancing against a strongly defended area north of Julich, Germany. Previous attempts to dislodge the enemy from this area had been thrown back with losses, and it was decided that only with the help of coordinated aerial attacks could the hostile stronghold be reduced. The weather conditions over the combat area were such as to preclude any normal aerial activity, inasmuch as a heavy overcast extended over the entire area. Flying below the overcast, the group navigated unerringly to the target area, and despite intense and accurate opposition from antiaircraft and small-arms fire they circled at minimum altitude to locate the enemy positions. Although several of the aircraft sustained heavy damage from the opposing fire, the pilots continued to press their attacks with relentless force. Strongly defended buildings were demolished, and ground entrenchments and troop concentrations were bombed and strafed, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy forces. The extraordinary heroism and keen aerial skill displayed by the pilots of the *48th Fighter Group* in braving extreme hazards and difficulties to breach the enemy defenses made possible the rapid advance of the Allied ground forces in this sector and reflect great credit on the *48th Fighter Group* and the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

6. The *50th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 25 April 1945 when the pilots of this group delivered a telling blow to the Luftwaffe. With its northern bases overrun by the rapidly advancing Allied spearheads, the German air force was compelled to concentrate its forces in the Redoubt area. The *50th Fighter Group* was one of the units chosen to deal a final crippling blow to the dwindling might of the enemy's air power. The target to be attacked was the Bad Aibling Airdrome, southeast of Munich. Upon reaching the target area the group was met by a withering hail of antiaircraft fire. Undeterred by intense opposition, the gallant pilots descended to tree-top level and strafed the field with forcefulness and consummate aerial skill. So great was the determination of the group to inflict maximum destruction on the Luftwaffe that, although the artillery installations were fully alerted, the airmen immediately initiated four consecutive attacks. Although 1 was destroyed and 12 others were damaged during these attacks, the airmen pressed their attacks with

such determination and brilliant flying tactics that 98 enemy aircraft were destroyed and 57 damaged. The heavy losses inflicted on the German air force on this occasion contributed in vital measure to the eventual defeat of the Axis forces in southern Germany. The gallantry, fortitude, and esprit de corps displayed by the airmen of the *50th Fighter Group* exemplify the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

7. The *82d Armored Reconnaissance Battalion* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy during the period 3 to 17 April 1945 in which the extraordinary heroism, gallantry, and brilliant team action of its individual members materially assisted in the defeat of the German forces of Southern Westphalian Plains by the exemplary manner in which extended screening operations were conducted during the historic drive of the Ninth United States Army from the Rhine to the Elbe River, Germany. During the period cited, the *82d Armored Reconnaissance Battalion* slashed through enemy defenses for more than 250 miles far in advance of the main elements of the spearhead forces, climaxing this advance with a spectacular dash of 62 miles from Gross Manner to the Elbe River south of Magdeburg in 8 hours. The bold and aggressive movements of widely separated companies of the battalion completely disrupted and disorganized the enemy defenses and resulted in the killing of 1,000 enemy troops and capture of 8,934 prisoners of war, the capture or destruction of large quantities of enemy equipment, and the liberation of approximately 32,000 Allied prisoners of war and slave workers. The daring and determined spirit exhibited by the exhausted and battle-weary members of the battalion in maintaining the momentum of the attack throughout the entire period regardless of casualties sustained and in executing small-unit maneuvers frequently behind enemy lines and rapid reconnaissance by fire in canalized sectors resulted in many enemy defensive installations being overrun before they could be manned. Destroyed in battle or captured intact were many self-propelled and towed anti-tank guns, tanks, railroad guns, artillery pieces, aircraft, armored vehicles, and trains, as well as enormous quantities of panzerfausts and small arms. Motivated always by the highest esprit de corps and displaying the greatest intrepidity and determination, the *82d Armored Reconnaissance Battalion* executed exceptionally hazardous missions with unusual speed and skill, inflicting great losses upon the enemy with a minimum loss of personnel and equipment. (General Orders 54, Headquarters 2d Armored Division, 7 August 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

8. The *86th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 20 April 1945. During the early weeks of April 1945 it became increasingly evident that the enemy was hastily withdrawing his ground and air forces from northern Germany. In a tremendous effort to disorganize the enemy's withdrawal and prevent his establishing his forces in the Munich area, the *86th Fighter Group* launched 9 missions for a total of 93 sorties against hostile convoys and airfield installations. Despite the fact that additional artillery had been installed to protect the greatly augmented numbers of aircraft dispersed on the airfields at Laupheim, Ulm, Ingolstadt, and Munish, the airmen attacked the airdromes with unmitigated fury, accounting for the destruction of a total of 46 hostile fighters and the damaging of 45. The five additional missions launched by the *86th Fighter Group* on this date were directed against troop concentrations and convoys of men and equipment proceeding hastily southward. Despite determined resistance from gun positions and small arms a total of 70 motor trucks

and buildings reported as troop concentrations were destroyed, and 111 trucks and 34 railroad cars were damaged. In striking this dual thrust at the military might of the Nazi war machine, the airmen of the *86th Fighter Group* materially weakened the ability of the enemy to continue resisting the advance of the Allied ground forces. By the unstinted courage and determination of their attacks against the enemy on this occasion, the pilots of the *86th Fighter Group* reflect the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

9. *Company B, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion*, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action during the period 13 to 15 March 1945 near Frauenberg, France. *Company B*, in support of an infantry battalion, was charged with the mission of providing crossings for foottroops who were to assault Siegfried Line positions across the Blies River. Personnel of *Company B* made extensive reconnaissance for crossing sites, cleared the areas of mines, and began construction of a footbridge after leading infantry elements had crossed on improvised structures. The bridge was completed only to be knocked out by a direct artillery hit. Work was recommenced, under heavy enemy small-arms and artillery fire, while a second bridge was begun several hundred yards downstream. The bridge at the first site was completed four times, only to be destroyed by enemy artillery and the swift current. Although attempts to use assault boats failed because of the heavy enemy fire, personnel of *Company B* finally succeeded in constructing a bridge at the alternate site, permitting infantry to cross and secure the bridgehead. *Company B* completed a second bridge, then crossed the river and continued to work in support of the infantry in breaching the Siegfried Line. The tenacity, courage, and determination displayed by the members of *Company B, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion*, reflect credit on themselves and their organization. (General Orders 305, Headquarters 45th Infantry Division, 30 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

10. The *310th Bombardment Group (M)* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations on 10 March 1945. During the aerial preliminaries to the spring offensive which defeated the German armies in Italy, the *310th Bombardment Group (M)* was called upon to attack the main rail bridge and railroad diversion bridge at Ora, Italy, the one remaining section of the Brenner Pass line which was open and the hub for the enemy transportation lines then attempting to bring supplies and munitions to front-line troops fighting in the Apennines Mountains. On 10 March 1945, the *310th Bombardment Group (M)* marshalled its full striking force for the blow against Ora. In complete defiance of their full knowledge that they would meet the stiffest opposition of which the enemy was capable, an opposition which had inflicted heavy losses on crews and aircraft in preceding weeks, 48 gallant air crews unhesitatingly took off in attack. Even though antiaircraft were sent in ahead of the formation to saturate the anti-aircraft positions with phosphorus bombs, so heavily massed were the enemy batteries that the hail of fire which enveloped the formation was heavy, very intense, and extremely accurate at both targets. Although they could see the destruction awaiting them, the resolute determination of the airmen to fulfill their mission removed all thoughts of self-preservation. In an extraordinary display of heroism, the entire formation continued unwaveringly to its objective, with each succeeding box watching their comrades ahead buffeted and tossed by the terrific enemy fire. Of the 48 participating aircraft, all of which dropped

their bombs on the target zone, 4 were shot down in flames, 10 were so badly damaged that only exceptional determination and skill enabled their crews to bring them back to base, and almost all of the remaining aircraft were holed. Undismayed ground crews, grimly surveying the damage, immediately began the work of repair, and as a result of their well-nigh superhuman efforts, 46 aircraft were airborne on the following day. The gallantry, resolve, and unmatched heroism of the personnel of the *310th Bombardment Group (M)* in making this magnificent attack in the face of hazards surpassing those normal to aerial combat reflect the highest credit on themselves and the military service of the United States. (General Orders 177, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force, 16 August 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, Mediterranean Theater.)

11. The *312th Bombardment Group (L)* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action over Formosa from 25 March to 4 April 1945. During this period the A-20's of this group, based in the Philippine Islands, completed eight strikes against Japanese plants producing butanol, an important component of aviation gasoline. Impressed with the strategic importance of these missions, the success of which would seriously impair production of aviation fuel throughout Japan, the ground crews worked arduously to keep the aircraft in the peak of combat condition. Operations and intelligence personnel devoted tireless efforts to complete the planning and furnish the air crews with all the information necessary for the effective accomplishment of these hazardous strikes. Because the distance to Formosa from any operational base on Luzon constituted almost the extreme flight range for attack bombers, no A-20's had previously attempted raids on these installations. To reach the target, the A-20's of the group, carrying six 100-pound napalm fire bombs attached to their wings in addition to the regular bomb load, had to fly a 230-mile stretch over the rough and dangerous waters of the South China Sea. Coming over Formosa, the pilots avoided the formidable belt of antiaircraft installations extending from Koshun, on the southern tip of the island, to Tainan by making their approach along the base of the Nitaka mountain range. Inasmuch as fighter escort was provided only to the target area, they were in constant danger of enemy interception during and after the raids. Attacking at roof-top level with a suddenness and fierceness that prevented the Japanese from offering more than feeble opposition to their devastating bombing and strafing runs, the crews of the *312th Bombardment Group (L)* hit their assigned targets with such precision and skill that each plant was left in a mass of flames and smoke that billowed upward thousands of feet. Striking at installations at Shinei, Eiko, Kyoshito, and Ensui, they destroyed or severely damaged large plant buildings, shops, warehouses, storage tanks, and railway yards. The *312th Bombardment Group (L)* caused irreparable destruction to these valuable butanol-producing plants with the loss of but a single aircraft. By the extraordinary gallantry and superb airmanship of its combat crews and by the exceptional devotion to duty and outstanding technical proficiency of its ground personnel, the *312th Bombardment Group (L)* brought great honor to the United States Army Air Forces and to the entire military service. (General Orders 1744, Headquarters Far East Air Forces, 2 August 1945, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

12. *Company F, 315th Infantry Regiment*, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy during the period 21 to 24 October 1944. The 2d Battalion, 315th Infantry Regiment, was committed to action on 21 October 1944, with the mission of closing a gap in friendly lines and seizing the high ground northeast of Embermenil, France. *Company F, 315th Infantry Regiment*, backed by accurate supporting fire from its weapons platoon spearheaded

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the attack, soon closing with the enemy. Hand-to-hand fighting ensued and rifle grenades were used freely. Despite the fierce fighting and the appreciable distance involved, *Company F* was quickly emplaced on its objective, having tied in with the unit on its left flank. Soon thereafter the enemy directed an attack against the unit on the right flank of *Company F*, forcing the adjacent troops to withdraw. The support platoon of *Company F* was then committed to occupy this position, holding it until relieved. Early the next morning an estimated battalion of enemy infantry supported by several tanks moved against the company's position. *Company F*'s left flank was soon exposed permitting the enemy to infiltrate into friendly lines. The third platoon, although forced to turn and fire to its left and rear, held fast. Company mortars were displaced to the front line platoons and from this position placed such effective fire on the enemy that hostile forces were unable to mount machine guns in the rear of *Company F*. Subsequently mortar and artillery fire was directed close to the company's left flank and succeeded in driving the enemy from their positions. Once again the determined enemy attacked the right flank of *Company F*, but was quickly repelled by the gallant company. Until 1400 hours, 24 October 1944, the enemy persisted in an all-out attempt to wrest the hill from *Company F*. Enemy casualties were 19 prisoners, 19 wounded, and an estimated 200 killed by the combined efforts of *Company F* and supporting mortar and artillery fire. *Company F*'s casualties totaled 27, 5 of whom were killed in action. By its heroic action in storming, seizing, and holding a strategic high point against overwhelming enemy superiority, *Company F*, *315th Infantry Regiment*, contributed substantially to the success of the regiment in this action. (General Orders 164, Headquarters 79th Infantry Division, 28 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

13. The *317th Troop Carrier Group* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action on 30 and 31 January and 1 February 1943. At that time strong enemy ground forces had penetrated into the Wau-Bulolo Valley, New Guinea, in an effort to capture the valuable Wau airdrome, which was garrisoned by a token Allied force too small to repulse the invaders. Airplanes of the *317th Troop Carrier Group* were attached to another troop carrier group to make an unprecedented series of air movements to save the airdrome. For 3 days the unarmed transport airplanes of the two groups carried Allied troops, ammunition, light artillery, and supplies over the hazardous Owen-Stanley Mountains until late in the afternoon, when treacherous weather would ordinarily have stopped aerial operations. As soon as the airplanes had rolled to a stop on the up-hill landing strip, which was under the lobbing fire of enemy mortars, Allied infantry jumped out of the transports and immediately opened fire on the enemy. On 30 January, 40 airplanes made 66 trips; on 31 January, 35 airplanes delivered 71 loads; and on 1 February, 40 aircraft transported 53 5,000-pound cargoes. By this time the Japanese had been killed or driven off, and Wau airdrome, later to be used as a staging base for Allied air attacks on Lae and Salamaua, had been saved. With the loss of only three aircraft, these troop carrier groups flew a total of 948,000 pounds of personnel and matériel into Wau. The courage and skill of the air crews in flying over a highly hazardous route subject to enemy interception and in landing under fire, as well as the tireless efforts of the ground echelon in keeping the aircraft in constant operation, were a vital factor in the success of the Allied counteroffensive against the Japanese forces which had pushed down into southeastern New Guinea. The achievements of the *317th Troop Carrier Group* uphold the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 1744, Headquarters Far East Air Forces, AGO 2150B)

2 August 1945, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

14. The *317th Troop Carrier Group* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action in the Philippine Islands on 16 and 17 February 1945. As part of the campaign to liberate Luzon it was necessary that American forces retake from the Japanese the historic island fortress of Corregidor at the mouth of Manila Bay so as to open the port of Manila to Allied shipping. The *317th Troop Carrier Group* was assigned the mission of transporting and dropping the parachute troops who were to land on the plateau at the western end of the rocky island. Successful accomplishment of the operation demanded thorough preparation, sound judgment, and exceptional flying skill on the part of the crews of the C-47's. The two zones into which the paratroopers and their supplies were to be placed were of such small size that each airplane had to come over the target individually and drop not more than eight men on each pass. Corregidor, with its multitude of caves, tunnels, and dug-in positions, afforded ideal concealment for antiaircraft gunners and was a hazardous target over which to fly unarmed, unarmored C-47's at a height of only 400 to 600 feet above the dropping zones. On the morning of 16 February, 51 of the group's C-47's dropped a total of 1,021 paratroopers and 151 bundles of supplies in a period of 1 hour, more than 92 percent of the troops and supplies landing in the designated areas. In a period of nearly 1½ hours on the afternoon of the same day, fifty C-47's dropped 978 paratroopers and 159 bundles, 94 percent of the men and supplies landing in the target zones. On the morning of 17 February, forty-three C-47's dropped 197 bundles of supplies in less than an hour; 95 percent to 98 percent hit the target. On the afternoon of 17 February, during a period of nearly 2½ hours, 785 bundles of supplies were dropped by thirty-three C-47's, 98 percent landing in the target zones. In all, approximately 563 separate passes had to be made to put the 1,999 paratroopers and 1,292 bundles on Corregidor. Antiaircraft and small-arms fire from the desperate and fanatical Japanese defenders of the island damaged 25 of the transports. The outstanding courage and superb flying skill of its air crews and the tireless determination and exemplary technical proficiency of its ground echelon enabled the *317th Troop Carrier Group* to play a significant role in the liberation of Luzon. Its achievements have brought great honor to the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 1744, Headquarters Far East Air Forces, 2 August 1945, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

15. The *332d Fighter Group* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. On 23 May 1945, the group was assigned the mission of escorting heavy bombardment type aircraft attacking the vital Daimler-Benz tank assembly plant at Berlin, Germany. Realizing the strategic importance of the mission and fully cognizant of the amount of enemy resistance to be expected and the long range to be covered, the ground crews worked tirelessly and with enthusiasm to have their aircraft at the peak of mechanical condition to insure the success of the operation. On 24 March 1945, fifty-nine P-51 type aircraft were airborne and set course for the rendezvous with the bomber formation. Through superior navigation and maintenance of strict flight discipline the group formation reached the bomber formation at the designated time and place. Nearing the target approximately 25 enemy aircraft were encountered which included ME262's which launched relentless attacks in a desperate effort to break up and destroy the bomber formations. Displaying outstanding courage, aggressiveness, and combat technique, the group immediately engaged the enemy formation in aerial combat. In the ensuing engagement that continued over the target

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area, the gallant pilots of the *332d Fighter Group* battled against the enemy fighter to prevent the breaking up of the bomber formation and thus jeopardizing the successful completion of this vitally important mission. Through their superior skill and determination, the group destroyed three enemy aircraft, probably destroyed three, and damaged three. Among their claims were eight of the highly rated enemy jet-propelled aircraft with no losses sustained by the *332d Fighter Group*. Leaving the target area and en route to base after completion of their primary task, aircraft of the group conducted strafing attacks against enemy ground installation and transportation with outstanding success. By the conspicuous gallantry, professional skill, and determination of the pilots, together with the outstanding technical skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, the *332d Fighter Group* has reflected great credit on itself and the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 3674, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, 9 August 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, Mediterranean Theater.)

16. The *354th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 25 August 1944. On this date the *354th Fighter Group* achieved an outstanding record in the destruction of large numbers of enemy aircraft. During the course of six separate fighter sweeps a total of 83 aircraft were dispatched against the enemy. Over Rethal, France, fourteen P-51 aircraft from one of the squadrons engaged 25 hostile fighters heading over the front lines. In a gallant display of aggressiveness and aerial skill the pilots of this group took a toll of 10 enemy aircraft destroyed and 4 damaged, and forced the remainder to flee. Meanwhile another squadron of the group attacked the airfield at Beauvais, France, and notwithstanding heavy opposition from ground fire, 2 hangars and 10 enemy aircraft dispersed on the field were completely destroyed. The third squadron, consisting of 15 aircraft, encountered a formation of 30 hostile fighters. In a battle which raged from deck level to 8,000 feet altitude, the Mustang pilots accounted for the destruction of twelve ME. 109's, one F. W. 190, and damaging of two F. W. 190's. In all, the pilots of the *354th Fighter Group* destroyed 51 and damaged 9 enemy aircraft on this date. Although outnumbered in every instance of aerial combat the pilots of the *354th Fighter Group* attacked the enemy with such ferocity and zeal that his aircraft were shot down in great numbers or forced to withdraw. The intense zeal and fighting spirit displayed by the pilots in aerial combat, combined with the perseverance and technical skill of the ground personnel, mark the *354th Fighter Group* as an organization of exceptional esprit de corps and reflect the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

17. The *358th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy from 8 to 25 April 1945. During this period the *358th Fighter Group* carried out a program of intensive operations against the Nazi military forces attempting to withdraw to the mountainous area of the southern Redoubt. This involved a series of attacks against the airfields in the region of Munich and Ingolstadt, and the continuation of close-support missions in coordination with the rapid advances of the United States Seventh and the French First Armies. In anticipation of these attacks on his airdromes, the enemy had concentrated large quantities of antiaircraft artillery wherever his aircraft were located, and on all of its attacks the *358th Fighter Group* was confronted with an intense hail of antiaircraft fire from the defending installations. During the entire period the airmen of the *358th Fighter Group* attacked the enemy with  
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such skillfully executed maneuvers that the losses incurred were negligible. Flying frequently in marginal weather, the pilots of the group achieved an impressive record of destruction wrought on the enemy; 13 airplanes were destroyed and 8 damaged in aerial combat, and 149 were destroyed and 116 damaged on the ground. In close cooperation with the advancing ground forces the *358th Fighter Group* destroyed 1,137 transports and damaged 845. In addition, 631 buildings, 91 locomotives, 60 guns, and 20 tanks were destroyed or damaged. This paralyzing blow dealt the enemy by the airmen of the *358th Fighter Group* evidenced the highest degree of courage, determination, skill, and esprit de corps, and reflects great credit on the *358th Fighter Group* and the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

18. The *362d Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 16 March 1945. Assigned to perform armed reconnaissance and close cooperation with two armies, the *362d Fighter Group* dispatched a total of one hundred and seventy-five P-47 type aircraft on 44 missions to strike a devastating blow against the enemy by disrupting and battering enemy transportation, transportation facilities, and artillery. Operating in the Moselle-Rhine River triangle, flights of the *362d Fighter Group* continued throughout the day to seek and destroy enemy forces and equipment resisting our ground forces. Attacking viciously and fearlessly despite withering barrages of intense and accurate enemy antiaircraft fire, targets were bombed and strafed at dangerously low altitude despite thoroughly alerted and formidable enemy defenses. As a result of this day's effort, the *362d Fighter Group* destroyed or damaged 420 enemy military transports, 7 armored vehicles and tanks, 11 locomotives, and 192 railroad cars; 12 gun emplacements and 42 horse-drawn vehicles were destroyed, and 14 roads or railroads rendered ineffective. The extraordinary achievement of the *362d Fighter Group* in delivering such a staggering blow against the enemy's supply of armored vehicles, motor transportation, and railroad facilities materially affected the enemy's inability to resist. The victorious exploits of the pilots of the *362d Fighter Group* exemplify the courage, leadership, teamwork, and flying skill which are in keeping with the highest traditions of the service. (General Orders 78, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 20 May 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

19. The *365th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 20 April 1945. The *365th Fighter Group* distinguished itself by exceptional courage, aggressiveness, and aerial skill on that date in the execution of numerous attacks against enemy airfields, concentrations of motor transport, and ammunition dumps which were vitally needed by the hostile troops impeding the advance of the VII Corps through southern Germany. Although fully aware of the extreme danger of attacking ammunition supplies at low altitude, the airmen descended to minimum altitude and inflicted extensive damage to enemy installations. While flying through clouds of smoke and debris which rose as high as 8,000 feet the gallant pilots executed as many as seven strafing runs. Undeterred by the intense opposition from antiaircraft fire and the additional hazards produced by the exploding ammunition, they attacked and destroyed vital objectives over the entire area. The results of this highly effective blow against the enemy's military power were 38 ammunition dumps and 40 buildings destroyed, 34 motor transport, 8 aircraft, and 5 barges damaged or destroyed. The extraordinary achievements of the *365th Fighter Group* on this

occasion evidenced aerial skill and devotion to duty which reflect great credit on the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

20. The *367th Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 19 March 1945. The *367th Fighter Group* exhibited exceptional courage, aggressiveness and aerial skill in attacking with great success a vital military target in western Germany. This unit was assigned the task of attacking the headquarters installation of the German commander in chief, west, at Ziegenburg, Germany. This high priority target, which served as the nerve center of all operations of the German armies on the Western Front, was extremely well-defended by antiaircraft artillery and was located in a type of terrain which made attack by air exceptionally difficult. After a period of detailed preparations three squadrons of the groups staged attacks at short intervals. Despite a ground haze over the target area the determined pilots descended to dangerously low altitude and skilfully dispatched their bombs directly on the buildings, returning to strafe repeatedly the adjoining installations. In executing this brilliant attack the airmen of the *367th Fighter Group* struck a demoralizing blow to the German High Command which hastened considerably the eventual capitulation of the enemy. The gallant courage, aggressive spirit, and devotion to duty displayed on this occasion reflect great distinction on the *367th Fighter Group* and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

21. The *371st Fighter Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy from 15 to 21 March 1945. During this period the *371st Fighter Group* inflicted tremendous destruction on the hostile forces fleeing before the Allied units closing to the banks of the Rhine River. Demonstrating steadfast determination to destroy the enemy, the gallant pilots launched a series of brilliant air attacks closely coordinated with the advances of the Third Army. Striking vigorously ahead of the advancing tank columns, they smashed the enemy's desperate attempts to organize a holding defense. Although frequently engulfed by intense concentrations of fire from mobile artillery and small arms, they descended to treetop level to attack the motor transports, troop concentrations, and strong points of the retreating enemy. During this 6-day period the airmen of the *371st Fighter Group* destroyed a total of 1,702 transport vehicles, 180 factories and buildings, 57 railroad cars, 20 tanks, and 7 gun emplacements; 1,407 transports, 70 railroad cars, and 59 tanks were damaged. The brilliantly successful attacks of the *371st Fighter Group* constituted a material contribution to the defeat of the hostile forces in southern Germany. The courage and determination of the airmen, combined with the technical skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel, mark the *371st Fighter Group* as an organization of unusual esprit de corps and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 117, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 27 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

22. The *373d Fighter Group* is cited for outstanding and heroic performance of duty in action against the enemy in the European Theater of Operations on 20 March 1945. This organization, displaying great valor and exemplary devotion to duty, greatly facilitated the crossing of the Rhine River by the Allied ground forces by dealing six consecutive blows against the enemy's air potential and by

crushing his lines of communication. The group destroyed and damaged 119 enemy aircraft on three vital airfields which presented the greatest threat to Allied armies massed west of the Rhine, and rendered these airfields completely inoperative. With unswerving resolution, pilots dived repeatedly through barrages of antiaircraft fire to batter strategic targets, then with brilliant airmanship and superior flying skill returned all aircraft safely to base. In a further display of outstanding aerial tactics, the *373d Fighter Group* tenaciously and aggressively attacked rolling stock, motor transportation, and utterly disrupted main highways and rail lines leading to the Rhine. The ingenuity, efficiency, and cooperation on the part of all personnel contributed in the fullest measure to the devastation wreaked by the *373d Fighter Group* on this significant day. The outstanding performance, achieved through the superb esprit de corps of this unit, is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 90, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 31 May 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

23. The *387th Bombardment Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in armed conflict with the enemy on 23 December 1944, when the group was dispatched to attack a vital and strongly defended railway bridge at Mayen, Germany. While en route to the target the second box of B-26 airplanes, which was without fighter escort and was separated by several miles from the first box, was viciously attacked by from 15 to 25 Messerschmitt aircraft. Despite the determined defensive fire which took a large toll of the hostile fighters, the enemy pressed his attacks with such fury that the low flight was overpowered and four B-26 aircraft were forced down in flames. Although in the ensuing encounters every airplane in the remaining two flights sustained damage from the enemy attacks, the gallant airmen succeeded in driving four of the enemy airplanes to certain destruction and forcing four more to break away in flames. Meanwhile the first box pressed on to the target despite intermittent flak and the imminence of fighter attack. Although a pathfinder failure occurred 1 minute before bomb-release time, the bombardiers synchronized on the target with such accuracy that extensive damage was inflicted on the bridge. Notwithstanding the heavy losses incurred during the enemy attacks the second box returned for an additional run on the target, and as a result of their determined efforts the central portion of the bridge span was completely destroyed. Despite the severe damage inflicted on the group's aircraft during the morning mission, the officers and men of the *387th Bombardment Group* displayed great determination in embarking on another mission only 2 hours after the bombers had returned to base. A withering hail of antiaircraft fire was encountered over the target area at Prum, Germany, which damaged 21 of the 26 airplanes dispatched. In the face of this sustained barrage of flak the courageous airmen released their bombs with a high degree of accuracy upon the communications installations. In carrying out this dual blow against the enemy's communications and transportation facilities on this date, the officers and men of the *387th Bombardment Group* displayed aerial skill, resolution, and devotion to duty in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 140, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 23 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

24. The *406th Fighter Group* is cited for outstanding performance of duty at Bastogne, Belgium, in a continuous action against the enemy from 23 to 27 December 1944. The *406th Fighter Group* was ordered to furnish direct air cooperation with the surrounded ground forces in Bastogne and through the united

effort of all its personnel made ready all available aircraft. With lifting skies during the early morning hours of 23 December 1944, airplanes of the *406th Fighter Group* took off at dawn, arrived over Bastogne 20 minutes later, and began a 5-day action which was never terminated until the approach of darkness on 27 December 1944, when relieving columns had reached the cut-off units, and only after the group had dispatched 81 missions totalling 529 sorties in devastating attacks limited almost exclusively to a 10-mile radius of the city. Flying from dawn until after dark, the courageous and heroic pilots, without regard for their own lives or physical endurance, bombed, strafed, and launched their rockets at enemy tanks, vehicles, defended buildings, and gun positions. In the face of heavy concentrations of antiaircraft fire and despite difficulty in recognition caused by enemy use of Allied equipment, uniforms, and identification, the pilots of the *406th Fighter Group* pressed home their attacks with such unequalled aggressiveness and professional skill that they destroyed or damaged 13 enemy aircraft, 610 motor transport, 194 tanks and armored vehicles, 226 gun positions, 59 fortified buildings, 43 horse-drawn vehicles, 12 bridges, and 13 ammunition or fuel dumps. On three successive mornings, flights of this group arrived at the target at the moment when the enemy had launched all-out assaults to reduce the garrison, and each time the critical situation was relieved by their counterattacks. The effective and extremely timely joint effort of the *406th Fighter Group* brought the highest credit on the Army Air Forces and the military service. (General Orders 97, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 14 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

25. The *410th Bombardment Group (L)* is cited for extraordinary heroism in armed conflict with the enemy on 23-25 December 1944. The pilots of the *410th Bombardment Group (L)* displayed marked perseverance and superior aerial skill in executing a series of attacks under exceptionally difficult conditions against supply and communications facilities employed by the enemy in the Ardennes sector. As the weather cleared for the first time in 7 days on 23 December 1944 the *410th Bombardment Group (L)* launched an attack against the railhead at Kyllburg, Germany. Despite determined enemy resistance which resulted in battle damage to 18 of the attacking aircraft, the vital railhead was bombed with devastating accuracy. An hour and forty-five minutes after returning from this mission, and despite the crippled condition of many of the aircraft, the *410th Bombardment Group (L)* dispatched a mission to bomb the Lunebach communications center. Outstanding results were achieved despite a snow-covered terrain which made target identification extremely difficult. During the 2 days which followed, the gallant airmen of the *410th Bombardment Group (L)* destroyed three other vital enemy installations. Flying through extremely intense barrages of antiaircraft fire they succeeded in crippling supply lines vitally needed by the enemy. The heroic determination and esprit de corps demonstrated by the airmen of this group, combined with the technical skill and untiring devotion to duty of the ground personnel, resulted in a crushing blow to the enemy's communication system, greatly aided our forces in halting the resurgent German armies, and brought the highest credit on the *410th Bombardment Group (L)* and the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 124, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 5 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

26. The *416th Bombardment Group* is cited for extraordinary heroism in armed conflict with the enemy from 6 to 9 August 1944. During the withdrawal of the beleaguered German ground forces from the Falaise Gap the *416th Bombardment*  
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Group launched a series of determined attacks upon strategic and strongly defended enemy positions in an attempt to turn the enemy retreat into a route. On the afternoon of 6 August 1944 the group dispatched 40 aircraft in an attack against the key bridge at Oissel, the last escape route for the enemy across the Seine River. In anticipation of attack the enemy had concentrated a large number of antiaircraft installations in this area. The withering barrage of fire which was thrown up took a toll of 3 Marauders destroyed and 26 damaged. Fighting through the intense resistance, with the wounded still at their posts, the flak-ridden formation released the bombs with devastating effect upon the bridge. Maintenance crews worked feverishly to repair the battle damage, and on 8 August a full-strength formation was dispatched to attack the railway junction at Frebent, France. Although two airplanes were shot down over the target area and eight were severely damaged, the airmen demonstrated extraordinary skill and determination in destroying a large quantity of vitally needed enemy equipment and rolling stock. Both air and ground crews toiled ceaselessly to repair the crippled aircraft, and on the following day the group had launched two additional attacks, inflicting heavy damage on a German radar establishment at Bois du Pierre and destroying the enemy railroad bridge at Clauny, France. The aggressive flying tactics and courage displayed by the airmen in attacking these vital targets and the determined efforts and technical skill exhibited by the ground personnel during this critical period of operations in Northern France distinguish the *416th Bombardment Group* above others engaged in similar action, and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 144, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 25 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

27. The *422d Night Fighter Squadron* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in the Ardennes Salient on the nights of 16-17 and 27-28 December 1944. On each of these nights the *422d Night Fighter Squadron* exerted maximum effort in countering the enemy's attacking force and despite extremely adverse weather conditions succeeded in destroying five enemy aircraft each night. In addition, and above their normal role of intercepting and destroying enemy aircraft, the *422d Night Fighter Squadron* attacked marshalling yards, road and rail networks, motor transport and locomotives on intruder missions, thereby effectively continuing the air effort to isolate the battlefields to cover a full 24 hours each day. The valiant efforts and unprecedented accomplishments of the *422d Night Fighter Squadron* on each of these occasions made a major contribution in denying the enemy his objectives and constituted an illustrious chapter in the history of the United States Army Air Forces. (General Orders 62, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 2 May 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

28. The *474th Fighter Group* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in a joint air-ground attack upon retreating enemy forces beyond the Falaise-Argentan area in France. Early in the day, the group discovered tremendous quantities of enemy equipment and matériel massed along the Seine River, and it was in this sector that the enemy forces had concentrated their entire anti-aircraft artillery on two bridges of vital importance in their attempted withdrawal. Realizing the importance of these points and disregarding the fatal hazards entailed, the *474th Fighter Group* vigorously pressed their unrelenting attacks from early morning until darkness rendered their objectives indistinguishable, and despite the formidable barrage of heavy and light antiaircraft fire,

supplemented by small-arms fire, the group by their unerring bombing and strafing frustrated this mode of evacuation and isolated a wealth of targets. At the end of the day the pilots of the *474th Fighter Group* destroyed or damaged 151 motor transport, 2 bridges, 2 barges, a supply dump, and completely disorganized the enemy throughout by their accurate bombing and strafing. The courageous devotion to duty and aggressive determination of the *474th Fighter Group* sustained throughout the day enabled the ground forces to capture innumerable items of enemy equipment and personnel and brilliantly exemplified the highest traditions of the Army Air Forces. (General Orders 95, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 14 June 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

29. The *863d Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion* is cited for extraordinary heroism in armed conflict with the enemy from 16 to 23 December 1944. The officers and men of this organization rendered outstanding services in holding off German counterattacks in the Ardennes sector. At the time when the enemy launched a series of vicious and determined attacks against our ground forces in the area south of Monchau, the *863d Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion* was established behind the front lines to provide defensive fire against hostile dive bombers and pilotless aircraft. When the army penetrated our front-line positions this battalion immediately assumed the initiative by dispatching provisional batteries to the forward positions to direct heavy concentrations of machine-gun fire into areas of enemy troop concentration. Despite heavy enemy artillery, mortar, and small-arms fire the members of this organization remained gallantly at their posts and repelled the determined attacks by air, infantry, and armored infantry of the resurgent enemy. Although widely extended and subjected to continuous probing attacks, this battalion held its ground against great odds without a break. The courage and aggressive fighting spirit displayed by the officers and men of the *863d Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion* prevented the enemy forces from making further advances in the Monschau-Hofen-Kalterherberg area, and evidenced a devotion to duty and esprit de corps in keeping with the finest traditions of the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 132, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, 11 July 1945, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theater (Main).)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

OFFICIAL:

EDWARD F. WITSELL  
Major General  
Acting The Adjutant General

G. C. MARSHALL  
Chief of Staff