

Ministry of National Defense

Decree No. 2509, 17 June 1946

CHARLES, Prince of Belgium, Regent of the Kingdom.

On the proposition of the Minister of the National Defense we decided and decide:

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Article 2:—The 2nd Infantry Division of the U S Army and attached units including:

462nd AAA AW Bn (Mobile)
741st Tank Bn
Company C. 86th Cml Mortar Bn
612th Tank Destroyer Bn (Self-Propelled)
644th Tank Destroyer Bn (Self-Propelled)

are cited twice to the Order of the Belgian Army with attribution of the "Fourragere 1940" for:

1st Citation: "During the period of the 13th of December 1944 to the 19th of December 1944, the 2nd Infantry Division with attached units, received the order to cease its participation in a great attack in which it was completely engaged. It was ordered then to play the principal part in the constitution of the "North Shoulder" of the Ardennes against the enemy offensive which had broken the lines on 16 December 1944. This was accomplished by resisting as a stone wall the enemy attack, in a way to limit and check it and to give our forces the time and the opportunity to organize the struggle against the German plan. Its operation led to an absolute success under the most difficult conditions of pressure and climate."

2nd Citation:—"During the period of the 19th to the 30th of December 1944, the 2nd Infantry Division with attached units, engaged the enemy with success and occupied the position of the Elsenborn crest, from which it was never removed. In this position, it formed the angle of the "North Shoulder" of the Ardennes. All this was accomplished with a tactical cleverness so remarkable, with constant courage from all the non-commissioned officers and such a power of resolution and judgment from the command that the operations of the Division became the force stimulating the confidence of higher echelons."

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Article 5:—The Minister of the National Defense is in charge of the execution of the present decree.

Given at Bruxelles,
on the 17th of June 1946

CHARLES

De Fraiteur

GENERAL ORDERS }
No. 21

WAR DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C., 12 February 1947

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I. ATLANTA GENERAL DEPOT, ATLANTA, GEORGIA.—Effective as of 1 February 1947, the Ordnance Section, under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Ordnance, and the Transportation Section, under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Transportation, class II activities, are established at the Atlanta General Depot, Atlanta, Georgia.

[AG 823.31 (5 Feb 47)]

II. PERSONNEL CENTER.—Effective 15 February 1947, the War Department Personnel Center, Fort Sheridan, Illinois (exclusive of the Separation Center), is discontinued.

[AG 354.1 (3 Feb 47)]

III. BATTLE HONORS.—As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, WD Bull. 22, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, WD Bul. 11, 1942), the following units are cited by the War Department 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 citation reads as follows: The 121st Infantry Regiment and the following attached and reinforcing units:

- 1st Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment;
- Company C, 8th Medical Regiment;
- 12th Engineer Battalion;
- 56th Field Artillery Battalion;
- Company B, 86th Chemical Battalion;
- Company C, 86th Chemical Battalion;
- 64th Tank Destroyer Battalion (less Company B);
- 709th Tank Battalion (less Company C),

are cited for extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance of duty in action from 21 to 28 November 1944. During this period they made a relentless and determined drive to overcome bitter opposition in the Hurtgen Forest and capture the town of Hurtgen, Germany. The bloody and bitterly contested advance, which taxed individual fortitude and stamina to the limit, represented the major offensive effort of the 8th Infantry Division and V Corps in effecting a break-through in this heavily defended sector, in order that further offensive action could be undertaken in the clearing of woods and towns west of the Roer River. Throughout the operation, the progress of the regiment was seriously impeded by an unusual combination of inclement weather and difficult terrain, with continuous rain and damp, penetrating cold constantly endangering the health of all personnel. The terrain was characterized by densely forested hills and deep mud, which retarded all movement of troops and vehicles. Fully aware of his defensive advantages, the enemy had prepared an elaborate system of mutually supporting fortifications, with extensive mine fields and well-placed booby traps claiming a heavy toll during the advance. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was made more effective by frequent tree-bursts in the heavily wooded area. Because of narrow muddy roads and other natural obstacles which prevented the effective employment of motorized support, the burden of assaulting fanatically defended fortifications was left to the determined infantrymen. Yet at no time did the regiment fail to advance, nor did it yield a foot in the numerous counterattacks launched by the enemy. Foot by foot and against great odds, the regiment and its attached and reinforcing units drove the enemy from log bunker and pillbox, passing through concentrations of artillery and mortar fire estimated at 3,500 rounds per day at the height of operations, and finally captured the strategically important town of Hurtgen in fierce house-to-house combat. Under some of the most difficult and hazardous combat conditions experienced during the war in Europe and despite its high casualty rate, the 121st Infantry Regiment and its attached and reinforcing units displayed extremely courageous fighting qualities in attacking a strongly fortified enemy in Hurtgen Forest. This gallant action contributed greatly to the eviction of the enemy from and around the town of Hurtgen, Germany, and later to the complete annihilation of the Germany Army.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

OFFICIAL:
EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff