

HEADQUARTERS  
11TH AIRBORNE DIVISION  
APO 468

24 February 1945

**MEMORANDUM:**

**TO:** Officers and Enlisted Men, 11th Airborne Division  
and attached Units.

1. The following message was received by the Division  
Commander from Lt General Walter Krueger, Commanding General  
Sixth Army.

"Please extend to the participating troops my hearty  
congratulations for their fine work in successfully liberating  
the LOS BANOS internees."

2. The following message was received by the Division  
Commander from Maj. General O. W. Griswold, Commanding General  
XIV Corps.

"My sincere congratulations to you, your officers and  
men for the successful operation at LOS BANOS. Your courageous  
and daring operation brought happiness to many hundred of in-  
ternees and their families, and reflects great credit to your  
division."

/s/ J. M. Swing  
/t/ J. M. SWING  
Major General, U.S.A.  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION "A" & "B"

CO 19th Inf  
CO Co A 44th Tk. Bn.  
CO Co B 637th TD Bn  
CO 672d Amph. Trac. Bn.

Certified a true copy of the original.

THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL

*Walter J. Langner*

*Walter J. Langner*  
Adjutant

CHARLES S CELESTE  
2d Lt FA, (TD)  
Acting Adjutant

HEADQUARTERS  
11th Airborne Division  
APO 468

25 February 1945

MEMORANDUM:

TO: All Officers and Enlisted Men, 11th Airborne  
Division and Attached Units.

The following message was received by the Division  
Commander from the Commanding General XIV Corps:

"The Corps Commander is happy to transmit the fol-  
lowing message from the Commander-in-Chief:

'The LOS BANOS raid was magnificent.  
Tell Swing, Soule and all concerned.

Signed MacArthur'."

/s/ J. M. Swing  
/t/ J. M. SWING  
Major General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION "A" & "B"

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CO Co A 44th Tk. Bn.  
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Certified a true copy of the original.

CHARLES S CELESTE  
2d Lt FA, (TD)  
Acting Adjutant

IS A  
[Handwritten signature]  
Adjutant

HEADQUARTERS  
637TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 453

RLM:mjh

26 February 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation  
TO: See Distribution

1. The Battalion Commander herewith commends the following personnel for meritorious and courageous action on 5 February 1945:

1ST LT HOWARD W CARDOZO, JR, 01 177 318

Pfc Regis F Fersch, 33 134 536

The Officer and enlisted man displayed courage and pluck in attacking and wiping out a small band of enemy approximately five miles west of Carmen. Notified by a civilian that the enemy were in the vicinity, Lt Cardozo and Pfc Fersch dismounted from their vehicle, took their weapons and a .30 cal MG, and proceeded to flush the enemy.

Joined later by a group of guerillas, and about ten soldiers from the neighborhood, Lt Cardozo took charge and led the mission. Although slightly wounded, both Lt Cardozo and Pfc Fersch proceeded on, and were in effect the spark-plug which pressed the mission to a successful conclusion. The assistance of the Filipino guide, Restituto Jiminez, is also to be commended.

2. The actions of Lt Cardozo and Pfc Fersch are to be highly commended and their courage and cool conduct in the situation are in keeping with the highest traditions of the service.

/s/ Richard L McNelly  
/t/ RICHARD L MCNELLY  
Lt Colonel, FA, (TD)  
Commanding

DIST: 10- Lt Cardozo  
10- Pfc Fersch  
1- ea unit  
1- ea 201 file

"I CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE  
IS A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL"

*Fred J. January*  
Adjutant



HEADQUARTERS  
637TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO #453, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, California

5 May 1945

201:22

SUBJECT: Commendation of Enlisted Men

TO: See Distribution

1. The Battalion Commander herewith commends the following personnel of Company A, 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion for meritorious and courageous action.

Technical Sergeant Everett F. Smith, 20 516 460, for outstanding service on 15 March 1945 on the San Pedro - Santa Rosa Road, one-half mile north of Binan, Luzon, Philippine Islands.

While in march column enroute south an M-18 destroyer of Company A was struck by a large gasoline tanker bound in the opposite direction. A second gasoline tanker following the first also collided with the halted vehicles and tankers and the M-18 immediately caught fire. In company with a platoon commander, Sgt Smith rushed to the burning destroyer. In total disregard of their personal safety and cognizant that the destroyer contained much HE 76-mm ammunition, the two men extricated the destroyer from the flames. Sgt Smith guided, while the officer mounted and drove the vehicle away from the flaming tankers, after which they extinguished the flames on the destroyer. The tank destroyer vehicle had proceeded only a few hundred yards down the road when the tankers both exploded, a total loss. Had the destroyer been allowed to remain alongside it undoubtedly would have exploded also, with the hazard of the heavy ammunition probably causing much loss of life. The vehicle was saved and later went back into operation.

Technician fifth grade William R White, 38 185 725, for outstanding service on 30 April 1945 in vicinity of Mt Mataasna Pundoc,, Laguna, Luzon, Philippine Islands.

While driving his M-18 tank destroyer up a perilous bulldozed trail enroute to firing positions against Japanese defending forces, Tec 5 White's vehicle hit a soft shoulder on the edge of an almost perpendicular declivity. Slipping from the road the destroyer started down the steep grade backwards. The destroyer commander realizing the dangerous situation ordered the crew to dismount. Tec 5 White remained with his vehicle piloting it down the precipice for a distance of approximately 400 feet before it could be brought to a halt. He succeeded in keeping the vehicle upright and fundamentally undamaged, later driving it under its own power back onto the narrow ridge.

2. The actions of T Sgt Smith and Tec 5 White are to be highly commended. Their pluck, courage and cool conduct in the face of definite danger to themselves constitute a laudatory example and evidence of conscientious devotion to duty. The highest traditions of the service have been upheld by these men.

DIST: 1-TAG  
1-ea unit  
1-ea 201  
10-T Sgt Smith  
10-Tec 5 White  
1-File

/s/ Richard L. McNelly  
/t/ RICHARD L. MCNELLY  
Lt Colonel, FA(TD)  
Commanding

CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE  
IS A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL

*Fred A. [unclear]*  
*[Signature]*  
Acting

Incl-4<sup>2</sup>

HEADQUARTERS  
637TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 75

28 June 1945

BULLETIN:

NUMBER 6:

1. The following letter of commendation to the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion has been received in this headquarters:

HEADQUARTERS XIV CORPS  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO 453

AG 330.13 Y-M

20 June 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: Commanding Officer  
637th Tank Destroyer Battalion  
APO 75

1. As your battalion leaves the XIV Corps, I wish to express to you, your officers and men, my personal appreciation and official commendation for the exemplary service rendered in the Luzon campaign.

2. A high degree of training, technical skill and aggressive fighting spirit has been evident in the efficient manner in which all assigned missions were carried out. The long distance reconnaissance conducted by your reconnaissance platoon proved exceptionally valuable throughout the advance across the central plains. In the battle of Manila where elements of the battalion took part in the reduction of enemy strongpoints in large buildings, the outstanding work performed was a major factor in keeping casualties among our foot troops to a minimum. The high praise of the infantry units which elements of your battalion supported during the campaign is a tribute to the cooperation, courage and battle competence of your command.

3. I am proud to have had the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion in my command, and congratulate you all for a job well done.

/s/ O. W. Griswold  
/t/ O. W. GRISWOLD  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding

2. The vital contribution which every man in the battalion made in the meriting of this commendation may justly be a source of pride to each and every one.

BY ORDER OF MAJOR HOLMES:

OFFICIAL:

OFFICIAL

CHARLES S CELESTE  
2d Lt, FA(TD)  
Actg Adjutant

CHARLES S CELESTE  
2d Lt, FA(TD)  
Actg Adjutant

"I CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE  
IS A TRUE COPY"

~~SECRET~~  
HEADQUARTERS XIV CORPS  
APO 453

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 62

14 August 1945

UNIT CITATION  
637TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

The 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action from 6 February to 2 March 1945, at Manila, Luzon, Philippine Islands. During this period the battalion distinguished itself by a display of fearless courage, aggressiveness and resourcefulness in brilliantly accomplishing many varied and difficult missions which required the complete and exhaustive application of every man and weapon through extended and intensive combat. As Special Security Force in an extremely active area of approximately 8 square miles, north of the Pasig River and east of Manila Bay, every possible man was pressed into combat duty; cooks, truck drivers, mechanics and headquarters personnel aided in manning every available weapon on a 24-hour basis day after day with little or no rest, and annihilated numerous pockets of fanatically-resisting Japanese, destroyed many heavily armed infiltrating demolition parties, and rescued from the water under enemy fire scores of refugees escaping from Fort Santiago and other Japanese installations on the south bank of the river. Moving to South Manila, elements of the battalion began a two-week attack with sustained direct fire on heavily fortified modern concrete and steel buildings; to assure maximum effect, tank destroyer crews often approached to within 60 to 75 yards of their targets though afforded very little protection from heavy enemy fire and flying fragments of our own shells. Concurrently, elements of the battalion rendered distinguished service in reducing strong enemy positions at Fort McKinley and Nichols Field, and assisted in the advance of the overland movement to the Los Banos Internment Camp. Throughout the period cited, prodigious feats of transporting huge quantities of ammunition from dumps more than 100 miles away, and maintaining all equipment at peak efficiency despite intensive use, were accomplished only through the tireless efforts and unflagging application of every member of the supply and maintenance section. The courage, aggressiveness and tireless devotion to duty displayed by all personnel of the 637th Tank Destroyer Battalion, which itself accounted for more than 450 enemy dead and 60 machine guns and artillery pieces destroyed, contributed greatly to the success achieved by our combat divisions in annihilating the defenders of Manila, and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States.

/s/ O. W. Griswold  
/t/ O. W. GRISWOLD  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

THE ABOVE IS A TRUE COPY OF THE ABOVE

*[Signature]*  
Adjutant

31

~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS  
637TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION  
APO 453

RLM:hem

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: All Units

1. The battalion commander hereby commends the following enlisted men, for their superb display of teamwork, calmness under fire and excellent technique applied as a working destroyer crew, all of which is attested by the results of their well co-ordinated effort, four (4) enemy tanks destroyed:

Sgt	Hitt, Thomas E.	34 136 672	Co A	Destroyer Commander
Tec 4	Duplisea, Robert T.	31 060 398	Co A	Driver
Pfc	Snyder, Donald J.	37 572 776	Co A	Asst Driver
Cpl	Reeser, Orvil C.	34 187 097	Co A	Gunner
Pfc	Mezwicki, Eugene F.	36 405 278	Co A	Cannoneer

2. Enthusiastic commendation often is sobered by the shadow of departed comrades in arms. And so in this case we cannot suffer elation over victory to pass without a silent benediction and prayer in our hearts for those who have gone to the soldier's reward. Their part was bravely played and in all humility we cannot do less than note their contribution in making possible the commendation of the living. It is the way of war.

3. Therefore, in this commendation, at one and the same time is paid respect and reverence to the memory of departed comrades and recognition given for a display of excellent and soldierly conduct on the part of those named, which reflects not only the best efforts of the battalion, but the finest traditions of the service.

/s/ Richard L Mc Nelly  
/t/ RICHARD L MC NELLY  
Lt Colonel, FA, (TD)  
Commanding

DIST: 1 - ea Unit  
1 - ea EM concerned  
1 - ea 201 file  
- File

FILED  
AUG 1951  
*Fred L. Langworthy*  
*1st Lt Inf*