

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
FIRST TACTICAL AIR FORCE (PROVISIONAL)
APO 374

GENERAL ORDERS)

19 May 1945

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E X T R A C T

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BATTLE HONORS.....I

I - BATTLE HONORS

By direction of the President, under the provisions of Circular Number 333, War Department, dated 22 December 1943, and in accordance with authority delegated by the War Department, the following named organizations are cited for gallantry and extraordinary heroism in armed conflict with the enemy while serving with the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional) in the European Theatre of Operations. The citations read as follows:

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THE 320TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP. For outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in the European Theatre of Operations on 15 March 1945. In direct coordination with the Allied Offensive against the enemy ground forces in the Saar-Palatinate, the Seventh Army was ordered to attack directly through the strongly fortified Siegfried Line along a front east of Zweibrucken, Germany; the objective of this Marauder group was to effectively blanket hostile pillboxes, and tank obstructions with heavy demolition bombs to sufficiently weaken that much vaunted line, enabling the ground forces to break through the enemy positions. Despite accurate anti-aircraft fire from the Siegfried defenses, the 320th Bombardment Group released a devastatingly accurate concentration of bombs to create inestimable damage to installations and personnel. The conspicuous part played by this group set it above and apart from other units participating in the same engagement and insured the success of these operations. Beginning at 0630 hours, on 15 March 1945, five waves of nineteen B-26 type aircraft of the 320th Bombardment Group took off from this French base. Despite persistent and accurate ground fire, the Marauders resolutely persevered on unwavering axes of attack to execute long, deliberate and flawless bomb runs releasing 1340 high explosives in perfect patterns within the assigned coordinates despite heavy ground haze, inflicting irreplaceable casualties upon enemy personnel. After-photographs revealed pillboxes, communications trenches, weapons pits and roads devastated within the target area with such effect that the Seventh Army made its initial breakthrough of the Line with virtually no opposition over the areas attacked by the 320th Bombardment Group. This perfectly executed endeavor of air-ground coordination was carried through to its highly successful conclusion under unfavorable weather conditions as the immediate target area was blanketed by a complete coverage of heavy, visibility limiting, ground haze. This was accomplished by the remarkable leadership of perfectly teamed pilot-bombardier combinations thoroughly trained in the revolutionary technique of non-visual Shoran bombing and the constantly proficient contributions of all personnel in this Marauder Group. This operation so typical of the superior bombing of the 320th Bombardment Group, has reflected the greatest credit upon the Group and the Armed Service of the United States.

B Y COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL WEBSTER:

C. E. CRUMLINE
Colonel, AG
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

s/ T. J. BROGAN
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General

A TRUE EXTRACT: