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UNIT CITATION

Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular 333, War Department, 22 December 1943, and as approved by the Commanding General, Third United States Army and Eastern Military District, the Third Battalion, 331st Infantry is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy from 1 April 1945 to 3 April 1945.

The Third Battalion, 331st Infantry Regiment is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy at Hamm, Germany. After having completed relief of 2d Armored Division Third Battalion, 331st Infantry was assigned the mission of seizing crossings of the Lippe River intact. As the leading elements approached the bridges leading into Hamm from the north, the enemy succeeded in destroying the highway bridge but leading elements pushed over the fire-swept 500 foot railroad bridge and cut the wires leading to the demolitions set under the bridge. The remainder of the battalion continued to cross and take up positions south of the river. Supplies were hand carried through almost continuous fire over the railroad bridge and casualties were evacuated over the same difficult route. At 1100, 2 April, the enemy launched the first of a series of counter-attacks in which he committed large forces of infantry and armor in an attempt to drive the men of the Third Battalion out of the bridgehead. The counter-attacks, characterized by individual fighting at close range in the subways of the railroad station, in houses and in the streets, were repulsed by maximum use of rocket launcher teams, mortar, artillery and all available weapons combined with the eager and bold aggressiveness of the troops. During the night, infiltrating enemy, attacking under the cover of darkness, were driven back. The enemy attacks the following day were even of greater strength and ferocity. Cooks and ammunition carriers who had carried food and ammunition to the troops shouldered weapons and fought. The troops, isolated by accident of terrain and limited approaches over natural barriers, held their ground tenaciously and in the face of bitter opposition refused to give ground or be demoralized by the direct fire of the enemy. During the three day period, the men of the Third Battalion, 331st Infantry exhibited unwavering courage and fighting determination in establishing the bridgehead at Hamm and repulsing the determined counter-attacks without yielding a yard of ground. As a result of the battalion's vigorous attack and spirited defense, the enemy suffered stunning losses in men and materiel and a bridgehead was provided for future operations into the Rhur Valley. The unflinching devotion to duty and the courage displayed by each man of the battalion reflect the highest traditions of the armed forces

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL MACON:

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