

GENERAL ORDERS }
No. 48

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C., 12 July 1948

BATTLE HONORS—Citation of unit----- II
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II. BATTLE HONORS.—As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, Bul. 22, WD, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, Bul. 11, WD, 1942), the following unit is cited under the provisions of AR 260-15 in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction. The citation reads as follows:

Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division, composed of the following units:
Headquarters and Headquarters Company;
17th Tank Battalion;
31st Tank Battalion;
23d Armored Infantry Battalion;
38th Armored Infantry Battalion;
87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron Mechanized (less Troop D);
275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion;
434th Armored Field Artillery Battalion;
965th Field Artillery Battalion;
168th Engineer Combat Battalion;
3d Platoon, Company F, 423d Infantry Regiment;
Company B, 33d Armored Engineer Battalion; and
Company A, 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP),

is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action from 17 to 23 December 1944, inclusive, at St. Vith, Belgium. *Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division*, was subjected to repeated tank and infantry attacks, which grew in intensity as the German forces attempted to destroy the stubborn defenses that were denying to them the use of the key communication center at St. Vith. By the second day, the flanks were constantly threatened by enemy forces that had bypassed the St. Vith area and pushed far to the rear in an effort to encircle the command east of the Salm River. The attacking forces were repeatedly thrown back by the gallant troops who rose from their fox holes and fought in fierce hand-to-hand combat to stop the penetrations and inflict heavy losses on the numerically superior foe. As the command continued to deny the important St. Vith highway and railroad center to the Germans, the entire offensive lost its initial impetus and their supply columns became immobilized. By 21 December, the German timetable was so disrupted that the enemy was forced to divert a corps to the capture of St. Vith. Under extreme pressure from overwhelming forces, this command, which for 6 days had held the St. Vith area so gallantly, was ordered to withdraw west of the Salm River. By their epic stand, without prepared defenses and despite heavy casualties, *Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division*, inflicted crippling losses and imposed great delay upon the enemy by a masterful and grimly determined defense in keeping with the highest traditions of the Army of the United States.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

OFFICIAL:
EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

OMAR N. BRADLEY
Chief of Staff, United States Army