

General Orders)

No. 56)

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington 25, D.C., 12 July 1944

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XII--BATTLE HONORS.--1. As authorized by Executive Order No. 9396 (Sec. I, Bull. 22, WD, 1943), superseding Executive Order No. 9075 (sec. III, Bull. 11, WD, 1942), citation of the following unit in General Orders, No. 17, Headquarters 1st Infantry Division, 8 May 1944, as approved by the Commanding General, United States Army forces in North African Theater of Operations, is confirmed under the provisions of section IV, Circular No. 333, War Department, 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 1st Ranger Battalion is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action. During the fierce engagement with the enemy in the vicinity of El Guettar, Tunisia, 16-27 March 1943, the 1st Ranger Battalion, attached to the 1st United States Infantry Division, distinguished itself by executing difficult and hazardous missions with skill and devotion. On 16-17 March 1943, this battalion, exhibiting unwavering fortitude and indomitable tenacity, successfully protected division artillery positions near Gafsa, in the face of overwhelming odds, and rendered most effective support to the infantry. On 18 March 1943, this efficient and mobile unit, without support and in danger of being cut off by numerically superior enemy forces, boldly and fearlessly pressed on from Gafsa to El Guettar, despite withering enemy artillery fire and aerial activity, captured a strategic position on Djebel el Ank at 0400 21 March 1943, and took more than 200 prisoners. On 23 March 1943, while this battalion was filling a dangerous gap in the front lines on the flank of the 3d Battalion, 18th Infantry, east of El Guettar, two armored battalions, two infantry battalions, and two artillery battalions of the 10th Panzer Division counter-attacked with relentless ferocity. Despite this savage onslaught the 1st Ranger Battalion stubbornly refused to yield ground and inflicted enormous losses on the enemy. The following day, 24 March 1943, the 1st Ranger Battalion, acting as advance

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WALTER E. PFEIFER
2nd Lt., Infantry
Adjutant.

group and bearing the brunt of another enemy counterattack, cleared the high ground near Djebel Berda, Tunisia, despite constant enemy artillery and bombing action, thus denying the use of this ground to the enemy and protecting the division's right flank. During this critical period, 16-27 March 1943, the 1st Ranger Battalion, although severely impeded by exceptionally treacherous terrain and intense enemy fire, by untiring efforts and heroic daring, gallantly accomplished every assigned mission. In these valorous actions the 1st Ranger Battalion fought with great skill and cunning, suffering a minimum of casualties. The courage, skill, efficiency, and scorn for personal safety conspicuously exhibited by the personnel of this organization exemplify the noblest qualities and finest traditions of the service.

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By Order of The Secretary of War:

G. C. MARSHALL
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

J. A. ULIO,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

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WALTER E. PFEIFER
2nd Lt., Infantry
Adjutant.