

DECLASSIFIED

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By IM NADA, Date 2/10R E S T R I C T E DHEADQUARTERS 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION
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BATTLE HONORS. Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular 333, War Department, 22 December 1943, as amended, the 2d Platoon, Company D, 134th Infantry Regiment, is cited for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy in the vicinity of Habkirchen, Germany, from 12 to 21 December 1944.

On 12 December 1944, the 2d Platoon, Company D, 134th Infantry Regiment, supporting a rifle company, was assigned the mission of leading an assault across the Blies River to establish a bridgehead at Habkirchen, Germany. The river crossing was instituted at 0500 in assault boats. The swift current and debris-covered water caused several of the assault boats to be wrecked, with the attendant loss of eight lives. The 2d Platoon, Company D, with its supported rifle company, the first elements of the Twelfth Corps to effect a landing in Germany, fully exploited the element of surprise to establish a foothold in two buildings on the water front, capturing a number of German prisoners. The alerted enemy then subjected the attacking force to heavy fire of all types despite which the machine gun platoon and the rifle company contrived to capture six more buildings, in many instances only after sharp hand-to-hand fighting. The unit then established a holding position and, during the course of the day, repulsed a number of enemy counterattacks. Heavy enemy fire isolated the troops on the enemy shore, and a rifle company which undertook to follow up the attacking force lost the majority of its strength in the effort. At nightfall, 13 December, the enemy launched a counterattack, utilizing an infantry battalion supported by assault guns. The 2d Platoon, Company D, and its supported rifle company repulsed the enemy attack with a marked exhibition of courage and determination after a three-hour period of fierce fighting, during the course of which combat engineers established a footbridge across the river, enabling reserves to reach the beleaguered force. The following morning, the 2d Platoon, Company D, and its supported rifle company again repulsed an enemy counterattack, the impetus of which carried it within hand grenade range. The repulse of the enemy counterattack was followed up by an expansion of the bridgehead to include occupation of commanding ground in the vicinity. This expansion resulted in the denial to the enemy of observation of the river and precluded the delivery of accurate enemy artillery fire thereon. The expansion of the bridgehead further resulted in the establishment of a bridge across the river over which supplies were transported to the attacking forces, the footbridge constructed by the engineers the previous night having been demolished by enemy fire. Despite heavy casualties, the 2d Platoon, Company D, and the rifle company which it supported remained in active combat with the enemy in that vicinity until the regiment was relieved from the sector on 21 December 1944. The action of the 2d Platoon, Company D, 134th Infantry Regiment, in support of a rifle company in effecting a river crossing, establishing and expanding a bridgehead in the face of determined enemy opposition by superior force and formidable obstacles, and despite mounting casualties, is in accord with the highest traditions of the military service.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL FUTCH:

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