

**COMMENDATIONS**

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16 October 1944

Dear General Lentz:

The fighting of the last few weeks has punched home to us one point so obvious and so clean cut, that I want every soldier in the Corps to realize its full significance.

That point is this: The Germans, even the best and most experienced of them, are visibly frightened of us. They are frightened by the superior equipment, the more skillful tactics, and above all, by the magnificent courage and will to win shown by the troops.

I wish that more of us fully realized the really remarkable role that artillery has played in the war up to date. In probably no branch of the ground forces has the skillful application of enormous power produced a more devastating effect upon the German army than in artillery, and I can assure you that the XII Corps Artillery is no exception. It has performed its missions consistently with distinction. All its members may well be proud of its record.

We are now between rounds of a fight to the knockout. The last round saw the Boche stagger back into his corner. While we are gathering our strength for the kill, he is hanging on the ropes. He cannot last another—he is bound to go down. I am confident when the next round comes up, that the troops of the XII Corps Artillery will show the same courage, the same skill, and the same driving determination to get this war won, that have won for them their successes to date.

I congratulate the XII Corps Artillery on its performance in the past—I wish it Godspeed and early victory.

M. S. Eddy  
*Major General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

24 November 1944

TO: Commanding General, XII Army Corps.

Radiogram received from General Marshall which is in substance herewith quoted:

“Congratulations on the capture of Metz and the splendid advance your Corps are making in spite of floods and mud and bitter enemy resistance. My very personal congratulations to Eddy and Walker on the grand show their troops are putting on towards bringing this war to a triumphant conclusion.”

I personally wish to add my commendation and congratulations for the splendid advance which you and your Corps have made. With such troops, the triumphant conclusion of the war is inevitably near.

G. S. PATTON, JR.  
*Lieutenant General, U. S. Army*  
*Commanding*

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8 December 1944

TO: Commanding General, XII Corps

Today marks the end of thirty days of relentless and victorious action against a well-posted and determined enemy in the face of appalling conditions of terrain and weather.

Please accept for yourself and pass on to the heroic officers and men of your command my deep appreciation of your magnificent performance. All ranks of the XII Corps are highly commended for their superhuman and victorious efforts.

G. S. PATTON, JR.  
*Lieutenant General, U. S. Army*

12 December 1944.

TO: All XII Corps Artillery Units.

The performance of the Corps Artillery Battalions during the present offensive has met the highest possible standards.

From the start of the offensive on 6 November to the present time, each battalion has fought hard and well. The enemy has been not only the German, but also the rain, the cold, the mud—all the concentrated discomforts of a winter battlefield. It has not been easy, but every obstacle has been overcome.

Many times the guns have been in such forward positions as to be exposed to small arms fire, but at all times the guns have been where they can destroy German personnel and equipment.

This has been possible only because each individual made it so. The wiremen laid an incredible number of miles of wire. The forward and air observers put rapidly and accurately the power of our artillery where it could kill the most Germans. Night and day service trains kept moving an unending stream of supplies. The cannoneers stood knee deep in mud day after weary day to serve their pieces. This is a proud accomplishment.

We stand now on the border of Germany. There is still more rain, still more cold, still more mud, still more Germans to be overcome. But the end is inevitable. It remains now to accomplish this final mission in the same magnificent manner that the Corps artillery has made its standard.

JOHN M. LENTZ  
*Brigadier General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

3 January 1945

Dear Major Pettersen,

Other urgent matters having prevented me from seeing you at the time your battalion left us, I wish to take this means of personally expressing my appreciation to you for the fine support and service rendered this Corps by you and your battalion.

Having come to this Corps crippled in personnel and equipment as a result of previous enemy action, the determination and efficiency with which your unit carried on, without complaint, inspired the admiration of everyone. Again the gallantry and determination with which your men and officers continued to serve their guns, ignoring continuous enemy shelling in order to perform your assigned mission over a prolonged period at Cappel, was worthy of unbounded admiration and gratitude.

Please accept my sincere wishes for your continuous success.

JOHN M. LENTZ  
*Brigadier General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

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20 January 1945

TO: Commanding General, Officers, and Men of the III Corps.

The speed with which the III Corps assembled, and the energy, skill and persistency with which it pressed its attack for the relief of Bastogne, constitute a very noteworthy feat of arms.

You and the officers and men of your Command are hereby highly commended for a superior performance.

G. S. PATTON  
*Lieut. General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

The Corps Commander is gratified to transmit the Army Commanders commendation to the units of Corps troops and divisions participating in the relief of Bastogne. The uncertainty of the enemy situation, the stubborn enemy resistance, the disregard for losses and the teamwork which all units displayed in gaining the goal of relieving Bastogne were the contributing factors that made the operation such an outstanding victory, and will be highly valued in the history of each unit.

The Corps Commander adds his commendation for the performance of this task well done.

JOHN MILLIKIN  
*Major General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

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8 April 1945

TO: Commanding General, XII Corps

Your cooperation with our bombing effort by counter-battery fire on AAA positions has been very successful. The splendid cooperation of allied artillery has saved many air crew members and many aircraft. In all air crews there exists hearty appreciation of your efforts to engage these AAA positions at the points at which air crews cross into enemy territory. I have an admiration and appreciation for the excellent work being done by these units and for the results they have achieved.

DOOLITTLE

19 April 1945

Brig Gen John M. Lentz

Before I leave, I want you to know of my admiration for your magnificent troops and of my gratitude for their remarkable contribution to the successful operation of our Corps. I hope I am not too prejudiced when I tell you I honestly believe the XII Corps artillery to be the finest on the western front. You have consistently set high new standards of team play between artillery and infantry which will surely be studied in years to come. The courage and skill and fidelity with which your battalions have fought during these last few crowded months will be to their undying credit.

Please accept for yourself, and convey to your command, this expression of appreciation. I wish I could be with you for the kill. Good luck—and Godspeed!

M. S. EDDY  
*Major General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

25 April 1945

My dear General Middleton:

Again the exigencies of war have separated the VIII Corps and the Third Army. We are all most regretful. None of us will ever forget the stark valor with which you and your Corps contested every foot of ground during Von Rundstedt's attack. Your decision to hold Bastogne was a stroke of genius.

Subsequently, the relentless advance of the VIII Corps to the Kyll River, thence to the Rhine, your capture of Koblenz and subsequent assault crossings of the Rhine at its most difficult sector, resulting in your victorious and rapid advance to the Mulde River, are events which will live in history and quicken the pulse of every soldier.

Please accept for yourself and transmit to the officers and men of your command my sincere thanks and admiration for the outstanding successes achieved. May all good fortune attend you.

G. S. PATTON  
*Lieut. General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

27 April 1945

Soldiers of the First, Third, Ninth, and Fifteenth American Armies:

At 1640 hours on April 25, 1945, in the 29th month of our land war against the German government, American troops of the 12th Army Group joined forces with the Soviet elements of Marshal Koniev's First Ukrainian Army Group.

These armies have come to you from the ruins of Stalingrad and Sevastopol—across the scorched cities of the Ukraine. In two years they have smashed 1400 miles thru the German armies to drive the enemy from Russia and pursue him to the Elbe.

Their achievements—and they have given immortality to the people that would not be conquered—are made more meaningful by your own deeds.

Across 3800 miles of an ocean supply line, you forced a coast the enemy had been years preparing against you. Within four months after landing you destroyed whole armies—to take Paris, free France and give the world a symbol of freedom. When the enemy raised a new army and threw it into the winter battle of the Ardennes, you smashed it and flung its remnants back. You have beaten and broken down his mighty Siegfried line. You crossed the Rhine in your stride, encircled and reduced the Ruhr.

While demonstrating new lessons in mobile warfare, you have annihilated whole groups of German armies in the west on their own German soil. In ten months you have fought your way 700 miles from the beaches. These accomplishments were secured by your courage, your resourcefulness, and by your comrades who died to achieve them.

You have shared in the liberation of four nations, given hope to others, and conquered half of Germany.

The people of America, who armed you, have had great faith in you. You have justified that faith as you will in the battles that follow.

O. N. BRADLEY  
*General, U.S. Army*  
*Commanding*

HEADQUARTERS  
XII CORPS ARTILLERY  
APO 312

3 January 1945

Maj. Herbert C. Pettersen  
Commanding Officer  
731st FA Battalion  
APO 403, US Army

Dear Major Pettersen,

Other urgent matters having prevented me from seeing you at the time your battalion left us, I wish to take this means of personally expressing my appreciation to you for the fine support and service rendered the Corps by you and your battalion.

Having come to this Corps crippled in personnel and equipment as a result of previous enemy action, the determination and efficiency with which your unit carried on, without complaint, inspired the admiration of everyone. Again the gallantry and determination with which your men and officers continued to serve their guns, ignoring continuous enemy shelling in order to perform your assigned mission over a prolonged period at Cappel, was worthy of unbounded admiration and gratitude.

Please accept my sincere wishes for your continued success.

Very truly yours,

s/John M. Lentz

JOHN M LENTZ  
Brigadier General, US Army  
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS  
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY  
APO 403

26 August 1944

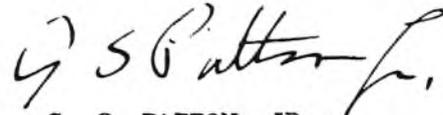
SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding General, XII Corps, APO 312, U. S. Army.

1. Your Corps has most expeditiously accomplished its mission of attacking east, seizing and holding a bridgehead east of YONNE RIVER at SEMS and protecting the south flank of the Army, all in the short space of three days.

2. The aggressive and efficient manner in which this mission has been carried out reflects credit upon the Corps in keeping with the high traditions of the service and upon you as its Commanding General. Your ability to accept calculated risks without becoming involved in unwarranted delays has contributed substantially to the successful accomplishment of the mission.

3. You and the personnel of your Command are hereby highly commended for your splendid accomplishment of this mission.



G. S. PATTON, JR.,  
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

To: Commanding General, XII Corps,  
APO 312, U. S. Army.

APO 441, U S Army,  
14 October 1944.

Thru: Commanding General, Third United States Army,  
APO 403, U. S. Army.

1. Joint air ground operations of the XIX Tactical Air Command with the XII Corps have always been characterized by the most magnificent cooperation on the part of your units in rendering all possible assistance to air units of this command in the execution of their mission. I have noted with extreme satisfaction the policy you have recently put into effect whereby your artillery delivers fire on hostile anti-aircraft batteries just prior to and during the time our fighter-bombers are operating on your Corps front.

2. Such cooperation will not only save pilots and airplanes but will go a long way in increasing the effectiveness of our air support to your units. This is another fine example of the air-ground teamwork that wins battles.

3. Please be assured of my personal appreciation and accept the thanks of the XIX Tactical Air Command for this fine work.

*O. P. Weyland*  
O. P. WEYLAND,  
Brigadier General,  
Commanding.

1st Ind

HEADQUARTERS, THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY, APO #403, U. S. Army, 16 October 1944.

To: Commanding General, XII Corps, APO #312, U. S. Army.

The Commanding General is most appreciative of your splendid cooperation in this vitally essential air-ground combination and is very pleased to note and forward this commendation.

By command of Lieutenant General PATTON:

*Hugh J. Gaffey*  
HUGH J. GAFFEY,  
Major General, U. S. A.,  
Chief of Staff.



"ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT! ONE AT A TIME!!"

By Lt J Hagan, from "History and Battle Record of 179 FA Bn."

HEADQUARTERS  
XII CORPS ARTILLERY  
APO 312

4 October 1944

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO: Group and Separate Battalion Commanders.

1. The performance of the corps artillery battalions in recent operations has been outstanding.

2. They have been out in front generally. Many have been under small arms fire with no thought of withdrawal. One medium battalion laid directly on hostile assault guns. The observers of another, in the absence of infantry or other troops, fired charge I at tanks over a low crest, turning back the tank attack only after two direct hits were made on tanks within 200 yards of the observers. Batteries suffering casualties from hostile artillery have continued their own firing.

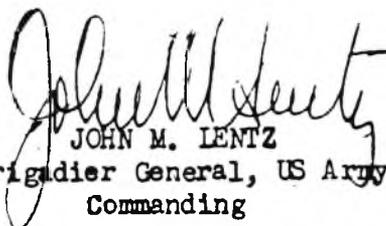
3. They have fired at all times and in all directions. Heavy battalions displayed amazing mobility, and changed positions at every possible chance to kill additional Germans.

4. The cooperation and coordination with supported infantry and tanks and with the reinforced artillery has been unprecedentedly superior. There has been no selfishness, only a desire to serve the supported troops.

5. Air OP's have been active constantly over the entire front. Extraordinary courage has been displayed in so many cases, usually under hostile fire, as to become common. Such devotion to duty is in the best tradition of field artillery.

6. Forward observers of corps units have also shown exemplary devotion to duty. One corps observer was isolated with his infantry across a river for over twelve hours and was the only artillery observer present. Innumerable other instances of outstanding service could be cited.

7. The courage, fighting spirit, and team work of the corps artillery are causes for congratulations to the fighting battalions of the XII Corps Artillery.

  
JOHN M. LENTZ  
Brigadier General, US Army  
Commanding

as possible. The civilians had not moved out of Sarralbe."

Two days after the Fwd Ech cleared the dismal barracks at Morhange the Rr Ech, Hq XII Corps, finally uprooted itself from the comparative comforts of Nancy and took to the field again. Col deLorimier was not impressed with his new premises: "The roads were muddy and there was mud all over the floors." It looked like no fit place

Christmas, which was never used. . . ." Long before Christmas could arrive, the Rr Ech at Morhange, like the Fwd Ech at Saarlbe, was to be rudely interrupted in its holiday plans. The Christmas party they were to attend was one now being planned, not by the friendly girls of Clubmobile "K", but by Gerd von Rundstedt. That, however, is a trifle ahead of the story.

**HEADQUARTERS  
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL  
APO 403**

8 December, 1944

**SUBJECT:** Commendation.

**TO :** The Commanding General XII Corps, APO 312, U. S. Army.

1. Today marks the end of thirty days of relentless and victorious action against a well-posted and determined enemy in the face of appalling conditions of terrain and weather.
2. Please accept for yourself and pass on to the heroic officers and men of your command my deep appreciation of your magnificent performance.
3. All ranks of the XII Corps are hereby highly commended for their super-human and victorious efforts.



G. S. PATTON, JR.,  
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

Copy To:  
Commanding General Twelfth Army Group.

6. *Breaking into Germany*



DECEMBER first, 1944, found XII Corps facing up to the Siegfried Line and prepared to drive through it to the Rhine. This is how the situation developed as it appeared to the DC/S, sitting down to write up the "Scope" section of the Corps After Action Report for December:

"At the beginning of the month the Corps front extended from contact with the XX Corps on the northwest in the vicinity of Bening Les St Avold-Foret De Farschviller—1 km west of Puttelage—Gueblange—1 km

east of Honskirch—Harskirchen—contact on the southeast with the XV Corps, Seventh Army, near Mackwiller. The Corps was disposed with the 80th Inf Div, 6th Armd Div, 26th Inf Div, and 4th Armd Div from northwest to southeast, attacking northeast through the Maginot Line against the enemy astride the Sarre River. The 4th Armd Div, on the right flank, was operating in part in the XV Corps zone of action. The 35th Inf Div and 2d Cav Gp were in Corps reserve in rear of the 80th Inf and 6th Armd Divs. The attack initiated on 8 November was continued with the 80th Inf Div pressing eastward beyond the Maginot Line, the 6th Armd Div attacking against the fortifica-

HEADQUARTERS XII CORPS  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO 312, U.S. Army

26 December 1944

TO: ALL TROOPS.

1. It is a pleasure for me to reproduce the following letter from our Chief of Staff.

WASHINGTON  
December 1944

Major General M. S. Eddy,  
Commanding General, XII Corps

Dear Eddy:

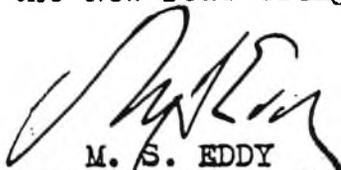
I hope this note reaches you at Christmas time so that you and your men may know that you are daily, if not hourly, in our thoughts during this bitter fighting. Your Corps has already written a splendid record of victories in the hard fighting across France and over the German frontier.

May you find some cheer in the coming season, and may the good Lord watch over you and guide you to final victory in the New Year.

Faithfully yours,

/s/ G. C. MARSHALL

2. Let me take this occasion to express to the officers and men of the XII Corps my warmest holiday greetings, my deep pride in your past successes, and my confident wish that the New Year bring happiness to you all in our final victory.

  
M. S. EDDY  
Major General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION  
"D"

communication targets deeper in Germany free of attack for nearly a month.

"The counteroffensive, however, was not without effects upon the enemy. Land and air forces had been carefully built up for months, and supplies, particularly of fuel, had been carefully hoarded for this all-out effort. During the month ending 16 January, my commanders estimated that the enemy suffered 120,000 serious casualties and lost 600 tanks and assault guns. He also lost about 1,620 planes—a severe blow—and his fuel stocks, after nearly a month of large-scale effort, were reduced to a bare minimum. The tactical aircraft claims for the month included also over 6,000 motor transport destroyed and 7,000 damaged, together with some 550 locomotives destroyed and over 600 damaged. By the end of our own counteroffensive the enemy had lost 220,000 men, including 110,000 prisoners of

war. More serious in the final analysis was the widespread disillusionment within the Germany Army and Germany itself which must have accompanied the realization that the breakthrough had failed to seize any really important objective and had achieved nothing decisive. . . ."

This "disillusionment within the Germany Army and Germany itself" over the results of von Rundstedt's desperate gamble in the Ardennes was to continue from then on increasingly until the last accounts were added up on 16 Jul 46. On that date SS Col Joachim Peifer and 42 other former members of the Wehrmacht, on trial before an American military court sitting at Dachau, Germany, were sentenced to be hanged, and 30 others given sentences up to life imprisonment, for the wanton slaughter of 750 American prisoners at Malmedy, Stavelot and elsewhere, (see photos, p 137) and of 150 Belgian civilians during the Battle of the Bulge.

HEADQUARTERS XIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

APO 141 U S ARMY

29 January 1945.

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Brigadier General John M. Lentz, USA,  
Headquarters, XII Corps, APO 312, US Army.

THRU : Commanding General, TUSA, APO 403, US Army.

1. I wish to express my appreciation for the role you and your Corps artillery played on 22 January when fighter-bombers of the XIX TAC destroyed or damaged 1700 German vehicles. Our victories were largely possible because of the successful interdiction of road junctions by your artillery.

2. I am expressing the deep appreciation of every pilot who has flown over the XII Corps front when I thank you for your cooperation in the form of anti-flak fire in support of attacking aircraft. It is such coordination and integration of effort that will lead the air-ground team to eventual victory.



*O. P. Weyland*  
O. P. WEYLAND,  
Brigadier General, USA,  
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS THIRD ARMY  
145 250.13

THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY  
Office of The Commanding General

5 February 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : The Commanding General, Officers and Men of the XII Corps,  
APO 312, U. S. Army.

1. The superior tactical skill and audacity which you and your Command displayed in breaking the southern shoulder of the German penetration will ever rank as an outstanding feat of intelligent planning and valorous execution.
2. You and the officers and men of your Command are hereby highly commended for a superior performance.
3. You will apprise all units concerned of the contents of this letter.

/s/ G. S. Patton, Jr.  
/t/ G. S. PATTON, JR.,  
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

REPRODUCED HQ XII CORPS  
8 February 1945

AG 330,13  
(5 Feb 45)

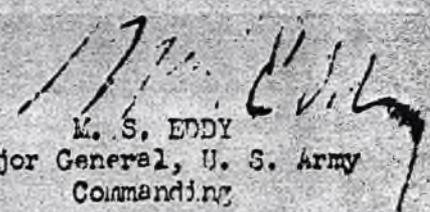
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HEADQUARTERS XII CORPS, APO 312, U. S. Army.

8 Feb 45

TO: Commanders, Officers and Men of the XII Corps.

With the greatest satisfaction and pride I indorse General Patton's message to you. Again your gallant achievements deepen my confidence in the certainty that the officers and men of the XII Corps will keep high in future combat the enviable standards of courage and teamplay you have set in the past.

  
M. S. EDDY  
Major General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

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HAN & NEN

10 FEB 1945

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HEADQUARTERS  
XII CORPS ARTILLERY  
APO 312

AG 201.22

11 June 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation

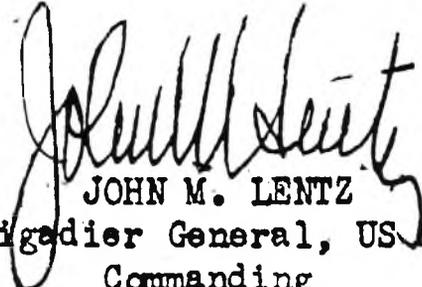
TO: Artillery Air Sections, each Corps Field Artillery  
Battalion and Group.

In reviewing the conspicuous achievements of our operations up to the close of the war, the Air OP's are an outstanding group of the many who have so magnificently contributed to victory. The dauntless courage, tireless efforts, and relentless desire to destroy the enemy on the part of each pilot, observer, and of the ground crews, was a matchless display of team play and unselfish devotion to individual duty.

Undaunted by the severest of weather conditions, which normally would have grounded your planes, you have taken to the air in order that our advancing columns, armored and infantry, would not be denied your observations. The determination with which you have disdained small arms and anti-aircraft fire in order to fly supplies, medicine and ammunition to surrounded units, not only inspired but enabled them to retain ground they had courageously fought for. You have justly been referred to as the eyes of the Infantry, as well as of the Artillery.

Because of the accuracy and effectiveness of your fire missions, the mere appearance of Air OP struck deadly fear into the enemy. This superior means of observation should not be acclaimed without credit to the energetic and arduous services rendered by the ground crews in their unspectacular yet vital duties.

It affords me pleasure and honor to commend the officers and enlisted men who have distinguished themselves as you have, in the establishment of your enviable combat record.

  
JOHN M. LENTZ  
Brigadier General, US Army  
Commanding