



CAMPAIGN CREDIT

The Old Breed was the most highly decorated Marine division in World War II and it was the only Marine division to receive three Presidential Unit Citations. As one of the original Marine division formed in February 1941, the Division occupied a unique place in history. With four major campaigns and occupation service in China, the Old Breed served from start to finish in World War II. The First Marine Division received credit for the following campaigns in World War II:

GUADALCANAL OPERATION

Guadalcanal-Tulagi Landing, 7 to 9 August 1942
Capture and Defense of Guadalcanal, 10 August to 22 December 1942

EASTERN NEW GUINEA OPERATION

Finschhafen Occupation, 2 October to 31 December 1943

BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO OPERATION

Cape Gloucester, New Britain, 26 December 1943 to 1 March 1944

WESTERN CAROLINE ISLANDS OPERATIONS

Capture and Occupation of Southern Palau Islands, 15 September to 14 October 1944

OKINAWA GUNTO OPERATION

Assault and Occupation of Okinawa Gunto, 1 April to 30 June 1945

UNIT AWARDS

The image below represents the streamers awarded to the First Marine Division and its subordinate units for service during the war. Below the image is a list of the streamers authorized to the Division for its service during the World War II era.



(NOTE: Click on the link to jump down this page to read specific citations.)

Presidential Unit Citation with 3 Bronze Stars
[Guadalcanal](#), [Peleliu](#), and [Okinawa](#) operations

Navy Unit Commendation
[Cape Gloucester operation \(11th Marines\)](#)

American Defense Service Streamer 1941

Unit awards to the First Marine Division

Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Streamer
with 1 Silver and 1 Bronze Star

World War II Victory Streamer
7 December 1941 to 31 December 1946

Navy Occupation Service Streamer with Asia Clasp
2 to 26 September 1945

China Service Streamer
30 September 1945 to 19 June 1947

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATIONS AWARDED TO THE FIRST MARINE DIVISION IN WORLD WAR II

GUADALCANAL OPERATION



4 February 1943

Cited in the Name of the President of the United States

THE FIRST MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)

Under command of Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, USMC

CITATION:

"The officers and enlisted men of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, on August 7 to 9, 1942, demonstrated outstanding gallantry and determination in successfully executing forced landing assaults against a number of strongly defended Japanese positions on Tulagi, Gavutu, Tanambogo, Florida and Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands, completely routing all enemy forces and seizing a most valuable base and airfield within the enemy zone of operations in the South Pacific Ocean. From the above period until 9 December 1942, this Reinforced Division not only held their important strategic positions despite determined and repeated Japanese naval, air and land attacks, but in a series of offensive operations against strong enemy resistance drove the Japanese from the proximity of the airfield and inflicted great losses on them by land and air attacks. The courage and determination displayed in these operations were of an inspiring order."

Frank Knox
Secretary of the Navy

ASSAULT AND CAPTURE OF PELELIU



The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

to the

FIRST MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

consisting of the First Marine Division; First Amphibian Tractor Battalion, FMF; U. S. Navy Flamethrower Unit Attached; Sixth Amphibian Tractor Battalion (Provisional), FMF; Third Armored Amphibian Battalion (Provisional), FMF; Detachment, Eighth Amphibian Tractor Battalion, FMF; 454th Amphibian Truck Company, U.S. Army; 456th Amphibian Truck Company, U.S. Army; Fourth Joint Assault Signal Company, FMF; Fifth Separate Wire Platoon, FMF; Sixth Separate Wire Platoon, FMF,

for service as set forth in the following citation:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy Japanese at Peleliu and Ngesebus from September 15 to 29, 1944. Landing over a treacherous coral reef against hostile mortar and artillery fire, the First Marine Division, Reinforced, seized a narrow, heavily mined beachhead and advanced foot by foot in the face of relentless enfilade fire through rain-forests and mangrove swamps toward the air strip, the key to the enemy defenses in the southern Palaus. Opposed all the way through by thoroughly disciplined, veteran Japanese troops heavily entrenched in caves and in reinforced concrete pillboxes which honeycombed the high ground throughout the island, the officers and men of the Division fought with undiminished spirit and courage despite heavy losses, exhausting heat and difficult terrain, seizing

and holding a highly strategic air and land base for future operations in the Western Pacific. By their individual acts of heroism, their aggressiveness and their fortitude, the men of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President

John L. Sullivan
Secretary of the Navy

ASSAULT AND CAPTURE OF OKINAWA



The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

to the

FIRST MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

consisting of the First Marine Division; Fourth Marine War Dog Platoon; Fourth Provisional Rocket Detachment; Fourth Joint Assault Signal Company; Third Amphibian Truck Company; Third Provisional Armored Amphibian Battalion; First Amphibian Tractor Battalion; Eighth Amphibian Tractor Battalion; Detachment, First Platoon, First Bomb Disposal Company; Second Platoon, First Bomb Disposal Company (less first Section); Battery B, 88th Independent Chemical Mortar Battalion, U.S. Army, Company B (less First Platoon), 713th Armored Flamethrower Battalion, U.S. Army,

for service as set forth in the following citation:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the invasion and capture of Okinawa Shima, Ryukyu Islands, from April 1 to June 21, 1945. Securing its assigned area in the north of Okinawa by a series of lightning advances against stiffening resistance, the First Marine Division, Reinforced, turned southward to drive steadily forward through a formidable system of natural and man-made defenses protecting the main enemy bastion at Shuri Castle. Laying bitter siege to the enemy until the defending garrison was reduced and the elaborate fortifications at Shuri destroyed, these intrepid Marines continued to wage fierce battle as they advanced relentlessly, cutting off the Japanese on Oruku Peninsula and smashing through a series of heavily fortified, mutually supporting ridges extending to the southernmost tip of the island to split the remaining hostile forces into two pockets where they annihilated the trapped and savagely resisting enemy. By their valor and tenacity, the officers and men of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, contributed materially to the conquest of Okinawa, and their gallantry in overcoming a fanatic enemy in the face of extraordinary danger and difficulty adds new luster to Marine Corps History and to the traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President

John L. Sullivan
Secretary of the Navy

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION



The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

ELEVENTH MARINE REGIMENT

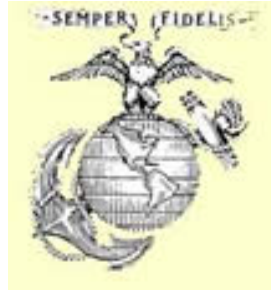
for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism while serving with the First Marine Division in action against enemy Japanese forces at Cape Gloucester, new Britain, from December 26, 1943, to April 30, 1944. Tortured by tropical insects, torrential rain and never-ending sniper fire, the Eleventh Marine Regiment slashed through dense jungle and through mud which mired artillery pieces and prevented movement except by man-handling. Refusing to be stopped by any and all obstacles, officers and men worked as an indomitable team under raking enemy fire, fighting their way over twisted, covered trails to provide heavy weapons fire for the assault infantry troops. With fire from a half-ton field gun, they tore a swath through the jungle screening a strategic ridge and, in the midst of hand-to-hand fighting with a stubbornly resisting enemy, inched forward up

the 40-degree slope to place the field piece on the commanding crest. There they guarded it through the night against the fury of repeated banzai attacks until, in the rain-drenched blackness of early dawn, they stopped the charging Japanese with relentless artillery fire and ensured the security of this dominating position. Their fortitude, determination and courageous fighting spirit in the face of almost insurmountable odds throughout this campaign reflect the highest credit upon the Eleventh Marine Regiment and the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the Eleventh Marines at Gloucester Bay from December 26, 1943, to April 30, 1944, are authorized to wear the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

John L. Sullivan
Secretary of the Navy



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