

RETURN TO RESEARCH STUDIES THE HISTORICAL DIVISION ARCHIVES BRANCH	APR 19 5 11 AM (Boone) Appr. Day 1944
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2006

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MICROFILMED

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GENERAL ORDERS )

NUMBER 29 )

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON D. C. 4 April 1944

E X T R A C T

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II -- LEGION OF MERIT.--By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 20 July 1942 (Sec. III, Bull. 40, WD 1942) and Executive Order No. 9260, 29 October 1942 (sec. I, Bull. 54, WD, 1942), the Legion of Merit was awarded by the War Department to the following-named officers and enlisted men:

\* \* \* \* \*  
Technical Sergeant REUBEN T. DAVIDSON (Army Serial No. 17034839), \* \* \*  
Signal Company \* \* \* Service Group, United States Army. For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services. Early in the North African campaign Sergeant DAVIDSON made sorely needed radio test equipment from salvaged parts. He developed a signal generator for tuning radio transmitters in aircraft which eliminated the necessity of removing the radio to the shop for tuning. At that particular time fighter aircraft were being flown from aircraft carriers to the air base where the radio frequency was changed before release to combat. Sergeant DAVIDSON'S DEVELOPMENT saved valuable time in release of the aircraft. This was accomplished in January 1943 at Casablanca, French Morocco. Sergeant DAVIDSON through exceptional effort and ingenuity carried out experiments on airborne radio equipment whereby intolerable interference was reduced to a satisfactory level. This was performed during May 1943 at Montesquieu, Algeria, at a time when information concerning this difficulty was not yet available from laboratories in the United States. Upon request of higher authority Sergeant DAVIDSON developed relay and amplifier equipment for transmitting teletypewriter messages by radio. This work was done during September 1943 at Tebourba, Tunisia.

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By order of the Secretary of War :

G. C. MARSHALL,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL :

ROBERT H. DUNLOP,  
Brigadier General  
Acting The Adjutant General

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY :

*Boyce H. Bedford*  
BOYCE H. BEDFORD,  
1st Lt. Signal Corps

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(G.O. 39)

## GENERAL ORDERS

No. 39

WAR DEPARTMENT

Washington 25, D.C., 16 May 1944.

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BATTLE HONORS - citations of units.....VIII.

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3. As authorized by Executive Order No. 9396 (sec. I, Bull. 22, WD, 1943) superseding Executive order No. 9075 (sec. III, Bull. 11, WD, 1942), citations of the following unit by the Commanding General, Twelfth Air Force, in General Orders No. 44, 14 April 1944, 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, are confirmed. The citations read as follows:

The 319th Bombardment Group (M) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy. On 9 March 1944 the 319th Bombardment Group participated with two other medium bombardment groups in the first of a series of attacks upon the Rome marshalling yards. Despite heavy anti-aircraft fire and the ever present threat of fighter interception, after one friendly and one unidentified aircraft were seen to go down in flames, the bombardiers of the three groups synchronized their instruments with such precision that all bombs fell on or within 200 yards of the Ostiense railroad facilities between the east choke point of the marshalling yards and the Tiber River railroad bridge. Briefed to exercise utmost caution to prevent damage to Saint Pauls Basilica, St. John Lateran, the Forum, Coliseum, and other religious and cultural monuments located in close proximity to the Ostiense yards, the 319th Bombardment Group achieved the greatest accuracy. Not one bomb released by the 24 air planes of that group fell outside the target area. All but three of 142 500-pound bombs scored hits on tracks, an ongoing rolling stock, or in the warehouse area. Photographs show that more than 200 units of rolling stock were destroyed or damaged, and that the tracks east of the Tiber River were completely blocked. Through outstanding leadership, untiring effort, and the skillful performance of duty by all members of the organization this Group has played a vital role in forcing the enemy to depend more and more upon coastwise shipping for transporting the bulk of his supplies to the southern Italian front. During a period of combat when superior performance of duty has been the rule rather than the exception, the 319th Bombardment Group has exhibited such gallant try, determination, and esprit in overcoming unusual difficulties and hazardous conditions as to set it above and apart from units participating in the same engagement, and to reflect highest credit on that organization and the military service of the United States.

The 319th Bombardment Group (M) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy. Repeatedly demonstrating superior achievement in precision bombing during critical periods in the Italian campaign, the 319th Bombardment Group was in a large measure responsible for the complete interdiction of rail communication between Florence and Rome which resulted from a supreme effort by our medium bombers. On 11 March 1944, the 319th Bombardment Group distinguished itself by conspicuous battle action when its

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group formation of 25 B-26's excelled others on the same mission by dropping 96 1,000-pound bombs with pin-point accuracy on the main marshalling yards at Florence. Of the 250 units of rolling stock in the yards approximately 50 were damaged or derailed. Thirty locomotives in the repair sheds were destroyed or damaged. All tracks in the target area were cut, and a concentration of craters in the south half of the area completely isolated the Central Station. Heavy damage was inflicted upon buildings of a chemical works, upon repair sheds and warehouses. A string of bombs fell in the Old Fort where 60 motor vehicles had been parked and several adjoining buildings were destroyed. Photographic reconnaissances on 16 March confirmed that all the through lines still were cut at many points and that the yards were impassible. Realizing that the carrying of a maximum bomb load on a mission of maximum range involving a hazardous overwater route under adverse weather conditions demanded flawless mechanical performance, the ground personnel displayed untiring zeal and devotion to duty in preparing and servicing their aircraft. Despite errorless navigation, two of the bombers were forced to land at friendly air-dromes to refuel. All others reached the home base safely. The success of this mission, which struck such a devastating blow to enemy, exemplifies the highest type of leadership, team work, and flying skill, and is keeping with the highest traditions of the military service of the United States.

By order of the Secretary of War:

G. C. MARSHALL,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

ROBERT H. DUNLAP,  
Brigadier General,  
Acting The Adjutant General.

A CERTIFIED TRUE EXTRACT COPY.

*Wilfred G. Corey*  
WILFRED G. COREY,  
Captain, Air Corps.