

### The 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion

The 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion was a highly decorated unit that participated in six World War II campaigns. The unit was originally formed at Fort Lewis, Washington, in July 1940 as the 99th Antitank Battalion and was redesignated the 99th Infantry Antitank Battalion on July 24, 1941. Six months later the army again renamed the unit the 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Tank Destroyer Forces did not have a branch insignia until March 1943. During the early years until the War Department created an insignia, tank destroyer men usually wore either infantry or artillery insignia, depending upon the origin of a particular unit. Shown is an officer's original lapel insignia made by N. S. Meyer for the 99th Infantry Antitank Battalion.



The unit left New York on January 26, 1943 and went to North Africa. It saw combat and received a campaign streamer for Tunisia. The battalion went to England in December 1943. The 899th participated in the Normandy invasion and received an arrowhead device on its campaign streamer showing it was part of the assault force. Other campaign streamers given the unit include Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe, and the Rhineland.



A pair of original officer insignia made overseas for the 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion is shown. In the last 20 years some unscrupulous people have made tank destroyer insignia that look somewhat like those shown, but these are easily distinguished from scarce original pieces.

Company A received a distinguished unit citation (also known as a presidential unit citation) for actions on July 11, 1944. Company C received two such awards, one for actions on July 11, 1944 and the other for 8 through 19 March 1945. In addition, the Second Platoon, Company C, received a third distinguished unit citation for actions from 22 June until 1 July 1944, as well as a French Croix de Guerre. The Belgian army awarded the entire battalion its fourragere for actions 3 – 13 September 1944 and 20 December – 26 January 1945. The unit returned to the United States late in 1945 where it was disbanded.