

# HOW TO USE A LINEAGE AND HONORS CERTIFICATE



A Lineage and Honors Certificate, or “Lineage,” is a stylized outline history of a unit. The Lineage establishes the continuity of a unit through various changes in designation and status, thereby verifying the unit’s entitlement to honors, as well as heraldic items, unit historical property and files, and other tangible assets. A Lineage is not the operational history of a unit.

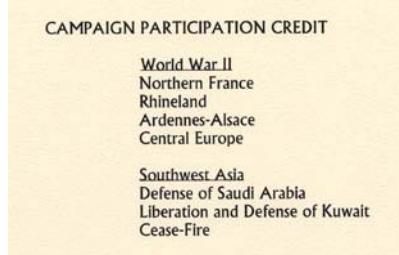
Lineage and Honors Certificates are prepared for most MTOE units that are authorized a color, standard, or guidon by The Institute of Heraldry ([www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil](http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil)). Soldiers will find information regarding their unit’s past achievements on a Lineage. Leaders can also use a Lineage to determine which unit awards should be represented by ribbons worn on the Class A uniform, and which streamers should be displayed on their color, standard, or guidon.

## Special Designations

**249th ENGINEER BATTALION  
(BLACK LIONS)**

Special Designations, or “nicknames,” have many origins. The one in this example, “Black Lions,” comes from the Coat of Arms of the 249th Engineer Battalion, which is also displayed on the battalion’s flag, as shown. The Institute of Heraldry placed a black lion on the unit’s Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI) and Coat of Arms to represent the unit’s service in Belgium during World War II. That country uses a similar lion on its national coat of arms. Units are entitled to select an official Special Designation, which the Center of Military History recognizes through a certificate signed by the Chief of Military History. Once approved, only the officially recognized unit may use this designation. For more information on Special Designations and for a partial list of approved designations, see our Special Designations web page at: [www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/sp-des.html](http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/sp-des.html).

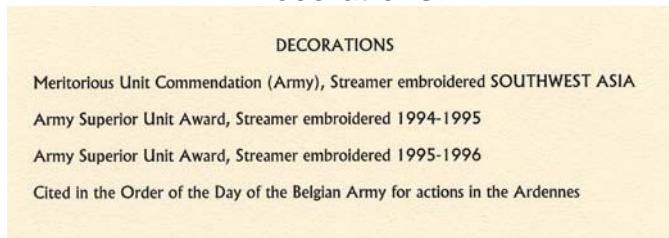
## Campaign Participation Credit



Campaign Participation Credit represents the official named campaigns in which a particular unit served. There is a corresponding streamer on the unit's flag or guidon for each campaign listed on a unit's Lineage. The streamer uses the same ribbon as the Soldiers' campaign medals, with each conflict having its own design. A unit can also earn credit for participation in unnamed campaigns, which honor a unit's engagement in a significant action that did not fall within the geographical boundaries or time period of a named campaign. Most unnamed campaigns are for actions prior to 1945.

There are currently 181 campaign streamers displayed on the United States Army flag. A complete list, with a sample streamer, can be found on our web site at Campaigns of the United States Army ([www.history.army.mil/html/reference/campaigns.html](http://www.history.army.mil/html/reference/campaigns.html)).

## Decorations



There are two general types of unit decorations. U.S. unit decorations have only been awarded since World War II, and foreign unit decorations date to World War I. As with campaigns, there are corresponding decoration streamers for most, but not all, unit decorations. The streamer inscriptions are determined by the Center of Military History to indicate the location or period of service for which the decoration was awarded. An example of a decoration without a streamer from the 249th's lineage would be "Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for actions in the Ardennes." Note that the entry does not contain the words "Streamer embroidered" as do the others. The decorations listed on a unit's Lineage also show what AR 670-1, 29-11 ([www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r670\\_1.pdf](http://www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r670_1.pdf)) authorizes for temporary wear on a Soldier's Class A uniform. Only the Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Valorous Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), and Army Superior Unit Award are currently authorized for temporary wear.

Both campaign and decoration streamers can be ordered from the Clothing and Heraldry Product Support Integration Directorate ([www.heraldry.army.mil](http://www.heraldry.army.mil)).