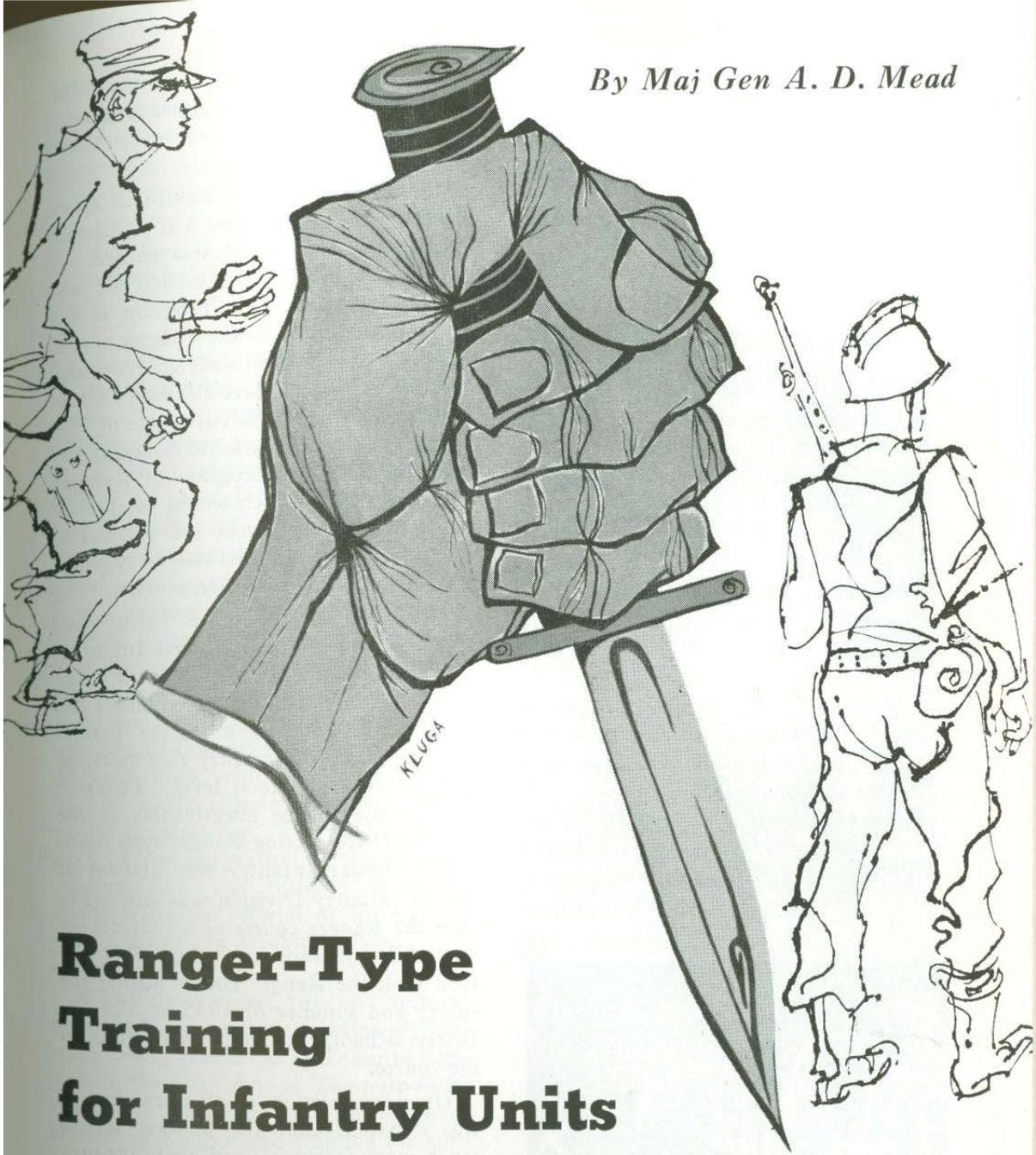


By Maj Gen A. D. Mead



Ranger-Type Training for Infantry Units

From the maze of uncertainties and unsolved problems connected with tactical atomic warfare one fact stands out crystal clear: The Infantryman of the future will have to be a more rugged individual than his already rugged counterpart of the past.

Aside from the past requirements of proficiency in Infantry weapons and tactics, the Infantryman of the future must attain a much higher capacity in the field of rapid marches, concealment and camouflage and hasty field fortifications. In addition he must be mentally conditioned

to fight aggressively, alone or as a part of a small isolated unit.

To prepare an Infantryman to perform in future warfare, intensification of training is required. In seeking means and methods to toughen Infantry training, the search is logically directed toward the most rigorous training conducted by the Army—that of the Ranger.

The story of the Rangers and their operations throughout the history of our country has been one of courage, daring and leadership. In every instance Ranger units have attracted men whose skills in the art of fighting have been unsurpassed. Rangers have played a spectacular and colorful role in the military history and growth of our nation.

To continue the know-how of Ranger training and develop new techniques, the Ranger Department of The Infantry School was organized in September 1951. The mission of this department was to design a course to train small-unit Infantry leaders in command and leadership problems in the field. In addition, this course was designed to improve the physical condition and to instill a high degree of pride in personal appearance, habits and conduct and a real understanding of



the meaning and necessity of discipline within a military unit. This Ranger course is being conducted today and is open to officers and enlisted men alike

who possess certain prerequisites. The course, however, is designed primarily for training the individual rather than the small unit.

In order to improve small-unit effectiveness, some method of adapting "Ranger-type" training was needed. It was neither practicable, feasible nor economical to prescribe a program of instruction identical to the Ranger course for all Infantry units since all posts and installations do not have the varied training facilities and terrain available to The Infantry School. It was necessary, therefore, to develop a program of Ranger-type instruction which would be applicable to all Infantry units and adapted to the terrain and facilities currently available at the various division posts.

In seeking ways to insure that we continue to have the best trained Infantrymen in our army, we considered it desirable to place additional emphasis on Ranger-type instruction in the normal training phases of Infantry rifle units, especially at the platoon level. To assist in determining the effectiveness of the small unit conducting Ranger-type training, a regular Infantry rifle platoon of the 3d Infantry Division was selected to take the Ranger course as a unit during its small-unit-training phase. This platoon took the Ranger course during the spring and summer of 1955 at The Infantry School. All individuals finished the course.

Upon completion of this training, it was apparent that the platoon was a much more aggressive and confident unit than one engaged in regular training. The members of the platoon developed a fighting spirit and a sense of pride which inspired weaker members to exert greater effort to maintain the unit standard. The over-all attitude indicated that the rigorous nature of Ranger training provides men with an incentive to perform well. As a result of this experiment,

Ranger-type training was considered most desirable for the small unit and should be included in regular training programs.

In integrating Ranger-type training into training programs, it is envisioned that this type of training will be introduced into the training program in peacetime by conducting it in the post cycle phase. To accomplish this training during mobilization, it must be made a part of the appropriate army training programs. Modification of existing army training programs to include realistic and tough Ranger-type training is expected to achieve the desired objectives. Integration of Ranger-type training into existing training programs will raise the individual proficiency of the Infantry soldier. It will increase the flexibility of employment of Infantry units by making them adaptable to a wider variety of terrain and climatic conditions. In addition to sound and realistic training, a spirit of unit competition will be engendered in the small units with resultant improvement in esprit, morale and physical and mental conditioning. The challenge offered by the integration of Ranger-type training into the training programs should stimulate interest of the participants and assist in developing latent leadership.

With this in mind, two unit tests of proposed Ranger-type instruction are currently being conducted by Infantry divisions in the Fifth Army. The purpose of these tests is to determine the optimum amount of Ranger-type training for both formal army training programs and post cycle training programs.

The 8th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado, is conducting one of the tests to determine the maximum feasible amount of Ranger-type instruction that can be integrated into existing army training programs without extending or eliminating other essential subjects. All

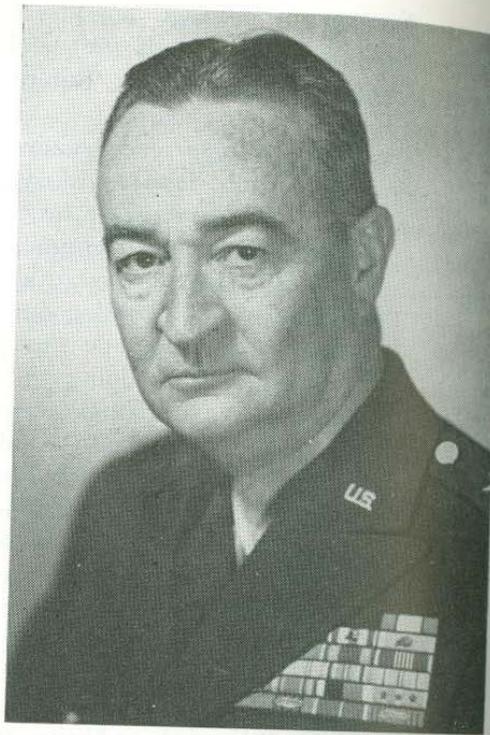
subjects that are considered essential for Ranger-type field problems are covered in the normal basic combat, advanced individual, squad and portions of the platoon training without changing materially the subjects, hours and scope of subjects now prescribed. Certain special subjects such as survival, patrol tips and



field craft expedients, etc., are conducted utilizing portions of "commander's time." During the platoon phase of training, the rifle platoons are moved to the field for a three-week period to conduct Ranger-type field problems.

The 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, is unit-testing a proposed five-week program of instruction designed as a single block of training for post cycle training. This program is divided into two distinct phases. Phase I is a two-week review and preparatory

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course to cover in detail all subjects considered essential to the individual prior to participating in Ranger-type field problems. Special emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, map reading, demolitions, mines and booby traps. Phase II follows immediately and consists of a three-week period of Ranger-type field problems for the rifle platoons.

The training programs which will eventually result from this testing should be the best training programs that can be produced for peacetime training as well as for the mobilization training of the Infantryman. The personnel, equip-

ment, facilities and time should not exceed those which will be available either in peacetime training or during mobilization training. Ranger-type training is expected to assist in developing self-confidence, aggressive spirit, unit pride and physical fitness.

Throughout the history of our country, the Infantryman can point with pride to his accomplishments in military operations. With tougher and more realistic training in the offing, the Infantryman of tomorrow should be even better equipped professionally, mentally and physically to undertake any assigned mission.

Gentlemen, here they come, the queen of battle, the Infantrymen, the old foot sloggers. Twenty-five years ago at West Point an old tactical professor used to say to us: "Never overlook the doughboy. A thousand years ago it was the foot soldiers who won and held territory and it will be the same a thousand years from now. . . ." Look at 'em, the doughboys, bless 'em.

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