

Staff Department  
THE INFANTRY SCHOOL  
Fort Benning, Georgia

STUDENT MONOGRAPH  
Infantry Officers Advanced Course  
Class Nr 1  
1956-57

TITLE

What Should Be Done Within The Infantry Regiment  
To Improve Leadership Training for NCO's?

Capt Willard Latham  
Roster Nr 103

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE.....	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
DISCUSSION.....	5
CONCLUSIONS.....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	17

## PREFACE

21 January 1957

Appreciation is expressed to the following officers for assistance in the gathering of information through interviews in the preparation of this study: Lieutenant Colonel William A. Robinson, Kings Own Royal Regiment, British Army, "British System of NCO Training", Lieutenant Colonel Louis M. Bonnigal, French Army, "French System of NCO Training", Major A. G. Shelby, United States Marine Corps, "Marine Corps Leadership Methods", and Captain John E. McCleary, United States Army, "Operation of a Regimental NCO Academy".

Except as indicated, the point of view expressed in this paper is that of the author and not necessarily that of The Infantry School or The Department of the Army.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William A. Robinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

## INTRODUCTION

In the atomic wars of the future it is envisioned that the ground forces will operate on the basis of fighting many small, widely dispersed battles. These battles will be conducted by the small unit leaders of the Army. It is with the leadership training of one group of those small unit leaders that this monograph will be concerned; the noncommissioned officer of the infantry regiment.

It is not intended that this study will analyze all of the necessities of leadership but will attempt to find a method for instilling and developing the intangibles that are essential; such as the desire to lead and excel in military life. The aspect of technical proficiency will not be discussed. Its importance is well recognized, however it is relatively easy to devise training procedures to obtain the desired level of proficiency.

The experiences of the writer will be used to evaluate the various methods discussed. It has been observed that throughout the research that there is evidently not a system or program of leadership training which can be used and depended upon to produce infallible leaders. The schools can produce graduates but cannot guarantee that they will lead. Nevertheless the search for the best system of producing must continue.

There is a directive to the officers of the British Army which is applicable to all leaders and its provisions seem to be lacking in many noncommissioned officers in the American

Army today.

"...The day may come when you will be called upon to register the manhood of the British Empire in the eyes of the continent of Europe. It is therefore imperative that every leader offer evidence of his awareness of his contribution to victory in his personal bearing. He should remember both on and off parade, that the...uniform he wears is the outward and visible sign of the...Commission which he has been honored to receive. He must conduct himself in such a fashion that the uniform he wears is regarded...less as a uniform than as a hallmark of that great profession of arms to which he belongs." (2:5)

The training programs of the various armed forces and business corporations have produced evidence that those who lead and direct others can be trained to lead and direct better. This study will attempt to find the best method of obtaining this goal at regimental level.

## DISCUSSION

In order to determine the most productive method of leadership training for noncommissioned officers within the infantry regiment it is necessary to establish the objective by which this leadership can be recognized. Research has developed a great number of traits considered by many people as the essentials of leadership for noncommissioned officers. It has been impractical to present all of these and therefore the following list of requirements for leaders put forth by the British War Office is considered most representative of the whole.

- "(a) He must have courage...
- (b) He must be technically proficient...
- (c) He must have initiative and offensive spirit...
- (d) He must look after his men...
- (e) He must be physically and mentally tough...
- (f) He must be cheerful...
- (g) He must be able to make up his mind...
- (h) He must be loyal...
- (i) He must instill discipline..." (26:94)

These requirements can not all be developed or instilled in a single training operation. In order to select the best method to develop most of these qualities it is desirable to analyze the various methods used by the United States Army, United States Marine Corps, the French Army and the British Army.

One of the methods found most popular in the minds of

some officers to improve leadership training of noncommissioned officers that of the regimental NCO school. (18) This solution admits of a uniform, efficient way to train noncommissioned and potential noncommissioned officers the basic and advanced skills they need to master in order to lead. Some of the advantages of this level school are:

First: Centralization of quality instructors. This will allow the entire unit to benefit from the better instruction.

Second: The regimental commander can directly influence the training of noncommissioned leaders. He may also instill his own standard operation procedures into the functioning of the school.

Third: Recognition can be accorded the graduates of the school.

Fourth: Unit publicity can be given to the school. This will increase the desire of soldiers to attend.

Some of the disadvantages of the regimental level school system are:

First: There is no table of organization and equipment. Therefore all instructors and equipment must be procured from subordinate or higher units.

Second: Subordinate units cannot spare first rate instructors on a long term basis without hampering the efficiency of the units.

Third: Graduation from the school will not automatically make the man a leader. In the final analysis, the real proof of leadership will be in his success or failure in leading men.

Fourth: This system interferes with the Company Commander's function of developing leadership within his unit. Since it is the Company Commander and his officers who select, train and supervise the noncommissioned officers they should be the ones who develop them.

Fifth: Schools at this level are excellent for producing

technically qualified men but can do little to instill the traits of a leader and insure that the noncommissioned officer will conduct himself as a leader when he returns to his unit.

(18)

Schools in the formal sense can be operated at all levels down to company, and it cannot be doubted that some benefit would accrue from them. However the shortage of qualified instructors, equipment and the lack of a uniform standard prevent these from being a universal solution.

Another solution lies in the field of command technique exercised by the officers of the army. Combat leadership stresses that, when in action and under fire, a leader is evaluated by his initiative, cooperation, perseverance and force. (6:14) These qualities are difficult to instill in a formal school. A return to the basic respect for the position of the noncommissioned officer by the commissioned officers would effect a sizeable start in the training of enlisted leaders. A great deal of lip service is paid to the idea that today noncommissioned officers are the backbone of the army, when it is the experience of most of the young officers, including the writer, that it is the officers who bear the burden of most of the responsible work within the company. It is not the desire nor the intent of the junior officers that this be so. However in order to meet the demands of higher headquarters for better results, faster, they have been forced to upsure more and more of the NCO's authority.

There is a tendency for officers at all levels to specify that an officer be in charge of most important details. This leaves the sergeant or corporal with the feeling that he is a private with chevrons. From the moment this impression is allowed to form, the NCO's position and prestige has been lowered. The results of a questionnaire conducted for the pur-

pose of determining the feasibility of integrating leadership training within the infantry company indicates that noncommissioned officers prefer that the lowest level of leadership be responsible for training of his unit. (19: Annex A) This would mean that the squad leader would conduct most of the training for his squad and also supervise his men in almost all other details. Under this system training would take longer in some instances but it would result in noncommissioned leaders, effective chain of command, and unity among the NCO's. This principle has been applied in recent months by the 8th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. The following excerpt from an article written as an explanation of this type of training gives an indication as to the favorable results.

"Squad leaders were given ultimate responsibility for the performance of their squads...Everyone concerned with training at every echelon within the division displayed a certain pride and initiative stemming from the realization that he was directly responsible for every performance of his unit, whether on the rifle range or the drill field. This produced not only a superior trainee but a superior NCO and junior officer.

"Initiative and leadership, it became apparent, go hand in hand with the personal relationship between the trainee and the instructor..." (24:12)

This system of operation would have the effect of elevating prestige of the Army NCO to that enjoyed by the NCO in the Marine Corps by use of the Drill Instructor method of recruit training.

It has been said that the noncommissioned officer caste is one of the foundation stones of military efficiency. (28:53) This caste results not from the mere appointment of sergeant

and corporals but from their actual elevation in treatment and regard above the private soldier. This is done in many ways aside from the obvious granting of privileges. The commander would not give detailed instructions to NCOs but would give mission type orders whenever possible and endeavor to make the man feel that he is a person of some stature in the military world. After assigning the mission the officer must allow the NCO to do the job. If he hesitates, help him, and if he fails to meet the desired standard after a reasonable period of time, reduce him. If he succeeds reward him with a "well done". The officer corps must set such an outstanding example in all their conduct that the corps of noncommissioned officers will strive to emulate them. In addition the officers must insist upon the maintenance of the caste between noncommissioned officers and other ranks. This is necessary in order to prevent any lowering of the leader's standards and aims to the level of the led. The NCO must have the feeling that he is leading and is in his position because of his superior skill and ability plus the knowledge that his superiors are depending upon him for success. It is not intended that the perpetration of NCO caste will obviate the need for formal system. The following forms of instruction are available:

First: Experience in leadership situation. This could take the form of allowing a potential leader to assume the duties of a more senior NCO and operate under the tutelage of the senior.

Second: Progression from small to larger leadership situations. This could either be part of a deliberate developmental program or just the routine way in which, by trial and error, the better leader is developed.

Third: Systematic personal conferences of trainer

and leader. These interviews are planned to review actual conduct; the commander would tell the junior leader what qualities of leadership he is failing to display and what to do to improve his performance.

The French Army has a system of leader training which is worthy of discussion. Upon induction into the army the soldier is required to undergo a battery of tests. Upon the basis of the results of these tests those soldiers who evidence leadership potential are so designated and after completion of basic training it is mandatory that they attend a six to eight months noncommissioned officer school conducted at regimental level. This school is not a part of the T.O.E. of the regiment but is required to be conducted by the French Army. All privates who will be promoted to the grade of corporal must graduate from this course. Another six to eight months course must be attended in order to be promoted to sergeant. This course is conducted either at regimental or division level.

These schools have all the advantages and disadvantages of the United States Army regimental level school but would seem to be much more selective and the training more complete. Yet it does not produce the desired results for the French Metropolitan Army that is desired. (5) This seems to be due to the treatment of noncommissioned officers in the matter of prestige by officers. The separation of NCOs and other ranks is not maintained, resulting in a lowering of the status of leadership.

The United States Marine Corps does not at the present time have a formal school system of training for the development of leadership for NCOs. However the Corps has a fundamentally different approach to the problem of encouraging leadership among NCOs as compared to the practice of the Army.

This practice is manifested in the basic handling of the NCO by all levels of command within the Corps. The Commandant of the Marine Corps insists that officers put maximum responsibility and authority on the corporals and sergeants. These men are made to feel that their superiors believe that they are important. The officers of the Corps at all levels are directed to instruct the NCOs personally and separately. This initiated the habit of command and teaches the NCOs to be exacting with their men. They are accorded a position of special privilege in such things as mess, pass and any other fields that can be used. Paramount in the installation of the NCO as a man of great importance in the Marine Corps is that they conduct all basic training, "Boot Camp", for all men just entering the Corps. This establishes his place in the eyes of the newcomers and gives the NCO corps the sure knowledge that they are entrusted with the training to the future marines at the most important point of their careers.

(23)

The British Army does not have a school program to develop leadership in their NCO's. The problem is simplified by the fact that their army is not large and the number of NCO's within their units is not as great as in American units. The selection process for NCO's begins when a man enters the army. In basic training the recruits receive a battery of tests. Upon the results of these tests and observations of the Cadre during basic training the man is recommended or not to the Commander of the unit to which he goes as a potential NCO. The man does not receive formal leadership training in the unit. The commander has the authority to promote to "Lance" grades (temporary without pay) for purposes of observation for leadership ability. The policy is not to promote a man to permanent grade unless he has

demonstrated his ability to lead.

The British NCO is accorded a position of signal honor in the chain of command. They are completely separated from the other ranks in the matter of privileges, living conditions, and mess. These distinctions are rigidly enforced by the NCO's and supervised by the officers. The chief supervisor of this system within the battalion is the Regimental Sergeant Major. Tradition has fixed this office so firmly that he has the unwritten privilege of reporting to the Adjutant the observed shortcomings of the junior officers within the battalion.

The Regimental Sergeant Major and the Company Sergeant Major (First Sergeant) are addressed as "Sir" by all lesser ranks.

(21) All these distinctions have the effect of exalting the position of the NCO and make it a desirable goal for which to aspire. Men must demonstrate ability before promotion. The system is not foolproof and misfits do slip in; however the problem of removal is relatively simple as compared to the American method. The theme is to give the NCO maximum responsibility and authority. Those who cannot produce are eliminated. One of the outstanding features of the British system as compared to the American habit is that men are not promoted because a vacancy exists. The use of the "Lance" grades is a partial aid in this matter.

The position of the NCO of the British Army is developed to the point that it has been quoted of a sergeant in the Coldstream Guards that the most important function of the officers is: "When the time comes, to show the men how to die". (21)

The writings of General Sir Harold E. Franklyn of the British Army indicates the feeling of the British Army toward the processes of developing leaders within the regiment.

"The very fact of commanding men continuously will

become a habit which will survive, in most cases, the transition from peace to war. It is, however, a very different matter to try to develop leaders in a hurry after war has broken out. It will be found that among the potential leaders within a regiment that there are some men who seem born to lead and about them there is no anxiety, but the majority will appear to lack any real aptitude. Picking leaders in such circumstances is a matter of guesswork, for often the quietest and most retiring men need the stimulus of battle to show their real worth. There is in fact only one practical test, which is to allow each man to turn to command the sub-unit and to watch carefully how he shapes. Eventually the most promising will have been selected, although the fact must be faced that there will have been many mistakes; now steps can and must be taken to strengthen their powers of leadership in the short time that is to be available. In camp or barracks the embryo leader will always find some senior or even a contemporary, from whom to seek advice and guidance and in such conditions no progress will be made. It is essential that the budding leader be thrown entirely on his own resources and faced with problems when there is no one else to consult, with this end in view NCOs and potential NCOs should be sent off, with or without troops under their command, for several days at a time and given some task to perform with no possibility of gaining even moral support from others. There is no training comparable with this for producing self reliant leaders in a short time." (19:3)

This system on the part of the British appears to be an excellent approach to the problem of leadership training below the regimental level. It is not indicated however, how efficient this system would be under conditions in the field

during war time.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the foregoing discussion that the best method of improving leadership training for noncommissioned officers within the infantry regiment is to re-establish the NCO caste within the Army. The NCO in the United States Army is no longer considered to be the backbone of the service by the rank and file of the men or by the officers. The NCO's are not depended upon, as a group, to carry out responsibility without close supervision.

It is further concluded that the system of operating NCO schools at the regimental level is not sufficiently productive from the standpoint of leadership to justify its operation. This does not obviate the need for formal schools at regimental level to teach certain technical subjects. Technical training is an integral part of a leader's training but is not considered to be as difficult to develop as the intangibles.

The NCO caste must be established and exercised by the officer corps. These procedures must be recognized by the officers at higher echelons and enforced by them. The junior officer must be criticized, not for mere failure of his unit if it fails, but for failure to properly utilize an NCO when such is the case. Those officers and NCO's who do not set a proper example after being instructed must be eliminated from the service.

Research has indicated that there is no one solution to the problem of developing leadership within the regiment. The

elaborate school system of the French has not produced what they sought; while, on the other hand, the British who have no system of schooling at all for leadership appear to have achieved better results. The American Army has tried both methods and finds itself between both extremes. The writer concludes that the optimum answer lies in an adaptation of the British Army and U.S. Marine Corps systems. This means a higher degree of dependence upon the NCO, elevating his position so that it becomes desirable to attain his status without considering only the financial side. He must be used more in the role of a primary leader and instructor and not as a mouthpiece for the officer. This can be achieved by placing the responsibility upon the officers' corps of the army. The officer must conduct himself at all times so that he is a man to emulate by all of his subordinates and especially the NCOs. Officers at higher levels should begin the practice of evaluating or rating officers by the quality of the NCOs under their command and the manner in which they handle them. Noncommissioned officers and potential noncommissioned officers should be allowed to conduct more and more of the training of their units. They should be forced to operate without supervision for extended periods of time in order to develop within themselves the traits desirable for leaders. This will enable the commander to evaluate the junior leaders and to lend his counsel to those who need it and to eliminate those who cannot measure up.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Adams, Paul D., Colonel, "Mobilization Training For Officers and Noncommissioned Officers," Command and General Staff College Military Review, 28:57, July, 1948.
2. Army Training Memorandum, Number 29, WAR, (London, England, War Office, P. 5, February, 1940). U 135.G7  
G 72 #29
3. Boatner, Mark M. III., "The CO and His NCO's", Infantry Journal, 54:10 May, 1944.
4. Boatner, Mark M. III., "School For NCO's", Infantry Journal, 64:17, August, 1947.
5. Bonnigal, Louis M., Lieutenant Colonel, French Army, French Liaison Officer to the Infantry Center, Interview, "French System of NCO Training", 30 January, 1956.
6. "Combat Leadership", Lecture Number 16, Program of Instruction, (Seventh Army NCO Academy, Munich, Germany, 1955).
7. Finne, D. D. Jr., Captain, "An NCO School in Every Company", Marine Corps Gazette, 40:34, October, 1956.
8. FM 22-10, Leadership, Washington D. C., Department of the Army, 1951.
9. Freeman, G. L., How to Pick Leaders, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1950).
10. Gordon, Thomas C., Master Sergeant, "The Long and Rocky Road", Combat Forces Journal, P. 21. Volume June, 1954.
11. Gouldner, Alvin W., Studies in Leadership, (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publisher, 1950). MH 141. G 73 bu
12. Hough, Chester C., Colonel, "Comments of Effectiveness of the American Soldier", Headquarters, US FEET WD Observers Report, AGF Report Number 1104. D 7311  
.E 91 1104
13. Information Brochure, Second Air Force, NCO Academy, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.
14. Jessup, John E., Jr., Captain, "NCO Training In the Army", Military Monograph, Advanced Infantry Officers Class Nr 2, 1954, The Infantry School Library, Fort Benning, Georgia.

15. Kalyadin, I., Major General (Soviet Army), "NCO Training", Translation from Voenney Vestnik #19, 1948.  
U4. V9 E1948-19-A.
16. Laird, Donald A., Technique of Building Personnel Leadership, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co, Inc., 1944).
17. Mahon, Russell P., Captain, "What Has Become of the NCO?", Anti Aircraft Journal, 86:35, January-February, 1943.
18. McCleary, John E., Captain, Interview, "Operation of A Regimental NCO Academy" 17 December 1956.
19. Research Service, Encyclopaedia Britannica Ltd. Report, 4 January 1957.
20. Reed, John E., Captain, "Integration of Leadership Within the Infantry Company", Staff Study, Advanced Infantry Officers Class, Nr. 1, 1954-55, The Infantry School Library, Fort Benning, Georgia.
21. Robinson, William A., Lieutenant Colonel, British Army, Interview, "Leadership Training of Noncommissioned Officers in the British Army", 31 January 1956.
22. Semmes, Harry H., Brigadier General, "General George S. Patton, Jr., Psychology of Leadership," Armor, 64:28-2A, May-June, 1955.
23. Shelby, A. C., Major, U. S. Marine Corps, Interview, "Marine Corps Leadership Training Methods", 29 January, 1956.
24. Sherburne, Thomas L., Major General, "They Gave the Squad Back to the Sergeant", Army Information Digest, 11:12, September 1956.
25. Taylor, G. A., Colonel, "Observations on an Infantry Regiment in Combat", Report No. 31, Observers Board, ETOUSA, 24 September 1943.  
D 731.1  
.E 91 #31 FU
26. Training For War, War Office, Great Britain, Chapter X, April, 1950. U 166.G7 (1950) bR
27. Wintersteen, Joseph O., Captain, "Integration of Leadership Training Within the Infantry Company", Staff Study, Advanced Infantry Officers Class, Nr. 1, 1954-55, The Infantry School Library, Fort Benning, Georgia.
28. Wise, Jennings C., Lieutenant Colonel, Hegemonics, (Washington, D. C.: W. F. Roberts Co. 1922). UB 210  
.W 5