From The Editor

ADVICE FOR INFANTRY AUTHORS

Each year we receive manuscripts from lots of aspiring authors. The length and quality of these submissions vary greatly, and when the smoke clears away we end up accepting only about half of them.

Let me tell you why manuscripts are rejected, and then how to improve your chances of seeing yours in print. We do not accept poetry, fiction, irrelevant accounts of battles, articles whose only purpose is to praise individuals or units, or articles on subjects we've covered in recent issues. If we finish reading a manuscript—we read all of them—and the phrase "So what?" comes to mind, we'll send it back. But we are reluctant to reject a draft without telling the author what's wrong, so we sometimes include recommendations for improvement, another subject that is of interest to us, or even the name of another publication for which the material is better suited.

What we look for, first and foremost, is substance. Simply stated, substance consists of the point the writer wants to make and all the information that supports it. An article must be relevant to the professional development needs of today's leaders. Next in order of importance is the organization of the piece. If the thesis is stated early on, and the writer's supporting arguments follow logically, the article is well on its way.

A third consideration is the style the author chooses; we strive for a conversational style, simply and clearly expressed, because it can be understood in a single reading. Write the way you speak, because it comes naturally. Don't use a big word if a small one will do. Don't write to impress the reader; just write well, and you will impress him anyway. Use only words and phrases whose meaning you understand, and if you use acronyms, explain what they mean. While you're at it, pay attention to the audience you're writing for—in our case, company and battalion level infantrymen.

The final consideration is correctness, and this is where the reader's first impression of a writer is usually formed. The basic standards of vocabulary and good usage are as valid today as they were a century ago; they make the difference between a polished final work and what may look like a hastily composed draft. If the details are sloppy, they may call into question the accuracy of the facts and assertions in the piece.

What about illustrations? Diagrams and photographs should support—not take the place of—text. Past issues of INFANTRY will provide examples of how illustrations should be used, as well as the type of photos we're looking for.

The last point I want to touch on is the format of a submission; it should be in a double-spaced draft—in type of normal size—on white bond paper. Include a disk if you like (we may be able to use it), but most submissions are only in paper copy, and that is acceptable. Be sure to include a telephone number, so we can reach you with any questions we may have.

This has been a brief review of what we're looking for when we review a manuscript. You have the key ingredient, and that is the subject matter expertise that INFANTRY's authors have been sharing with our armed forces and those of other nations around the world for 74 years. The only way to get published is to write, and that is what I encourage you to do. If you have an idea for an article, write or call me, and we'll talk about it.

RAE

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

INFANTRY is available to subscribers at $12.00 for one year and $23.00 for two years. Foreign (non-APO) subscribers must add $4.00 per subscription per year to cover the cost of surface mailing and handling. Foreign air mail rates will be furnished upon request. Single copies are $2.50 each if sent to a U.S. address.

Payment must be made in U.S. currency, by international money order, or by a check or draft drawn on a U.S. bank. For best service, payment should accompany each order, because we cannot start a subscription until we have received full payment for it. Checks, money orders, or drafts should be made payable to INFANTRY.

One-year subscriptions are not refundable; two-year subscriptions are refundable, but service and handling charges will be deducted.