

Field classes provide experience for junior Army ROTC students

(Author's preface: Last Thursday the Army ROTC department allowed me to accompany the junior class on their field problem so that I could record my impressions for The Emerald. For their co-operation in allowing me to be The Emerald's first "combat correspondent" I am very grateful.)

By TED MAHAR
Emerald News Editor

The platoon leader stood up and shouted "Attack! Attack!" Forty men staggered to their feet from the grass in which they had lain in readiness and ran shouting toward the enemy rifles. When the two opposing forces closed, the enemy ran out to greet the attacking platoon. After a few minutes of joking and horseplay, the platoon leader issued a few administrative orders and everyone sat around waiting the cadre officer to deliver the critique of the exercises.

The platoon involved in the attack was comprised of the juniors taking advanced ROTC at the University. The enemy were a few seniors who fired blank ammunition as a part of the field problem.

THE ROTC department conducts these practice tactics classes to prepare juniors for their six weeks in summer camp at Fort Lewis. Another, and more important, reason is that through the Thursday afternoon practice maneuvers the officers-to-be can get a general idea of the problems in leading and controlling troops in combat situations.

In order to do this, as many realistic details as possible are incorporated. The students wear combat fatigue clothes, carry rifles and machine-guns and are organized into the regulation chain-of-command units. The terrain, south of Eugene, is wooded and in many parts no buildings are visible except for an occasional barn.

OF COURSE it is impossible to simulate actual combat, and the military department does not hope for this end. Only a limited amount of equipment is available. For example, it is impossible to bring down a "simulated" mortar barrage; real mortars kill and the only alternative is to pretend. Even blank ammunition must be carefully supervised, for it is lethal at a range of 20 feet. And probably most important of all, it is impossible to simulate fear.

But the purpose of the field training sessions is, as one of the cadre officers put it, "only to give you an idea of how hard it can be to try to control a platoon." The field exercises provide the best opportunity outside of actual combat for practicing the theories learned in the classroom. Concepts that seem elementary and ridiculously simple in class somehow become brain-torturing problems of inextricable intricacy in the field.

IN ADDITION to seeing the difficulties of controlling a platoon, cadets can learn a number of other situations that face a soldier in combat.

For one thing, hardly anyone sees his enemy. Thursday afternoon the platoon was fired upon by a sniper as it advanced toward the objective. Because the platoon was widely dispersed, many only heard the gunfire without ever seeing the sniper. When finally the sniper was silenced, this correspondent was surprised to see that the enemy was only a little over 100 feet from where I lay. Later, when the assault was launched against the objective, the seniors could not be seen until the platoon had almost overrun their position.

ANOTHER LESSON taught on Thursday afternoons is that na-



JUST BEFORE THE ATTACK begins, the platoon leader holds a conference with his squad leaders and issues final instructions.

ture is not always inclined to cooperate with soldiers. The grass in front of the objective was high enough to slow men down as they approached the objective. It was also high enough to conceal branches and holes in the ground as well as sloppy little puddles that made walking upright somewhat challenging. And when it was necessary to hit the dirt, one discovered that the only things in view were several hundred blades of grass and the visor of his helmet. For variety there were sometimes bugs and water-dogs, but not everyone was fortunate enough to run into these natural diversions.

ON THIS particular day (and by coincidence, on every other particular day) everything was wet, especially the cadets. One of them observed that "you don't even bother trying to keep dry. You just feel lucky when you accidentally go through a spot where the water isn't over your boot soles."

Another phenomena that becomes quite apparent even to the most hopelessly obtuse is that M-1's gain weight proportionate to the distance they are carried. And men grow tired. There are times when the decision to walk another hundred feet seems only an optimistic wish. Despite this, the foot soldier has been called the most mobile weapon on the battlefield. He needs no spare parts, only a minimum of maintenance, and can somehow always summon the strength to go a few more yards.

BUT PROBABLY the strongest impression of all is the confusion that oozes over a battlefield like molasses. The simplest orders can be misunderstood and the most

obvious solution to a problem can be overlooked. In the critique held immediately after the exercise one of the cadre officers said that "everyone's a college man and thinks his idea's a little better." Consequently orders get different interpretations as they pass down the chain-of-command. And though initiative in a soldier is desirable, there is such a thing as too much initiative. Thursday afternoon theoretical Pfc's ended up giving orders not only to other Pfc's in their squad, but to Pfc's in other squads as well.

EVERYTHING in general went wrong. The platoon leader sadly mentioned that he had been killed seven or eight times. The cadre sergeants, who acted as referees, noted that the platoon had been wiped out about three times.

But the mistakes everyone made were more helpful as lessons than the successes. In the critique, one of the officers said he was "glad things happened the way they did, because one thing that is always true is that something is always bound to go wrong. If everyone had done everything right, no one would have learned anything."

THE LESSONS learned Thursday were not great revelations to anyone; it is doubtful that anyone was surprised by anything, except possibly by the fact that no one broke his ankle in the pot-holes. The important thing was that the cadets were made aware by personal experience of some of the things that could possibly happen to them when they must lead real soldiers in a real combat situation. Certainly they are not crack troops after three hour's practice every Thursday

Sigma Delta Chi initiates students

Sigma Delta Chi, men's professional journalism fraternity, initiated six new members into the Oregon chapter Thursday. They were James Boyd, Kernan Turner, Tong Suhr, Jonathan Marshall, John Simpson and Keith Powell.

ONE CANDIDATE for admission, Gary Sala, was unable to be present, and will be initiated

afternoon; but, should they ever be involved in a war, they will never live to be even adequate troops without the kind of training provided on Thursday afternoons.

Sigma Delta Chi is a professional organization for men in the news-editorial field of journalism. The group holds bi-monthly luncheon meetings where guest speakers from the professional world of journalism are speakers.

THE NEXT meeting will be held Tuesday at noon when Warren Price, acting dean of the School of Journalism, will talk on his Washington, D.C. trip where he was awarded the Sigma Delta Chi award for journalism research.

Professor John Hulteng is the chapter adviser.



EUROPE MADE SIMPLE: NO. 2

Last week we discussed England, the first stop on the tour of Europe that every American college student is going to make this summer. Today we will discuss your next stop, France—or the Pearl of the Pacific, as it is generally called.

To get from England to France, one greases one's body and swims the English Channel. Similarly, to get from France to Spain, one greases one's body and slides down the Pyrenees. As you can see, the most important single item to take to Europe is a valise full of grease.

No, I am wrong. The most important single item to take to Europe is a valise full of Marlboro Cigarettes. Oh, what a piece of work is Marlboro! If you think flavor went out when filters came in, treat yourself to a Marlboro. The filter works perfectly, and yet you get the full, zestful, edifying taste of the choice tobaccos that precede the filter. This remarkable feat of cigarette engineering was achieved by Marlboro's research team—Fred Softpack and Walter Fliptop—and I, for one, am grateful.

But I digress. We were speaking of France—or the Serpent of the Nile, as it is popularly termed.

First let us briefly sum up the history of France. The nation was discovered in 1492 by Madame Guillotine. There followed a series of costly wars with Schleswig-Holstein, the Cleveland Indians, and Captain Dreyfus. Stability finally came to this troubled land with the coronation of Marshal Foch, who married Lorraine Alsace and had three children: Flopsy, Mopsy, and Charlemagne. This later became known as the Petit Trianon.



Most Frenchmen were able to walk under Card Tables...

Marshal Foch—or the Boy Orator of the Platte, as he was affectionately called—was succeeded by Napoleon who introduced shortness to France. Until Napoleon, the French were the tallest nation in Europe. After Napoleon, most Frenchmen were able to walk comfortably under card tables. This later became known as the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

Napoleon was finally exiled to Elba where he made the famous statement, "Able was I ere I saw Elba," which reads the same whether you spell it forwards or backwards. You can also spell Marlboro backwards—Orobrom. Do not, however, try to smoke Marlboro backwards because that undoes all the efficacy of the great Marlboro filter.

After Napoleon's death the French people fell into a great depression, known as the Louisiana Purchase. For over a century everybody sat around moping and refusing his food. This torpor was not lifted until Eiffel built his famous tower, which made everybody giggle so hard that today France is the gayest country in all Europe.

Each night the colorful natives gather at sidewalk cafes and shout "Oo-la-la" as Maurice Chevalier promenades down the Champs Elysees swinging his Malacca cane. Then, tired but happy, everyone goes to the Louvre for bowls of onion soup.

The principal industry of France is cashing travelers checks.

Well sir, I guess that's all you need to know about France. Next week we'll visit the Land of the Midnight Sun—Spain.

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Next week, this week, every week, the best of the filter cigarettes is Marlboro, the best of the non-filters is Philip Morris; both available in soft pack or flip-top box.

TREAT TIME

IF YOU WERE . . .

Sitting in the stands during the bottom of the ninth inning, with the score tied, two on and Willie Mays coming to bat, what would you do? You should get right up and proceed immediately to Taco Time because any time is Taco Time.

TACO TIME

TACO TIME

13th & HIGH