

Training In Asia Different

By SFC RICH LAMANCE
Southern Thailand—The life of an infantryman means long hours on foot, carrying a backbreaking load, using only his wits, and months and months of seemingly endless training to be good at what he does.

But for a Charlotte man, infantry duty took on a different twist in these Southeast Asian jungles where dodging cobras and other poisonous snakes, scorpions, tigers, elephants and torrential monsoon rains made training a little more interesting.

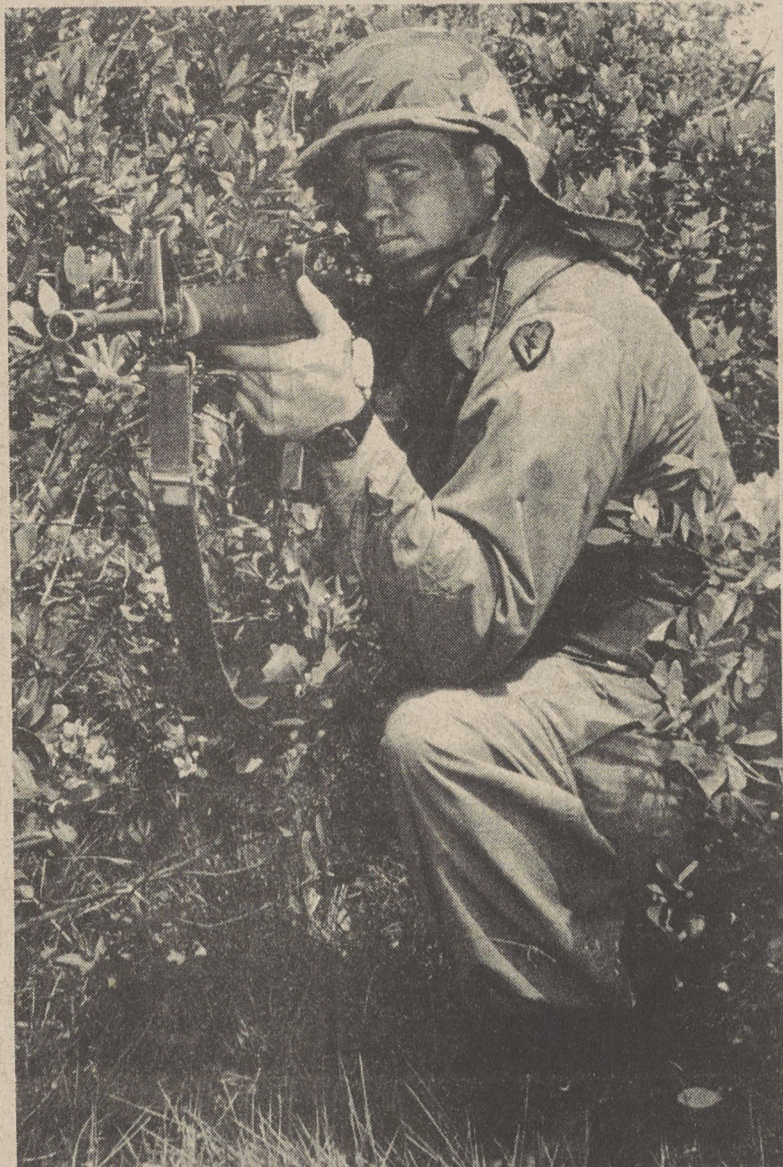
Army Sgt. James E. Blackwelder Jr., son of James E. and Barbara R. Blackwelder, 414 Rutland Drive, is a member of the Hawaii-based 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, of the 25th Infantry Division, that travelled to Thailand for a month-long exercise to train with members of the Royal Thai Army and exchange infantry tactics that would benefit both forces.

"The training I've received here is the same as I would receive anywhere with movements to contact, ambushes, raids and airmobile operations," explained Blackwelder. "The differences are the terrain and the fact that we're able to train with the Thai army."

"The heat and humidity have really caused problems for our troops. It doesn't seem to affect the Thai soldiers the way it does the Americans."

"I've noticed that there are some very basic differences between our two armies. They are taught by repetition of doing the same thing over and over until they know it by heart. The U.S. Army stresses independent reaction to different situations. Both sides have their good points."

"The wildlife is something else over here," marveled



Army Sgt. James E. Blackwelder Jr. of Charlotte uses jungle tactics during a military exercise played out in the jungles of southern Thailand recently. Blackwelder is an infantryman with the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, based in Hawaii.

Blackwelder. "I have seen more snakes in the last couple of weeks than I have seen in my entire life. The ants will eat you alive and the bees are killers. I ought to know; I stepped on a bees' nest and had to be medically evacuated out of the field. I still jump at the sight of a bee. Overall, it's been an excellent experience, though."

Whether a veteran of other Asian training exercises or a newcomer to the sights and sounds of the orient, all soldiers came away from Thailand with indelible impressions of the Thai people and their land and culture.

"The thing that caught my attention about the Thai people is their living conditions. They live in thatched huts made of whatever they can

find such as grass, logs, boards, rock, whatever. They drink water that I wouldn't wash my clothes in, but surprisingly, they seem happy and content."

"Whenever we pass by, they give us bananas, coconuts, or whatever they have to share. They are friendly beyond a fault."

Blackwelder is no newcomer to military exercises having travelled to such exotic Pacific countries as New Zealand and Korea, in addition to Thailand.

He is a 1973 graduate of Olympic High School, Charlotte.

He and his wife, Bertha, have three children: James, 9; Connor, 6; and Jacob, nearly a year.

McGaha Completes Basic

Airman Jeffery N. McGaha, son of Roger N. and Gail L. McGaha of 2416 Essen Lane, Gastonia, N.C., has completed Air Force basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

The airman, who is remain-

ing at Lackland for specialized training in the security police field, studied the Air Force mission, organization and customs and received special instruction in human relations.

Completion of this training

earned the individual credits toward an associate degree in applied science through the Community College of the Air Force.

He is a 1984 graduate of North Gaston High School, Gastonia.

Wanda Scism In Germany

Army Pvt. Wanda K. Scism, daughter of Sharon D. and Kent Scism of 204 New Orleans Blvd., Heritage E., Morganton, N.C., has arrived for duty in West Germany.

Scism, a flight operations coordinator with the Mainz Military Community, was previously assigned at Fort Rucker, Ala.

Her grandparents, Maude B. and Ralph F. Scism, reside on Route 10, Cherryville, N.C.

She is a 1984 graduate of Freedom High School, Morganton.




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Fortune Attends Academy

Army National Guard Master Sgt. Maurice P. Fortune, Jr., son of Mary V. Fortune of 2308 Pineview Drive, Richmond, Va., has been graduated from the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.

The Sergeants Major Academy is the highest level

of the Army's non-commissioned officer (NCO) education system. The 22-week course prepares selected NCOs for positions of greater responsibility.

Students receive instruction on such topics as small group communications, the Army's enlisted personnel

management system, resource management and U.S. foreign policy.

Selection for attendance at the academy is made by a Department of the Army board from among NCOs with fewer than 23 years of service who have demonstrated the highest standards of performance and job proficiency.

Fortune will now serve in Richmond, Va.

His wife, Regina, is the daughter of Carl F. Wilson of 4641 Grier St., Gastonia, N.C.

He is a 1970 graduate of Belmont Abbey College, N.C.

Cornwell Has Leadership Training At Fort Bragg

Cadet Michael C. Cornwell, son of Paul R. and Kay M. Suman of Rural Route 1, Kings Mountain, received practical work in military leadership at the U.S. Army ROTC advanced camp, Fort Bragg, N.C.

The six-week camp, attended by cadets normally between their third and fourth year of college, includes in-

struction in communications, management and survival training.

Successful completion of the advanced camp and graduation from college results in a commission as a second lieutenant in either the U.S. Army, Army Reserve or National Guard for the cadet.

Robert Ramseur Graduates Army Services Staff School

Army Capt. Robert L. Ramseur, son of Robert P. and Pauline M. Ramseur of Rural Route 2, Bessemer City, has graduated from the Army's Combined Arms and Services Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

The cornerstone of the Army's officer education system, the nine week course is designed to train officers in the skills needed to be an ef-

fective staff members with the force in the field.


The curriculum included preparing a command budget, setting up training programs, mobilizing and deploying mock units and giving staff presentations.

Ramseur is scheduled to serve with the 5th Infantry Division at Fort Polk, La.

He is a 1977 graduate of Appalachian State, Boone, N.C.

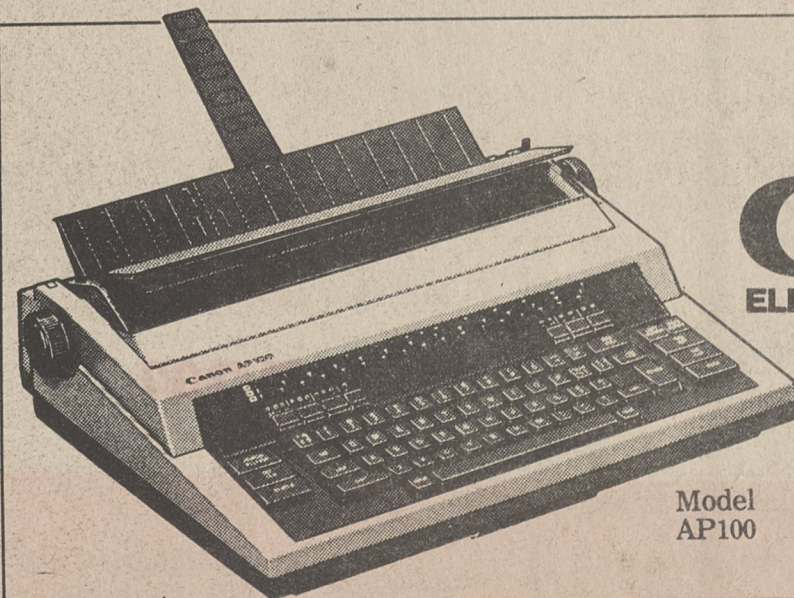


The soil carried down and spread out at the mouth of a river is called a delta because its triangular shape resembles the 4th letter of the Greek alphabet called Delta.



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