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MARINE CORPS GROUND TRAINING

IN WORLD WAR II

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## PREFACE

This study of Marine Corps ground training in World War II has been prepared by the Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps, at the direction of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3. Beginning with President Roosevelt's declaration of a limited national emergency on 8 September 1939, it covers the training activities in both the short-of-war period and during the war itself.

The authors have examined all available records pertaining to training during the World War II period. They have also made an extensive circulation of chapter drafts to key participants. From these two sources a great deal of valuable information has been obtained, but gaps which were discovered in the written record could not be entirely closed by the comments in response to circulated drafts. Only the records of Headquarters Marine Corps and of Marine Corps Schools were available. For information concerning the training activities of other establishments, the authors have had to rely on copies of correspondence in the files of Headquarters Marine Corps.

In view of these deficiencies, it was realized that a truly comprehensive history of Marine Corps ground training could not be written. It was decided instead to prepare this group of studies, covering those phases of training for which there is sufficient documentation to assure reasonably complete and accurate treatment.

It is believed that the experience recorded here will be of value to those in the Marine Corps who are charged with planning for training in the event of a future national emergency.



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PART I

OPERATIONS SHORT OF WAR

8 SEPTEMBER 1939 TO 7 DECEMBER 1941

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## Chapter 1

### THE SHORT-OF-WAR PERIOD

World War II was two years and three months old before the United States formally entered the struggle against the Axis Powers. But the declarations of war did not project the nation directly from a state of isolation and indifference into active belligerency. For the United States had been gradually drawn deeper and deeper into "short-of-war" operations in support of Britain since the beginning of hostilities in Europe in 1939. As the rising tide of Nazi aggression inundated more and more of the Old World and sent out waves to lap at the shores of the New, Americans gradually awakened to their peril. They took the first steps toward rearmament.

In the fall of 1939 the United States armed forces were not even adequate for the defense of the western hemisphere.<sup>1</sup> The outbreak of war in Europe did little to arouse the American people to the need for rearmament, and the lull in operations during the winter of 1939-40

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(1) For a detailed treatment of the "short-of-war" period, see Samuel E. Morison, History of United States Naval Operations in World War II: Vol. I, The Battle of the Atlantic, and Vol. III, Rising Sun in the Pacific (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1947 and 1948); William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953); and Stetson Conn and Byron Fairchild, "The Framework of Hemisphere Defense" (MS in Office of the Chief of Military History, to be included in The United States Army in World War II).

seemed to justify the popular attitude. It was not until the Germans overran Denmark, Norway, the Low Countries, and France, in the spring of 1940 that Americans were jolted from their complacency. They saw the buffer of French land power and British sea power which had insulated them from Europe crumbling before their eyes.

It was clear that the United States would have to replace the buffer with its own military strength. During the summer and fall of 1940, Congress stepped up the procurement of aircraft, launched the two-ocean navy building program, called reserves to active duty, and passed the selective service act. To gain time for the mobilization of industry and manpower, the administration came to the aid of the British by trading 50 overage destroyers for the lease of bases on British possessions and by the passage of the lend-lease act.

The fall of France also raised the possibility that her possessions in the New World would fall into German hands. Diplomatic negotiations were successful in neutralizing these territories, but the administration considered the situation so serious that it alerted an expeditionary force to seize Martinique, the most important of the French possessions in the West Indies.

During the winter and spring of 1941, the Nazi tide surged even higher. German armies overran Yugoslavia and Greece. With the aid of the Italians, who had entered the war after the fall of France, they drove the

British across Libya in full retreat towards the Egyptian frontier. In the Atlantic, submarine wolf packs took an ever increasing toll of merchant shipping, extending their activities farther and farther into western hemisphere waters. To President Roosevelt, the danger of Nazi attack upon the western hemisphere was very real. In May, he warned that the United States would resist by force any German attempt to occupy bases which threatened the security of the Americas. An expeditionary force was organized to occupy the Azores, but it was diverted at the last moment to Iceland.

The occupation of Iceland, an important covering position on the Atlantic convoy route, resulted in the United States taking a long step closer to actual war with Germany. British merchant ships were permitted to join Iceland supply convoys escorted by the U. S. Navy. And on 4 September the inevitable happened when a German U-boat fired on an American destroyer. From then on, the United States was engaged in a de facto naval war with Germany in the Atlantic.

During these fateful days, American statesmen and military leaders could not avoid the fact that the dangers confronting their country were world-wide. Asia, as well as Europe, was in turmoil. Since 1937, Japan had been engaged in an undeclared war against Nationalist China and had been, with increasing effrontery, challenging the Far East position of the United States and of the European colonial powers.

Underlying the Japanese policy of aggression was the determination of the ultra-nationalist army group to carve out a larger empire for Japan in East Asia. By the summer of 1940, the militarists were firmly in control of the government. In August, they wrested from a defeated France the right to occupy Indo-China. Then, on 27 September, they concluded a nonaggression pact with Germany and Japan. Thus the two danger areas were tied together, and American leaders were faced with the danger of concerted action in Europe and Asia.

The Nazi danger was considered to be the more serious, so the priority for whatever measures the United States was able to take were directed against Germany and Italy. In the Pacific, the policy arrived at in the fall of 1940 was to stave off hostilities with Japan as long as possible and to avoid any extensive military commitments which would tie down the nearer American forces in a theater considered of secondary importance. In response to the tripartite pact, President Roosevelt directed that the U. S. Fleet be based at Pearl Harbor, ordered an embargo on the shipment of oil, iron and steel scrap to Japan, and sent small reinforcements to the Philippines and other of our Pacific possessions.

Far from being deterred, the Japanese determined to take whatever measures they considered necessary to achieve their goals. Failing in a last diplomatic effort,

they turned to military means. On 7 December, the attack on Pearl Harbor ended the short-of-war period and brought the United States into World War II as a full participant.

The Marine Corps had played a vital role in the events of the past 27 months. In both the Martinique and Azores operation plans, Marines were designated as the landing force. They constituted the first American garrison in Iceland, and stood guard at the Pacific outposts at Palmyra, Johnston, Midway, Wake, and Guam islands.

At the beginning of the short-of-war period, however, the Marine Corps was far from ready to carry out the commitments it would soon be called upon to assume. Total strength was only 18,070 officers and men. On 8 September 1939 President Roosevelt, sensing the popular sentiment against rearmament, authorized an initial increase of only 6,000, bringing the total authorized strength to 25,000. The Marine Corps achieved this figure by the assigned target date of 30 June 1940 only to be confronted with the necessity of a further increase. Under the mobilization program resulting from the crisis precipitated by the fall of France, the Marine Corps was authorized a strength of 45,758 for the fiscal year 1941 and a further increase to 79,290 for the following fiscal year.

Supplementing the additions to the regular Marine Corps, was the mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve,

which brought an additional 15,927 to the active duty rolls. On 15 October 1940, general mobilization orders were issued to all reserve battalions. Ten days later, the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve, composed of enlisted men honorably discharged after 16 or more years of service, was called back to the colors. The volunteer reserve, which included reservists not belonging to organized units, was ordered up in two groups, the first on 14 December 1940, and the second on 12 May 1941. These reservists, combined with regulars, gave the Marine Corps a total strength of 66,319 on 7 December 1941.<sup>2</sup>

The Marine Corps faced an expansion program ultimately calling for a 325% increase in size with few specific plans for the training of the additional personnel. It was necessary to improvise training procedures under the pressure of mobilization and to improve them by trial and error in order to achieve the goal of preparedness for amphibious operations.

Since the turn of the century, Marines had shown an increasing interest in amphibious warfare.<sup>3</sup> In 1927, the Marine Corps was assigned this subject as its primary

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(2) Figures from Annual Reports of the Commandant to the Secretary of the Navy, fiscal years 1939-41, hereinafter cited as CMC Rpts.

(3) See Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl, The U. S. Marines and Amphibious War (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1951), 14-71, for an excellent account of these developments. Hereinafter cited as U. S. Marines and Amphibious War.

mission, but it was not until 1933 that it could concentrate on amphibious preparation. Before that date, the Marine Corps had been committed to "police" actions in China and the Caribbean, and, with many senior officers still under the influence of trench warfare it was not unanimous in support of the new doctrine. The Navy, whose cooperation was necessary for amphibious exercises, was busy preparing for surface fleet actions - a la Jutland.

The turning point in amphibious development came in 1933 with the creation of the Fleet Marine Force. Organized as a component of the fleet, its training became a matter of direct concern to the Navy. The Marine Corps was also in a better position to push amphibious preparedness, for the decision to recommend formation of the FMF followed the triumph of the amphibious-minded element within the Corps. In addition, with the withdrawal of the last Marines from Nicaragua in 1932 and from Haiti in 1934, the Marine Corps was no longer distracted from its amphibious mission by other commitments. Thus from 1933 to 1939, both Navy and Marine Corps prepared for amphibious warfare with a new seriousness of purpose.

Although the Marine Corps had accumulated considerable experience in amphibious training during these six years, the great expansion that occurred after 1939 created new problems inherent in the preparation of the

vastly larger amphibious forces for combat. The short-of-war period furnished the Marine Corps an opportunity to seek solutions to some of these training problems. Considerable progress was made towards their solution, so that the Marine Corps did not have to start "cold" when war was declared. The solution to training problems, the way these solutions were reached, and their success or failure are discussed in the chapters that follow.

## Chapter 2

### RECRUIT TRAINING

#### Peacetime Training

The foundation for all enlisted training in the Marine Corps on the eve of World War II was an eight-week period of rigorous training for all recruits. Every man entering the Marine Corps went first to one of the two recruit depots: Parris Island, South Carolina, or San Diego, California. Here he was introduced to the fundamentals of military life. He learned discipline, military courtesy, close order drill, and interior guard duty. He was given thorough physical conditioning to prepare him for the rigors of combat. He became intimately familiar with his rifle, mastering its mechanical functioning and firing it for record on the range. And he received elementary instruction in infantry combat subjects, including the digging of fox-holes, bayonet, grenades, chemical warfare, map reading, and basic squad combat principles.

\* The central recruit depot system, in which veteran officers and noncommissioned officers devoted all their energies to turning civilians into Marines, was thoroughly entrenched in the Marine Corps by 1939. Since 1911, when the Commandant, realizing that the old system of sending recruits to the nearest Marine barracks for training frequently resulted in inadequate instruction, directed

the concentration of recruit training in organizations specifically created for this purpose, all new Marines had received their initial instruction in one of the recruit depots.

The new system proved itself during World War I, when the Marine Corps expanded from about 15,000 to over 70,000 in a year and a half. In the years following the Armistice, recruit training procedures were brought to a high peak of efficiency. It was, therefore, no new and untried training system with which the Marine Corps entered the critical years of World War II.

#### Fall 1939: The Initial Expansion

President Roosevelt authorized an enlisted strength of 25,000 for the Marine Corps on 8 September 1939. The same day, the Commandant, hoping to achieve the newly authorized strength as rapidly as possible, sent dispatches to all recruiting divisions, lifting recruiting quotas until further notice. By February 1940, the goal had been reached. In five months, 7,000 new Marines had joined the Corps. By comparison, the total recruiting effort for the previous year had only been 5,861.<sup>1</sup>

So rapid a build up naturally placed a heavy strain on training facilities. To meet the goal, a drastic reduction in the length of the recruit training cycle was necessary. The eight weeks formerly allotted to the

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(1) MarCorps dispatches to MarRecruit, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and New Orleans, all 8Sep39, 1535-140. Unless otherwise noted, all documents are in General Files HQMC.

conversion of civilians into Marines was cut in half, so that new Marines entering the service during the first five months of the short-of-war period received only four weeks of recruit training.

Headquarters Marine Corps, foreseeing just such an emergency, had already prepared a four-week schedule. The Commandant had initiated action on a reduced program on 1 June 1939. On that date, he directed the commanding officers of the recruit depots to prepare emergency training schedules of only three weeks duration. Included in his directive, was a general outline for the shortened training schedule, calling for two weeks indoctrination and basic instruction in the school of the soldier, followed by a third week of weapons training. Care and use of rifle and pistol, instruction in grenades, hand and rifle, and, whenever practical, instruction or demonstration of other infantry weapons were to be included in the final week. Of necessity, the short course was intensive. Accordingly, every day, including Sunday, was a work day.<sup>2</sup>

Working within this framework, the staffs of the recruit depots prepared new training schedules. By 5 June, Headquarters Base Troops, Marine Corps Base, San Diego,

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(2) CMC ltr to CG MB PI and CG MCB SD, 1Jun39, 1975-60-20.

forwarded their proposals to Washington. Recruit Depot Parris Island, followed suit on 22 July.<sup>3</sup>

Three Weeks Training Schedule		Recruit Depot, Parris Island.
Major Subjects	Training Hours	
DRILL	71	
MUSKETRY	1½	
BAYONET TRAINING	3	
FIELD TRAINING*	28	
Tenting, First Aid, Hygiene, Marches, Scouting and Patrolling, etc.		
WEAPONS TRAINING	77	
BAR, rifle grenade, grenade, mortar, .45-cal. pistol, .30-cal. rifle, etc.		
<p>(*) Of necessity, an estimate; available records do not include a complete breakdown of the number of hours devoted to each subject, and often, training hours are not listed under the appropriate subject. The total number of training hours was 199; the above chart accounts for 191½ of the total.</p>		

From the outset, Colonel Miles R. Thacher, Commanding Officer, Base Troops, Marine Corps Base, San Diego, objected to the shortened course. He recommended continuing the eight week schedule in the event of war or emergency. Three weeks, in his view, were too short to give the necessary instruction. The longer course, on the other hand, provided enough time to give thorough instruction in military basics and the care and use of weapons.<sup>4</sup>

(3) CG BaseTrps MCB SD ltr to CMC, 5Jun39, 1975-60-20-10. CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 22Jul39, 1975-70.

(4) CO BaseTrps MCB SD ltr to CMC, 5Jun39, 1975-60-20-10. Parris Island submitted no recommendations.

Having had an opportunity to study the proposed emergency three weeks schedules and Colonel Thacher's recommendation, the Commandant modified his original program but did not accept the Colonel's recommendation, in toto. He requested that the recruit depots prepare new reduced schedules immediately. The Commandant granted the depots "the greatest discretion and initiative..." in drawing up the new schedules, with the following conditions: set aside Sunday for rest and recreation; increase the period of range instruction to nine days; add a fourth training week, scheduled after the firing on the range.<sup>5</sup>

These instructions were issued on 5 September. The depots began at once to draw up the new schedules, and not a moment too soon. Only three days later, President Roosevelt issued his declaration of limited national emergency, and the next day General Holcomb ordered the four week schedule into effect.<sup>6</sup> His purpose was to achieve the build-up to the newly authorized 25,000 enlisted strength as rapidly as possible.

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(5) CMC ltr to CG's, MB PI and MCB SD, 5Sep39, 1975-60-20.

(6) CMC ltr to CG's, MB PI and MCB SD, 9Sep39, 1975-60-20. Although effected immediately, the training schedules did not reach Headquarters until 15 September. (CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 15Sep39, 1975-70) and 30 September (CG MCB SD ltr to CMC, 30Sep39, 1975-60).

Four Weeks Training Schedule : Recruit Depot,  
Parris Island.

Major Subjects	Hours*
Indoctrination and Military Courtesy	7
Bayonet Training	5
Drill	41
Interior Guard	6
Field Training	34
Including: First Aid, Hygiene, Combat Exercises, Tenting, Scouting and Patrolling, etc.	
Marches	16
Rifle Range Period	70

(\* ) Of course, this sample doesn't account for total hours; administrative, clothes issue, physical training, etc., are not included.

The effort to achieve quantity output by reducing training time resulted in a drastic decline in the quality of the finished product. Within a month after the four week schedule was put into effect, Brigadier General Edward A. Ostermann, the Adjutant and Inspector, reported a decline in rifle range qualifications of as much as 25 per cent.

Parris Island's percentage of qualified riflemen dropped from 48 to a low of 25; San Diego reported a drop of 25 per cent from a high of 92 to 67.<sup>7</sup>

(7) Adjutant and Inspector (hereinafter cited as A&I) memo to CMC, 7Oct39, 1975-60-30-10.

General Ostermann was most concerned with the decrease in rifle qualifications, but he was also worried by the greatly inferior record of Parris Island. He felt that the discrepancy in rifle range qualifications between the two depots could be explained by the inexperience of range officers at Parris Island and by the fact that 60 hours were scheduled for rifle and pistol at San Diego, compared to only 30 at Parris Island.

The general approved San Diego's apportionment of training hours. He was convinced that while it was desirable to provide training with mortar, machine gun, and BAR, rifle and pistol marksmanship merited considerably more time, even at the sacrifice of other training. As long as it was necessary to operate under reduced schedules, rifle and pistol marksmanship should be stressed at the recruit depot and instruction in other weapons deferred until after recruit training. Parris Island could raise its scores and qualification percentages by increasing the number of hours in rifle marksmanship and, of course, by obtaining additional experienced range personnel.<sup>8</sup>

The Commandant was also concerned over the poor results of rifle marksmanship training. On 17 October, he wrote the commanding generals at Parris Island and San Diego that he expected a higher percentage of

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(8) Ibid.

qualifications in the future.<sup>9</sup> As to the methods to achieve this, General Holcomb, in a subsequent letter, indicated that the commanding generals were the best judges of what should be done at their respective commands. However, he did suggest that the total hours of marksmanship training be increased, and some time be devoted to demonstrations of other infantry weapons. The four week schedule was to continue for the time being.<sup>10</sup>

#### Training During 1940

By the end of January 1940, Marine enlisted strength reached the 25,000 mark. With the attainment of the authorized personnel figure, recruiting was reduced to a number sufficient to maintain the Marine Corps at its existing size. The pressure of expansion was for the moment removed, and it was possible to lengthen the period of recruit training.<sup>11</sup> On 26 January 1940, the Commandant directed the recruit depots to increase their courses to six weeks for all personnel enlisted after 10 February.<sup>12</sup>

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(9) CMC ltr to CG MB PI and CG MCB SD, 17Oct39, 1975-60-20-10.

(10) CMC ltr to CO BaseTrps MCB SD, 16Nov39, 1975-60-20.

(11) Dir, Div of Plans and Policies memo 6930 to CMC, 26Jan40, 1975-60-20-10. Staff recommendations by the Div of Plans and Policies were forwarded to the CMC as numbered memoranda. They are hereinafter cited as P&P memo (with appropriate number).

(12) CMC ltr to CG MB PI and CG MCB SD, 26Jan40, 1975-60-20-10.

Six Weeks Training Schedule: Recruit Depot, Parris Island.	
1st, 2d, and 6th Weeks*	
Major Subjects	Hours
Drill	45
Indoctrination and Military Courtesy	8
Interior Guard	7
Bayonet Training	6½
Inspections	3
Review of Instruction	4
Field Training	36
Includes: Marches, Scouting Patrolling, Tenting, First Aid, Sanitation, Chemical Warfare, Combat Principles, etc.	
(*) 13th - 30th days conducted on range; includes: instruction, demonstrations, fires, with grenade, rifle grenade, .22-cal. rifle, .30-cal. rifle, .45- cal. pistol, BAR, machine gun. No training-hour breakdown available.	

In March 1940, the Commandant reviewed the results obtained with the six week schedules. He was particularly concerned about the number of hours of actual training as contrasted with the total number of hours provided in the training schedule.<sup>13</sup> Early in March, he wrote the Commanding General, MB, San Diego and requested the following information:

(13) The CMC had directed both CG's to avail themselves of whatever variations in scheduling they considered applicable to execute the recruit training program, in accordance with the basic precepts and requirements for recruit training.

1. How long after a recruit arrives at the recruit depot is it before
  - (a) he receives a physical and dental examination?
  - (b) he is issued uniforms, post exchange supplies, and his 782 equipment?
2. Does the schedule provide for the time necessary to complete the above prior to initiating the training program?
3. Considering the situation as it existed prior to September 1939, what was the average length of time elapsed?
  - (a) between the time of arrival of the first recruit and the organization of the platoon to which he was assigned?
  - (b) until he was assigned to the regular service?
4. What police work was required of the recruits
  - (a) while awaiting assignment to a recruit platoon?
  - (b) after assignment to a platoon?
  - (c) from time platoon completes training until recruit is assigned to regular service?
5. From what source are messmen for the depot obtained?
6. Are recruits receiving training required to perform mess details at the base or on the range?<sup>14</sup>

Colonel Thacher provided the requested information.<sup>15</sup>

1. Medical and dental examinations are conducted on the morning following the recruits' arrival at the depot; uniforms and post exchange gear are issued that same afternoon. Upon formation of the platoon (almost without exception, 48 men), 782 gear is issued.
2. The above details were completed prior to the commencement of the training schedule.

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(14) CMC ltr to CG MCB SD, 6Mar40, 1975-60-20.

(15) CO BaseTrps MCB SD ltr to CMC, 12Mar40, 1975.

3. The time elapsed between the time of arrival of the first recruit and the organization of the platoon averaged six days; the time elapsed between date of arrival and completion of training through to date of assignment averaged 48 days.
4. Concerning police details, the policy at San Diego was to require recruits to clean and maintain their squadrooms, toilets, and washrooms while awaiting assignment; after assignment to platoons, the recruits continue the above duties; and while awaiting transfer, they perform the same duties.
- 5&6. Recruits awaiting transfer to points outside the base and recruits held at the depot are used to perform duty as messmen at the depot. However, recruits under training are not used to perform mess at the MCB or the range.

Apparently satisfied with Colonel Thatcher's reply, the Commandant turned to Parris Island. On 27 March 1940, he informed the Commanding General that recruits should not perform any labor other than policing their own quarters and surroundings prior to completion of recruit training. They were not to augment the messmen's force or perform other labor except in emergencies.<sup>16</sup>

Major General J. C. Breckinridge, Commanding General, MB, Parris Island, replied to General Holcomb's letter on 5 April. He maintained that a break in the training sequence for mess and fatigue details provided a period of relief during an intensive program. Deferring mess and fatigue details until after the completion of training usually resulted in the transfer of recruits who

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(16) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 27Mar40, 1975-60-20. Parris Island's training schedule, dtd 16Feb40, revealed that recruits were required to perform post maintenance work.

had recently come off the range, with a break of more than three weeks in their last field and/or drill instruction.<sup>17</sup>

The Commandant also wanted to know more about the difference between the two depots' systems of range scheduling. A comparison of these schedules indicated that at San Diego the first three weeks were conducted at the base and the last at the range, while Parris Island scheduled the first two weeks at the depot, the following three at the range, and the sixth week back at the depot. The system employed at Parris Island offered certain obvious advantages, particularly in that the last week was used to review, in part, the training of the first two. In view of this, what advantages accrued from San Diego's scheduling?<sup>18</sup>

Colonel Thacher explained that, by providing a longer initial period of depot instruction, the recruit was afforded more time to make the adjustment to military life.<sup>19</sup>

Apparently convinced of the superiority of San Diego scheduling, the Commandant directed the Commanding General, Parris Island, to provide three weeks depot training prior

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(17) CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 5Apr40, 1975-70.

(18) CMC ltr to CG MCB SD, 6Mar40, 1975-60-20.

(19) CO HqBaseTrps MCB SD ltr to CMC, 12Mar40, 1975.

to range instruction.<sup>20</sup> General Breckinridge firmly opposed the change. He pointed out that men coming off the range needed a week of drill and field training to bring them back to the peak they had reached prior to range training.<sup>21</sup>

These marked differences in the procedures of the two recruit depots called for resolution by the Commandant. After thorough study within the Division of Plans and Policies, Colonel Larsen, the director, submitted a series of proposals to General Holcomb.<sup>22</sup> He noted that in the past a minimum of three weeks basic training was required prior to transferring recruits to the rifle range; and a minimum of three weeks on the range was necessary to transform the recruit into a rudimentarily trained rifleman. In addition, another week, preferably two, was scheduled to review the initial three weeks instruction.

The current six weeks schedule did not provide adequate time to complete instruction in the basic subjects for duties performed in the general service. Particularly neglected was the subject of marches and march discipline, fundamentals in the training of the infantryman.

Colonel Larsen recommended an increase in the length of the training schedule to provide for one week of

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(20) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 27Mar40, 1975-60-20.

(21) CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 5Apr40, 1875-70.

(22) P&P memo 7053, 16Apr40, 1975-60-20-10.

training after completion of range instruction. Since the present flow of recruits was sufficient to maintain the Corps' authorized strength, an addition of one week would not seriously inconvenience the program, nor decrease the volume.

General Holcomb concurred, and, within short order, both depots were on the new schedules.<sup>23</sup> By early May 1940 the Commandant had received and approved the new seven week schedules.<sup>24</sup>

Seven Weeks Training, Recruit Depot, Schedule San Diego.*	
Major Subject Breakdown	Training Hours**
Physical Training	10½
Drill	44
Interior Guard	9
Guard	2
Military Courtesy	3
Bayonet Instruction	8
Musketry	2
Rifle Instruction	3
Field Training	72
Including: Patrolling, Scouting, Hikes, Marches, Signals, First Aid, Chemical Warfare, Cover and Concealment, Combat Principles.	
(*) 1st-18th days at depot, 19th-36th at range, and 37th-42d at depot.	
(**) Unfortunately, the schedule did not include a breakdown of range instruction hours. (1Dec41, 7 wks schd1, RD, MCB, SD, 1975-60-20-10.)	

(23) CMC ltr to CG MCB SD, and CG MB PI, 16Apr40, 1975-70.

(24) CO RD MCB SD ltr to CMC, 27Apr40, 1975-10, appvd by CMC, 6May40, 1975-60-20-10. CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 10May40 1975-70, appvd by CMC, 20May40, 1975-60-20-10.

With regard to the differences in rifle range scheduling between the two depots, the Commandant ruled in favor of Parris Island. The seven week schedule called for an initial three weeks at the depot, then three weeks at the rifle range, and a final week at the depot.<sup>25</sup>

Interim Recruit Depot - Quantico, Fall 1940

On 11 August 1940 the Marine Corps base at Parris Island was severely damaged by a hurricane. While salvage operations were underway, it was necessary to suspend all other activities, including training at the recruit depot. This posed an immediate problem for Headquarters since some 800 newly enlisted Marines were scheduled to report shortly to Parris Island to begin recruit training after induction at east coast stations. Since San Diego's depot was operating at full capacity, and the cost of transcontinental shipment was prohibitive, Headquarters decided to organize a temporary recruit depot at Quantico. The necessary space was available, and range facilities were adequate. And since these recruits, for the most part, were slated to join the First Marine Brigade, FMF, at Quantico, the Brigade was designated as training agent.<sup>26</sup>

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(25) Ibid.

(26) Unless otherwise cited, this section is documented by CO RD 5th Marines rpt to CG 1stMarBrig, via CO 5th Marines, dtd 30Sep40, 1975-60-20-10.

The Commanding General, 1st Marine Brigade, Brigadier General Holland M. Smith, ordered the Commanding Officer, 5th Marines, Colonel Alfred H. Noble, to establish the necessary organization. On 14 August the newly designated Recruit Depot, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Brigade, FMF, came into being.<sup>27</sup>

Acting with celerity, Colonel Noble called his battalion commanders and their executive officers to a conference at 1300 that afternoon to discuss the problems attendant to the establishment of a recruit depot. The de jure organization became de facto later that afternoon when Colonel Noble transferred six officers and 92 enlisted men to the depot and designated Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr., (formerly, Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines) as Commanding Officer, Recruit Depot.<sup>28</sup> At 1630 that afternoon, officers and selected key noncommissioned officers met with Colonel Kilmartin and prepared a plan for effecting the immediate organization and operation of the depot to receive recruits the following morning.

On the morning of 15 August the first contingent of recruits arrived at the Quantico railroad station and were met by drill instructor groups, who guided the new Marines to the Recruit Depot where they were processed prior to commencing training.

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(27) Authorized by CG 1stMarBrig, GO 12-40, and 5th Marines, GO 4.40, both dtd 14Aug40, 1975-40-20-10.

(28) 5th Marines SO 37040, dtd 14Aug40, 1975-60-20-10.

Three hundred and seventy-six men had reported to the training area by the 17th.<sup>29</sup> While the majority of this group was being processed, the first increment, formed into the first and second platoons, initiated the training schedule. From the start it was evident that the schedule was in serious competition with the calendar. Since the majority of the recruits were slated to join the 1st Marine Brigade prior to its movement to Guantanamo, Cuba, their training had to be completed before the brigade movement. To complicate the situation further, the depot was ordered to close 30 September to make room for the First Reserve Officers' Class which was scheduled to open on 1 October.

Obviously, all the platoons could not complete the schedule, which provided for a total of 27 training days: 13 days field training, 12 days range training, followed by two additional days of field training. Accordingly, the depot's staff set up two minimum requirements: all recruits must fire the .30-caliber rifle course prior to departing Quantico; and since the majority was destined to serve with the overseas-bound 1st Marine Brigade, training in ship-to-shore movement and embarkation.

While the first two platoons successfully completed the original schedule, platoons 3-7 were the only other platoons to complete range training prior to the terminal date, 30 September. The depot staff decided that all

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(29) Each of the 18 recruit platoons was organized as soon as the requisite number of recruits arrived at Quantico.

personnel who did not receive range instruction before the depot's disbandment would return to the range after joining their new units, prior to the brigade's embarkation.

In the period from 15-28 August 1940, 855 recruits were formed into 17 platoons of 48 men each and one, the 18th, into a platoon of 37.<sup>30</sup> By 30 September, 821 of these recruits finished training and were transferred to other units: 418 to 5th Marines, 327 to other units of the Brigade, and the remaining 75 to Signal Detachment, MB, Quantico, for additional training. The balance, totaling 43, constituted attrition from fraudulent enlistments, summary courts-martial, and sickness.<sup>31</sup>

The Quantico project was concluded on 7 October. All platoons fired the range for instructional purposes and satisfied minimal field training requirements: platoons 8 through 18 fired the range during the week following the depot's disbandment.

Although this situation was not intended to simulate a national or wartime emergency, the parallel can not be avoided. It was obvious, as it had been in the fall of 1939, that while forced schedules could be accomplished under pressure, at least six weeks was minimal. And when time was available the addition of a seventh week was most desirable.<sup>32</sup>

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(30) Two reenlisted Marines were transferred without recruit training.

(31) CO RD 5th 1stMarBrig memo to CG 1stMarBrig, 30Sep40.

(32) CO 5th memo to CG Brig, 7Oct40, 1975-95-50/5.

Continued Expansion and Training Prior to Pearl Harbor

By mid-September 1940, Parris Island had recovered from the shock of the August hurricane and repaired the storm damage. Returning to normal operation, the recruit depot continued to take its share of incoming new Marines.<sup>33</sup> During fiscal 1941 (ending 30 June 1941), 19,084 regulars were enlisted; 9,987 trained at Parris Island, and 9,097 trained at San Diego.<sup>34</sup>

While the influx of these thousands of recruits created additional administrative and organization problems, by and large, these were resolved at the depot level. Despite continued shortages of experienced officers and noncommissioned officers, Headquarters did its best to support the enlarged training facilities. During the period 1940-41, Headquarters authorized periodic increases in the tables of organization for the training establishments and transferred additional instructor personnel to the recruit depots.<sup>35</sup>

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(33) CMC rpt, fiscal 1940. During fiscal 1940 13,114 men were enlisted; 11,059 were first enlistments, and, of this number, 5,397 trained at Parris Island and 5,662 at San Diego.

(34) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941. The November 1940 mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve added 5,009 enlisted men to the active duty muster rolls; since these men had received military training as members of organized units, they were not ordered to recruit depots. Interviews with Col W. W. Stickney (member 5thResBn, 1940) and Maj C. S. Nichols (with 5th Marines, 1940), 8Feb54.

(35) CMC ltr to CO RD MCB SD, 12Jun40. A&I memo to CMC, 24Jun40. CMC ltr to CG, DeptofPac, 30Jun40. A&I ltr to CO, BaseTrps MCB SD, 10Jun41. CMC ltr to CG PI, 27May41. (All documents in 2385/7).

However, Headquarters had still not succeeded achieving a uniformly high level of training. In the spring of 1941, a survey of recruit rifle scores indicated that the differences observed in the fall of 1939 between percentages of qualifications for Parris Island and San Diego still existed. Parris Island recruits continued to fire lower scores than those trained at San Diego.

Headquarters attributed this difference to the fact that the two depots operated their range programs along different lines. Parris Island transferred each recruit platoon to the range after completion of the 18th day of training, while San Diego moved recruits to the range weekly, on Saturdays. Since the period of range training averaged 15 days, and new platoons arrived daily, as many as 15 platoons converged on the Parris Island range at one time. As a result, the already hard-pressed range staff was forced to instruct 5, 7, 10, or possibly 15 platoons, each at a different phase of range training.

General Ostermann recommended that Parris Island revise its system immediately. By sending platoons to the range on a weekly or a twice-weekly schedule instead of daily, there would not be less than three nor more than six platoons on the range at one time. The range staff could then work with a smaller number of groups and devote more time to individual instruction. Under this system, Parris Island could expect appreciable increases in the number of qualifications and rival the success attained by San Diego.<sup>36</sup>

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(36) A&I memo to CMC, 1Apr41.

General Holcomb accepted the A&I's recommendation and requested General Breckinridge to consider the feasibility of adopting the weekly or semi-weekly range system at Parris Island.<sup>37</sup> General Breckinridge, after conferring with the Commanding Officer, Recruit Depot, and his staff, concluded the change would not appreciably improve conditions at the Parris Island range.

The present schedule provided for three weeks of recruit training prior to range instruction. Changing over to a new schedule would interrupt the smooth flow and increase the administrative load: i.e., revision of present schedules and additional record-keeping. By transferring recruits after depot training, the range staff handled a steady flow, and accordingly followed a uniform pattern of instruction; all recruits had the same number of pre-range training hours and continued through the range-phase as units rather than as individuals.

General Breckinridge's recommendations were favorably received at Headquarters. Colonel Charles D. Barrett, Colonel Larsen's successor as Director of Plans and Policies, recommended that the Commandant approve Parris Island's range program and approve the transfer of additional range personnel to Parris Island.<sup>38</sup>

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(37) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 7Apr41, 1975-60-20-10.

(38) CMC ltr to CG PI, 27May41, 2385/7-460. The Commandant authorized increases in MB PI table of organization to provide additional personnel for range and Service Co.

While each depot exacted the optimum from its mode of operation, it was obvious that the differences in operation were responsible for the contrasting degree of success each achieved. Accordingly, San Diego continued to enjoy higher scores and greater percentages of qualified riflemen.

During the remainder of the prewar period, Headquarters strived to adjust these differences in results, both by authorizing additional personnel and by suggesting various changes in Parris Island's mode of operation.

### Summing Up

During the period September 1939 - December 1941, over 42,000 newly enlisted Marines were trained at the two recruit depots.<sup>39</sup> Two things were demonstrated in this period of expansion. First, there were definite limits below which training time could not be reduced without creating serious inadequacies in the military skills of recruit depot graduates.

Second, variations in the training schedules had to be accepted as long as each depot did its own scheduling with no more than very general guidance from Headquarters. And as long as this was the case, there was not likely to be a uniformly high level of recruit training. A cursory review of the 27-month period indicates continued differences in the percentages of qualified recruits, and in the scores fired at both depots. In addition, despite Headquarters efforts to regulate the apportionment of training

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(39) Rough total compiled from CMC rpts, fiscal 1940-42. Of course, over 800 recruits were trained at Quantico in 1940.

hours - i.e., range scheduled hours as opposed to depot scheduled hours - there was a continued disparity in the operation of the two depots.

It remained for the actual commencement of hostilities, and the vastly expanded enlisted strength, to provide the stimuli required to overhaul the existing structure and method of operation.

## CHAPTER 3

### ENLISTED SPECIALIST TRAINING

The two years and three months beginning with the first declaration of limited national emergency on 8 September 1939 and ending with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, were critical ones for the development of specialist training in the Marine Corps. Under the peacetime conditions which prevailed before September 1939, the Marine Corps was stabilized both in size and composition. Specialist training policy called for training to be conducted as much as possible within the units. Formal schools were kept to the minimum.

With the gradual mobilization of the short-of-war period, demands for trained specialists required the acceleration of training. This was achieved by increasing the number of formal schools and by streamlining courses of instruction. By December 1941, the groundwork had been laid for a mass production system for training specialists. To meet the vastly increased demand for trained specialists following the declaration of war, it was only necessary to expand this system and modify it in detail.

#### The Peacetime Base - 30 June 1939

On the eve of the expansion caused by the outbreak of World War II in Europe, the Marine Corps specialist training system was a combination of various types of

Marine schools, supplemented by quotas in Army and Navy operated schools and civilian institutions. Courses were few and output was low, but they were adequate for the Marine Corps of 1939. With an actual strength of 18,070 on 30 June 1939, the types and quantities of specialists required were very small. The complex maintenance and supply organizations which had to be staffed after the Marine Corps expanded its striking force to division and corps size were not in existence, nor were the units which would maintain and operate the intricate electronics equipment soon to be introduced.

The specialist fields in which the Marine Corps conducted formal schools for enlisted men fell into two categories. The five schools in the communications field comprised one category, while the remaining schools (Armorer, Clerical, and Motor Transport) made up the other.<sup>1</sup>

The schools of the latter category were characterized chiefly by a subjective system for selecting students. Standards for admission to all these schools, except where minimum education was specified, were general, permitting the commanding officers of the units from which the students were drawn to interpret the standards rather freely, drawing upon their knowledge of individual applicants.

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(1) There is not sufficient information about the QM Administration School and the two Sea Schools to justify generalization, so they are not included in this discussion.

Students for all these schools were to be of mature age and to have good records. At the Armorer and Motor Transport Schools, mechanical aptitude or experience was also required.<sup>2</sup>

Educational requirements provided a more objective basis in two instances. The Clerical School required students to be high school graduates, and the Armorer School called for students to have completed two years of high school.<sup>3</sup>

All these schools were located in Philadelphia, the Clerical School at the Marine Barracks, Navy Yard, and the Motor Transport and Armorer Schools at the Depot of Supplies. Each school conducted one course a year, the clerical course of six months duration, and the other two five months in length. Total enrollment was very low, with only 10 in the Armorer School, 20 in the Clerical, and 35 in the Motor Transport.<sup>4</sup>

The curricula of the schools provided a fairly thorough coverage of the various subjects. At the Clerical School, students were taught typing, shorthand, and routine Marine Corps administration. Motor Transport

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(2) CMC ltr to CO MB Washington, D. C., 8Feb40, 1520-30-10. CMC ltr to CO MB Navy Yard Philadelphia, 13Jul40, 1520-30-55.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.; Dep QM, Dep of Supplies, Philadelphia, ltrs to CMC, 1Feb39, 1Aug39, 1520-30-10.

School graduates were skilled in both operation and maintenance, while students completing the Armorer School were competent to repair all Marine Corps small arms and automatic weapons.

Training in the communications field differed from that in other specialist fields by virtue of the system for selecting students. Candidates for communications training were selected upon completion of recruit training by use of written tests in mathematics, spelling, code, tone perception, and general intelligence. This method of selection furnished a degree of objectivity not present in selection systems for other schools.

The communications training program was conducted by the 1st and 2d Signal Companies. Located at Quantico and San Diego respectively, both companies conducted elementary radio operator and field telephone courses. The mission of these schools was to provide personnel for the Fleet Marine Force trained in the setting-up, operation, and maintenance of radio and telephone systems in the field.<sup>5</sup> Radio operators pursued a course of 20 weeks duration and field telephone men one of six weeks. Advanced training was offered to experienced communications men in the Telephone Electricians course conducted by the 1st Signal Company. Candidates were selected on the basis of a series of competitive examinations,

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(5) CO SigDet MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 2May40, 1520-30-160.

including a general classification test, and tests in mathematics, electricity, and radio.<sup>6</sup>

Supplementing the Marine Schools were quotas in Army, Navy, and civilian schools. These were available for men who had already completed a Marine school or had gained considerable "on the job" experience. There were five Army, four Navy, and two civilian schools which Marines could attend.<sup>7</sup>

Marine enlisted men attended the Army Field Service School, the Engineer School, the Coast Artillery School, the Chemical Warfare School, and the Signal Corps School.<sup>8</sup> At the Engineer School, one Marine was enrolled in each of the following courses: map reproduction and photography; electric motors and water purification; surveying and drafting.<sup>9</sup> Two Marines, graduates of Marine Corps courses at the 1st and 2d Signal Companies, were admitted each year to the Signal Corps Wire Communications Course.<sup>10</sup> At the Chemical Warfare School the Marine Corps was given a quota of six in the NCO course.<sup>11</sup>

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(6) CMC ltr to CG MB Quantico, 12Jun30, 1520-30-160.

(7) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

(8) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

(9) CMC ltr to AdjGen USA, 7Mar39, 1520-10-40.

(10) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

(11) CO Naval Unit, Edgewood Arsenal, ltr to CMC, 30Jun39, 1520-10-25.

Other Marines attended the Radio Material, Optical, Metalsmith and Machinist, and Sound Motion Picture Technician Schools conducted by the Navy. Six experienced communications men, selected on the basis of examinations in mathematics, electricity, radio, and a general classification test, took a six months course at the Radio Material School. At the Optical School, ten Marines were trained in the maintenance and operation of range finding equipment every eight months.<sup>12</sup>

There were only two civilian schools attended by enlisted Marines. These were the Automatic Electric Company School, which trained dial telephone technicians, and the Sperry Gyroscope School. At the Sperry School, enlisted men followed the same Searchlight and Sound Locator and Fire Control Director courses available to officers. Designed to furnish trained specialists to the 15th Marines (antiaircraft artillery), these courses were used to give further instruction to all the Marine graduates of the Navy Optical School.<sup>13</sup>

This was the specialist training program which was soon to be subjected to the pressures of three-fold expansion. For on 1 September 1939, Hitler sent his panzer armies rolling across the Polish frontier to

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(12) CMC ltr to CG MB Quantico, 12Jun39, 1520-30-180. P&P memo 7064, 23Apr40, 1520-30-180.

(13) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939. P&P memo 7064, 23Apr40, 1520-30-180.

deliver the opening blows of World War II. From this date, the Marine Corps was engaged in an ever accelerating expansion, and with it an ever increasing demand for trained specialists.

Expansion Begins - 8 September 1939 to 1 January 1941

New and vastly expanded demands for trained specialists were a natural by-product of expansion. But it was not until the early months of 1940 that the expansion had progressed far enough for these demands to be felt. Thus there was a period of about six months in which to make specific preparations for expanded specialist training.

The most important action taken during this period was a trial run of the emergency signal training program. Prepared to implement the general provision in mobilization plans for the expansion of specialist training, this program was put into operation from November 1939 to June 1940. Three short courses were given at both the 1st and 2d Signal Companies: a Radio Operators' Course of 10 weeks duration, a Field Telephone Course six weeks long, and a Message Center Course which lasted for three weeks. Output was as follows:<sup>14</sup>

Course	1stSigCo	2dSigCo	Total
Radio	57	89	146
Field Telephone	86	80	166
Message Center	5	35	50
	148	204	372

(14) CO SigDet MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 2May40, 1520-30-160. CO SigDet MCB SD ltr to CMC, 28May40, 1520-30-160.

The accelerated program was not an unqualified success. The staffs of both 1st and 2d Signal Companies agreed that the 10 week radio operators course did not prepare its graduates for field duty. Both schools recommended additional practice in sending and receiving code. Reaction from Fleet Marine Force units was even stronger. Reports from the two brigades and four defense battalions indicated that combat efficiency of graduates of the short course was no more than 65 per cent. By contrast, both the schools and the Fleet Marine Force units agreed that the six week field telephone course was adequate. Its graduates were rated as 80 per cent efficient. Neither the schools nor the Fleet Marine Force had much use for the three week message center course. Students were not qualified in visual signalling, they knew little about enciphering and deciphering, and they lacked the knowledge of communications organization in Marine units necessary to efficient message center operation.<sup>15</sup>

Shortages of trained enlisted specialists began to appear during the early months of 1940. At first, these shortages were met by a variety of expedients. Existing schools were expanded, quotas at Army and Navy schools were enlarged, new schools were activated, and tactical units were pressed into service to conduct formal schools.

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(15) Ibid.; CG FMF ltr to CMC, 13Jun40, 1520-30-160.

In January, activation of defense battalions pointed up the need for men to operate and maintain the water purification units furnished the battalions. Lacking a formal school on the subject and unable to obtain a quota at the Army Engineer School, the Marine Corps was obliged to utilize a tactical unit to conduct the training. The 1st Engineer Company of the 1st Brigade was selected to give the course at Quantico. Using its graduates of the Army Engineer School and the facilities of the Quantico water plant, the 1st Engineer Company ran a six week course, graduating eight men on 28 May.<sup>16</sup>

A more serious shortage in the defense battalions was in trained fire control men. These units were beginning to provide training in the specialty, but they relied upon the Sperry Gyroscope Company, manufacturers of the equipment, for most of their trained fire control personnel. With the deactivation of the 15th Marines in November 1939, the graduates of the Sperry training program were diverted to the defense battalions. By April 1940, demands for greater numbers of fire control men led the Marine Corps to increase the output at Sperry by a greater specialization. Under the old policy, the same men took both Sound Locator and Searchlight, and Director Courses. Now separate groups were ordered to these two classes.<sup>17</sup>

(16) P&P memo 6926, 25Jan40, 1520-30-180. CG 1stMarBrig ltr to CMC, 28May40, 1520-30-180.

(17) P&P memo 7064, 23Apr40, 1520-15.

By July, the pressures of expansion began to be felt by the Armorer and Clerical Schools. The Director of the Division of Plans and Policies at Headquarters Marine Corps reported to the Commandant that there were only 192 armorers in the service and that there was a need for 90 to 100 more. To fill the need, the quota for the 1 September class was increased from six to 24. Subsequent classes were to number 15.<sup>18</sup>

It was also necessary to meet a shortage of clerical personnel. The Commanding Officer of the Clerical School, Marine Barracks, Philadelphia, recommended that the quota for each class be increased from 20 to 30 and that the course be split into elementary and advanced sections, the elementary course to teach typing and administration, the advanced course to add stenography to the subjects taught in the basic course. The Commandant approved this request and on 1 August followed up by approving a Plans and Policies recommendation to speed up further the production of clerical personnel by eliminating the study of muster rolls and pay rolls. In the future, this training would be provided on the job.<sup>19</sup>

By the end of August, the demands for trained personnel in established specialties could no longer be met merely by expanding existing schools or by tossing the

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(18) P&P memo 7221, 24Jul40, 1520-30-10.

(19) CO MB Navy Yard, Philadelphia, ltr to CMC, 1Jul40, 1520-30-55. P&P memo 7209, 13Jul40, 1520-30-55. P&P memo 7239, 1Aug40, 1520-30-55.

problem to tactical units. It now became necessary to activate new specialist schools. The first of these was designed to meet a shortage of approximately 192 cooks and bakers. Schools in these specialties were set up at Parris Island and San Diego to supplement the "on the job" training at the larger posts. The course was eight weeks long, with 25 students in each class. The first class graduated on 15 November.<sup>20</sup>

The month of August also saw the beginning of formal tank training. To man the newly acquired M2A4 light tanks of the 1st and 2d Tank Companies, the Marine Corps obtained authority to send ten enlisted men to the 2d Armored Division at Fort Knox, Kentucky, for instruction in tank operation. This was a temporary expedient pending the opening of the light tank course at the Armored Force School. Beginning in November, the Marine Corps was given a quota of ten enlisted men at this school.<sup>21</sup>

By fall, severe shortages began to appear in the communications field. Previously unaffected by the growing size of the Corps, the communications schools were now faced with the problem of making up deficiencies caused by new activations and the bringing of existing units up to strength. The 2d Brigade, for example,

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(20) P&P memo 7328, 28Aug40, 1520-30-65.

(21) P&P memo 7250, 5Aug40, 1520-10-115.

reported a shortage of 96 in the training complement and of 276 in authorized strength.<sup>22</sup> This condition was recognized simultaneously, at Headquarters and in the field, for on 24 October the Commandant directed the Fleet Marine Force to institute communications training programs. On the same date, the Commanding General of the 2d Brigade requested authority to institute a training program to overcome this shortage.<sup>23</sup>

Beginning on 18 November, the 2d Brigade conducted a radio operators and a field telephone course. Of 12 and six weeks duration respectively, these courses utilized the facilities of the Signal Detachment, Marine Corps Base, San Diego. Instructors and students were drawn from the brigade. Two cycles of each course were conducted, graduating a total of 77 radio operators and 96 field telephone men.<sup>24</sup>

The 1st Brigade school was conducted under considerable difficulties, as the brigade was on maneuvers in the Caribbean at the time the order to establish formal signal training was received. It was not until 18 December that the communications training was begun, organized as a 10 week combined radio operator and field telephone course. Interrupted by a full schedule of landing exercises, the program was only able to produce 37 radio

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(22) CG 2dMarBrig ltr to CMC, 24Oct40, 1520-30-160.

(23) Ibid.; CMC ltr to CG FMF, 24Oct40, 1520-30-160.

(24) Ibid.; CMC rpt, fiscal 1941. CG 2dMarDiv ltr to CMC, 4Feb41, 1520-30-160.

operators and 15 field telephone men by 19 March when the Commandant ordered the program stopped.<sup>25</sup>

But the programs of the 1st and 2d Brigade were just stopgaps. To provide a permanent solution to the shortage of trained signal personnel, the Commandant ordered the signal detachments at Quantico and San Diego to accelerate their training programs. Radio operators' courses were reduced from 20 to 12 weeks; the field telephone courses remained unchanged. Monthly input from recruit depots to both schools were increased. At Quantico the figure was raised to 110, 50 for radio operators and 60 for field telephone men. At San Diego the Commanding General was authorized to increase the input "as may be necessary" to achieve maximum production.<sup>26</sup>

To make matters worse, the Army revised its Signal Corps School to take care of its own expanding needs and was no longer able to accommodate Marines in its Wiremen's course. To make up for this training loss, the Marine Corps was obliged to expand its own Telephone Electricians School from 11 to 20 students per class.<sup>27</sup>

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(25) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941. CG 1stMarBrig ltr to CMC, 28Nov40, 1520-30-160. CMC ltrs to CG's, 1st and 2dMarDivs, 19Mar41, 1520-30-160.

(26) CMC ltrs to CG MB Quantico and CG MCB SD, 8Nov40, 1520-30-160. There is no documentary evidence to indicate whether this program was related in any way to the emergency program tried out the year before.

(27) P&P memo 7505, 1Nov40, 1520-30-160. CMC ltr to CG MB Quantico, 6Nov40, 1520-30-160.

These various expedients introduced in 1940 served for a time to alleviate the critical shortage of trained specialists. But as the new year began, the pressures of expansion were becoming so great that the old methods would soon no longer be adequate.

#### The New Specialist Training Program

By February 1941, Marine Corps expansion had reached the stage where enlisted specialist training requirements could no longer be met by the various expedients which had been used up to this time. It was against this background that the Training Center at Quantico was organized. A mass production system, taking in recruits fresh from boot camp and turning out large numbers of specialists, this training center and others to follow became the foundation of specialist training in the Marine Corps during World War II.

The Training Center at Quantico was an outgrowth of the Reserve Training Center. Organized on 25 October 1940 to train reservists called to active duty, the Reserve Training Center had fulfilled its purpose by February 1941. On 8 February, the Division of Plans and Policies recommended that it be disbanded.<sup>28</sup> Before this recommendation could be acted upon, it was superseded by another, calling for retention of the center but changing its designation to Training Center, Marine Barracks,

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(28) P&P memo 7852, 8Feb41, 2385/70-6000.

Quantico. This action was not taken to fulfill an immediate need, but to maintain the training organization for possible future use. One of the missions suggested was the training of specialists.<sup>29</sup>

The need for specialist schools was not long in coming. On 11 March, Plans and Policies recommended the establishment of an Amphibian Tractor School in the Training Center at Quantico. Its purpose would be to provide preliminary instruction in motor boat and gas engine operation for personnel to be transferred for special instruction at the Amphibian Tractor Plant in Dunedin, Florida.<sup>30</sup>

At about the same time, the Commandant announced his intention of setting up a group of schools in the Training Center. These were to include the Amphibian Tractor School, Engineer School, Motor Transport School, and Ordnance Repair School.<sup>31</sup>

Suiting the action to the word, the Commandant, Marine Corps Schools activated the Amphibian Tractor School on 24 March.<sup>32</sup> During the next four months, the Engineer, Motor Transport, and Ordnance Schools were also activated. While all these schools were organized under the Training Center, no effort was made to bring all specialist training

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(29) P&P memo 7908, 19Feb41, 2385/70-6000.

(30) P&P memo 7976, 11Mar41. 1520-30-180.

(31) CMC ltr to CMCS, 14Mar41, 1520-30-180.

(32) Hq MB Quantico, Post SO 365-1941, 24Mar41, 1520-30-180.

activities at Quantico under this training command. The Signal School continued to be separate, although in function and organization it was similar to the component schools of the Training Center.

Amphibian Tractors were new to the Marine Corps. There were only a few demonstration machines in the Marine Corps, although contracts had been let for mass production at Dunedin, Florida.<sup>33</sup> As a first step, an instructional and administrative staff was assembled at Quantico about the middle of April. One officer and five enlisted men from this group were sent to the Hercules Motor Corporation for instruction in tractor power plants. Students in two groups, one to report on 1 May and the other on 1 June, were assembled at Quantico. They were selected on the basis of their experience in operating boats or motor vehicles, 75 per cent of them came directly from recruit depots.<sup>34</sup>

Owing to delays in construction of tractors, the instruction program could not be carried out on schedule. On 6 June, the Commandant stopped the selection of students, pending delivery of tractors.<sup>35</sup>

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(33) U. S. Marines and Amphibious War, 69.

(34) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 11Apr41; P&P memo 8092, 5Apr41, both 1520-30-180.

(35) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 6Jun41, 1520-30-180. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 18Jun41, 1520-30-180.

The Engineer School was activated on 8 May, with a four-course curriculum divided into two parts.<sup>36</sup> The specialist section included courses in Refrigeration and Water Distillation and Purification, while the military engineering section offered courses in Demolitions and Camouflage. Specialist courses were limited to instruction in the operation of the specific types of refrigeration and water distillation and purification equipment purchased by the Marine Corps for field use. The military engineering courses were to train camouflage and demolition experts for engineer battalions.<sup>37</sup>

A total of 30 enlisted students per month was authorized, apportioned as follows:

Water Purification and Distillation .	10
Refrigeration . . . . .	10
Demolition . . . . .	6
Camouflage . . . . .	4

Of these, 50 per cent were to be selected from recruit depots, the only qualification required was mechanical experience.<sup>38</sup>

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(36) Hq MB Quantico, Post SO 540-1941, 7May41, 1520-30-70.

(37) TC MB Quantico, "Courses offered in Engineer School" (mimeographed pamphlet dtd 7Oct41), 1520-30-70.

(38) P&P memo 9027, 14Apr41, 1520-30-70.

The demolition and camouflage courses began about 1 July, and two weeks later the refrigeration course got under way. Little difficulty was experienced with these courses, and classes graduated on schedule with an attrition rate of only 11 per cent.<sup>39</sup>

But the Water Purification and Distillation Course was a different story. The equipment had just been developed in May when the course was being organized, and deliveries in quantity were yet to be made. Based on a planned combat strength of two divisions and 10 defense battalions, the Division of Plans and Policies anticipated a need for 412 trained specialists. By calculating a 10 per cent loss by attrition, the figure was raised to 453. To meet these figures, it was planned to conduct classes of one month duration, 40 students per class, beginning 1 July.<sup>40</sup>

Although the first class began on schedule, delays in receiving equipment forced one postponement after another, and it was not until 15 September that the distillation and purification equipment arrived. Students were given instruction in other courses during the summer, and finally the first and second classes were combined, all graduating on 30 September.<sup>41</sup>

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(39) CO TC MB Quantico ltrs to CMC, 17Jul, 7Aug, 25Aug, and 9Sep41, 1520-30-70.

(40) P&P memo 9090, 1May41, 1520-30-70. CMC ltr to CG MB Quantico, 1May41, 1520-30-70.

(41) CO TC MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 4Sep41, 1520-30-70.

Experience with the first Engineer classes was mixed. While the Camouflage, Demolition, and Refrigeration courses were generally satisfactory, the Water Distillation and Purification course was plagued from the first by an unacceptably high attrition rate. Realizing that this course was of a difficult technical nature, the staff of the Engineer School persuaded the Commandant to extend it to six weeks.<sup>42</sup> But this remedial measure was not adequate to prevent an attrition rate of 32 per cent in the first two classes.<sup>43</sup>

The high rate of failure was the result of inadequate screening of prospective students by their units. In an effort to improve the selection process, the Plans and Training Office of the Training Center recommended a set of qualifications for candidates for the Refrigeration and Water Distillation and Purification courses. These students should be high school graduates with a knowledge of physics, mathematics, and chemistry.<sup>44</sup> There is no evidence that this recommendation was acted upon, and the class ending in November graduated only 16 out of 33 students.<sup>45</sup>

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(42) CO TC MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 5Aug41, 1520-30-70.  
CO TC MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 17Sep41, 1520-30-70.

(43) P&P memo 9440, 23Jul41, 1520-30-70.

(44) TC MB Quantico, "Courses offered in Engineer School," op. cit. BrigGen Nelson K. Brown ltr to CMC, 23Jul56, ~~HistBr~~ HQMC.

(45) CO TC MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 7Nov41, 1520-30-70.

Thus the Engineer School was to face its greatest test, which came with total mobilization after 7 December, with this problem still unsolved. Still, a good deal had been accomplished, for all the courses originally contemplated for the school were in operation and had completed several cycles of instruction. And of these courses, only one out of four had encountered any serious difficulty.

The Motor Transport School was activated to remedy a serious deficiency in motor vehicle operators and mechanics. The 2d Division, for instance, pointed out the lack of facilities, either in the Marine Corps or in the other services, for motor transport training.<sup>46</sup> In response to this situation, the Motor Transport School was organized in the Training Center at Quantico and began operations on 1 July. Two courses were offered. The Operations course was two weeks long and accommodated 10 enlisted men in each class, while the Mechanics course gave 30 men three months of instruction. All these men were selected from recruit depots.<sup>47</sup>

Hardly had the course started when it became apparent that two weeks was not enough time in which to train motor vehicle operators. Most of the students had very limited experience with motor vehicles, so it was

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(46) CO 2dDivSpec1Trps ltr to CG 2dMarDiv, 24Apr41, 1520-30-90.

(47) P&P memo 9074, 28Apr41, 1520-30-90. CMC ltr to CG 2dMarDiv, 5May41, 1520-30-90.

necessary to give them an elementary course, including motion pictures, in the theory of motors and related subjects. As a result, only four days remained for actual driving practice, necessitating an extension of the course to three weeks.<sup>48</sup>

The Operators course was deficient not only in quality but also in quantity. The original quota of 10 students per class proved to be inadequate and had to be increased to 20 in August and then to 35 in September.<sup>49</sup> No further changes were made before 7 December, nor were any other difficulties encountered. The completion of two cycles of the Mechanics' course and 12 cycles of the Operators' course provided ample opportunity for the school staff to shake down in preparation for the larger tasks to be encountered following the entry of the United States into the war.

The Ordnance School was organized following a comprehensive study of the whole ordnance problem by a special board appointed for that purpose. According to board estimates, there were only 157 ordnance specialists in the Marine Corps, and of these only 62 were performing ordnance duties. Requirements for camps, posts and stations, and for Fleet Marine Force units were estimated at 664, making a shortage of 507. To make up the deficiency,

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(48) P&P memo 9440, 23Jul41, 1520-30-90.

(49) CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 7Aug41, 1520-30-90.

the board recommended the establishment of an Ordnance School at the Training Center, Quantico.<sup>50</sup>

Six courses were contemplated for the Ordnance School.

(1) The Artillery course was to cover mechanics, repair, preservation, modification, and inspection of artillery. Classes were to contain 22 enlisted men selected from artillery organizations and were to last for three months.

(2) The Instrument course was to cover operation, construction, mechanics, testing, adjustments, maintenance, and inspection of instruments, including fire control equipment. Each three month class was to be made up of 11 enlisted men.

(3) The Munitions course was to be of three months duration, with nine enlisted men in each class.

(4) The Noncommissioned Officers course was to teach general ordnance maintenance, small arms, instrument, artillery, mechanics, supply, service, and Marine Corps accountability for three months to 17 graduates of the other courses.

(5) The Officers course, for first lieutenants, marine gunners, and quartermaster clerks, was to be three to six months long. It was to teach small arms, artillery, fire control, munitions, tanks and motor vehicles, shop

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(50) Maj Morris L. Shively, et al., ltr to CMC, 25Apr41, 1520-30-125.

management, service, supply, and Marine Corps ordnance accountability.<sup>51</sup>

(6) Special trades courses were to teach a limited number of skills, such as carpentry, electricity, and mechanics.

These recommendations were adopted with certain modifications. Only four courses were offered at first: the Officers, Artillery, Ammunition, and Instrument courses. Quotas for these courses were to be as follows:

Artillery . . . . .	22
Ammunition . . . . .	7
Instrument . . . . .	8
Officers . . . . .	4

A further modification was that approximately half of each class was to be made up of recruits, whereas the original plan called for all students to be selected from the Fleet Marine Force or posts and stations.<sup>52</sup>

Before this ambitious training program could be undertaken, ordnance equipment had to be purchased, buildings prepared, and a staff assembled. Procurement of equipment would take about a year, so the board recommended that arrangements be made with the Army Ordnance School, Aberdeen, Maryland, to use facilities of the school to train Marines.<sup>53</sup>

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(51) See Chapter V below for officer specialist training.

(52) P&P memo 9169, 16May41, 1520-30-125.

(53) Ibid.

Negotiations with the Army Ordnance School for the establishment of a temporary Marine school there were conducted by Captain G. O. Van Orden. He arranged for a school using the Army facilities but staffed by Marines who were graduates of the Army school. Each month, courses of not more than eight artillery mechanics, three instrument repairmen, three munitions technicians, and four officers were to commence. To start the school, five officers and 13 enlisted men were sent to Aberdeen on 1 July.<sup>54</sup> During subsequent months, an average of 12 enlisted men attended the school every month for the remainder of the year.<sup>55</sup> It was not until the spring of 1942 that the Marine Ordnance School at Quantico began operations.

#### Army, Navy, and Civilian Schools during 1941

Despite the inauguration by the Marine Corps of its own specialist training programs, the old policy of sending enlisted men to schools of the other services and to civilian institutions was continued. The Marine Corps had to make a few minor modifications to meet reorganizations of these schools, particularly in the Army, but, for the most part, the program remained the same.

Marines continued to attend all but one of the schools they had attended the previous year. The Navy

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(54) P&P memo 9321, 28Jun41, 1520-30-125.

(55) P&P memo 9411, 15Jul41, and 9762, 8Oct41, 1520-30-125. CMC ltr to CG MB Quantico, 28Aug41, 1520-30-125.

Metalsmith and Machinist School was dropped, but the Navy Fire Control School and the Fire Control course of the Army Coast Artillery School were added. These courses, along with the Antiaircraft Director and Searchlight and Sound Locator courses given at the Sperry Gyroscope Company, reflected the emphasis the Marine Corps was placing on the antiaircraft phase of base defense organizations.<sup>56</sup>

### Conclusions

On 7 December, the Marine Corps was certainly not prepared to meet the new demands for trained specialists brought about by the coming of war. Not only were there still difficulties to iron out in existing schools, but the tremendous expansion following the outbreak of war created demands for specialists on an unprecedented scale. Still, the groundwork had been laid. The activation of the Training Center and its component schools furnished the pattern for the majority of specialist training in the Marine Corps during World War II. It was only necessary to perfect and expand this system to meet the demands of a rapidly expanding Marine Corps for trained specialists.

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(56) List of Enlisted Schools, in unnumbered P&P memo, 18Jul41, 1520-30-180.

## CHAPTER 4

### BASIC OFFICER TRAINING

#### On the Eve of Expansion

The peacetime officer training program in effect in 1939 was geared to produce a small, highly skilled professional officer corps. Upon reporting for duty, newly commissioned second lieutenants were assigned to the Basic School, located at the Marine Barracks, Philadelphia Navy Yard. There U. S. Naval Academy graduates, meritorious enlisted men, honor graduates of NROTC and ROTC, selected graduates from the Platoon Leader's Class, and outstanding officers from the Marine Corps Reserve entered a nine months program of intensive training which included: drills, ceremonies, marksmanship, naval law, small arms training, minor tactics, and other subjects designed to prepare new officers for duty with all Corps activities including the Fleet Marine Force and service afloat. In fiscal 1939 (ending 30 June 1939) 67 second lieutenants were graduated from the Basic School.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, MCS conducted an annual summer camp for selected candidates for commission in the Marine Corps Reserve. Annually, beginning in 1935, young college men were enlisted as privates first class in the Volunteer Marine Corps Reserve and sent for two consecutive summers for six weeks of basic training at either

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(1) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

MCS, Quantico, or at the MCS-directed camp at Marine Corps Base, San Diego. This Platoon Leaders' Class offered instruction in the school of the soldier, drill, minor tactics, and marksmanship. Upon successful completion of two summer camps and graduation from college students were commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve.

During the summer of 1939, 285 students attended the Platoon Leaders' Class (PLC) at Quantico, and 84 trained at San Diego. The same year over one hundred PLC-trained men, who were graduated from college or university that June, were commissioned. These joined the growing rosters of those who had trained with preceding classes and were now officers of the Marine Corps Reserve.<sup>2</sup>

#### Establishment of the Reserve Officers' Training Program

This peacetime officer training system proved inadequate to meet the needs of an expanding Marine Corps from the very beginning of the short-of-war period. The Basic School expanded its output during 1940 and again in 1941, but never sufficiently to graduate the needed officers. It was necessary to obtain the additional officers from another source. Fortunately, the Marine Corps was prepared for this: the Marine Corps Reserve (Volunteer and Organized) included young company grade officers who were

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(2) Ibid.

available for active duty. However, since they were for the most part graduates of only the Platoon Leaders' Class, and had had but a minimal basic training, it was necessary to provide additional instruction prior to their assignment to general duty.

On 18 September the Commandant approved the establishment of an advanced training course for them.<sup>3</sup> Two days later, he directed the Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools to "...organize as soon as practicable... an additional resident course in the Marine Corps Schools for the instruction of reserve officers."<sup>4</sup>

The first class was organized at Quantico, under the command of Major George E. Monson as the Officer-in-Charge of the First Reserve Officers' Class (ROC). This class of 114 first and second lieutenants was assembled on 2 October 1939.

The First ROC established a pattern for later classes. It was a heterogeneous mixture of officers from 28 states, and 52 colleges and universities. Their backgrounds were as varied as their reasons for accepting active duty. Included were: (1) the national emergency, (2) an active interest in the Marine Corps and a desire for a regular commission, (3) an interest in active military training,

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(3) CMC ltr to CMCS, 18Sep39, 1520 MCS.

(4) CMC ltr to CMCS, 20Sep39, 1520-30-120 MCS. CMC ltr to CMCS, 26Sep39, 1520-30-120.

and (4) on the part of three officers, the temporary lack of employment.<sup>5</sup>

The First ROC consisted of a headquarters group, a supply and maintenance group, and two training companies.<sup>6</sup> Sixty-three reserve officers were assigned to the infantry company (2 rifle platoons) and 51 to the specialist company. The specialist company was further divided into two units: a pack howitzer unit (20 students), to provide field artillery training; and a base defense unit which trained 31 students.

Both companies trained for a period of six weeks. However, during the final week, 24 officers from the infantry company were reassigned for 21 hours of additional special training. Sixteen of these officers received training in a machine gun sub-course, and eight in an 81mm mortar sub-course.

The instructional staff of the ROC was made up of officers from the resident staff of Marine Corps Schools, the 1st Marine Brigade, and specialists from the Post Service Battalion, Marine Barracks, Quantico.<sup>7</sup> For the most part, the instructional staff was assembled on very short notice. Many were required to devote part of their

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(5) 1stLt Anthony Francis, "History of the Marine Corps Schools," Quantico, 1945, (MS, HistBr HQMC). Hereinafter cited as Francis.

(6) OIC, 1st ROC to CMCS, Final Rpt, 1st ROC, 15Nov39, 1520-30-120. This report is the basic document for information concerning the 1st ROC.

(7) P&P memo 6769, 1Sep39, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CMCS, 28Sep39, 1520-30-120.

time to other activities. The ROC's plans and training officer, Captain David M. Shoup, was notified of his assignment to the new staff on the day preceding the arrival of the first students. He, like most of the other members of the staff, had to begin immediate planning for the training schedule while still immersed in other MCS duties. Despite the short notice and the lack of a training syllabus and a permanent staff, the instructors and staff officers came up with both a schedule and a syllabus in time for the first class.<sup>8</sup>

TABLE I<sup>9</sup>

First ROC

Sources of Instructional Staff	Hours of Instruction			
	Rifle Co.	Base Def.	F.A.	TOTAL
ROC Regular Unit Staffs	174	152*	206*	532
ROC Hq Staff	29			29
MCS Resident Staff	14	61	5	80
First Marine Brigade	2	1**	1**	2
	219	213	211	643

(\*) Includes 15 hours conducted by instructors of Rifle Co in combined classes.  
(\*\*) Indicates combined classes conducted by MCS Resident Staff.

In general, the training program was directed at the development of leadership qualities and the furtherance

(8) Interview BriGen David M. Shoup, 24 Jun 53.

(9) Rpt of Plans and Training Officer to OIC, ROC, 16 Nov 39, 1975-95.

of the student officers' professional knowledge. And while the over-all program of training enjoyed a good measure of success, there were many obvious shortcomings. In particular, the training of the specialist company suffered from the lack of the necessary equipment. It was hardly possible to illustrate the theory and technique of artillery and base defense weapons without the pieces or the related field demonstrations and firings. Therefore, of necessity, the emphasis was placed on classroom instruction rather than on field training.

In addition, it soon became apparent that the method of assigning both the students and instructors had been faulty. In general, selection was based on the individual's previous military history, and/or his personal preference. Students had been allowed to choose between infantry and artillery. As a result, some ambitious but unprepared students were unable to keep abreast of the course. The best qualified were held back by the slower members. Unfortunately, some of the instructors also lacked experience and were not prepared to present the requisite technical instruction.<sup>10</sup>

Upon the termination of the class, the instructors and students were invited to make critiques of the course and instruction. Both agreed that there was a need for

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(10) Interview BriGen David M. Shoup, 24Jun53. General Shoup noted that he was pressed to turn out training materials and serve as an instructor, in addition to his other MCS duties. Other members of the staff were under the same pressures. Working nights and week-ends was not uncommon.

additional field training and practical work, and for a longer training period. It was also recommended that future specialist instruction be held where organizational equipment and materials were available for practical application of the classroom theory. This final critique confirmed the work-in-progress findings of the ROC's staff.<sup>11</sup>

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TABLE II<sup>12</sup>

<u>Training Hours, First ROC</u>	<u>Location</u>		TOTAL
	Classroom	Outdoor	
Rifle Co	103	116	219
F.A. Unit	136	75	211
B.D. Unit	190	23	213

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Whatever its initial shortcomings, the 10 November 1939 graduation exercise marked more than the completion of a course of routine training by 114 reserve Marine officers. It prepared the way for further ROC classes for the training of other reservists during a period of heightened military interest and international tension. Accordingly, the Second ROC was organized to commence on 1 April 1940.<sup>13</sup>

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(11) Plans and Training Officer memo to OIC, ROC, 16Nov39, 1975-95.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 27Feb40, and ltr to CMCS, 7Mar40, 1975-95-50.

For the Second ROC, the curriculum was reorganized to meet the changing officer requirements. A comparison of the 1940-41 FMF officer requirements with the officer supply revealed that under existing procedures there would be a shortage of infantry officers and a surplus of Base Defense officers during 1940-41. To remedy this situation the Second ROC was devoted exclusively to infantry training.<sup>14</sup>

Fifty-one officers reported for training on 1 April. They were organized into a single company of two platoons. By and large the same training was offered, with one exception. Additional hours of field instruction were added to the schedule, while a corresponding number of classroom hours were eliminated. Drill, customs and traditions, exercise, first aid, and weapons instruction made up the bulk of the subject matter studied during the 13 week schedule.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the changes in internal organization, the Second ROC was hobbled by the same problems encountered by its predecessor. The continuing lack of suitable instructional material required that the staff, in order to execute the daily lesson plan, prepare original material prior to the meeting of the class. Secondly, the differences in the instructors' military education and

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(14) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 27Feb40, 1975-95.

(15) CMCS ltr to CMC, 29Jun40, 1975-95. CMC approved the 2d ROC training program in his ltr of 7Mar40, same folder.

experience made for an inequitable distribution of the work load. And, thirdly, despite a strong recommendation on the part of the First ROC staff, a permanent staff, was, as yet, not provided.

Major William C. Hall, the third commanding officer of as many classes, activated the Third ROC on 12 August 1940, and classes got underway on 19 August. The 108 officers in this class included 84 second lieutenants, USMCR, 18 graduates of the Easter PLC, and six officers from miscellaneous sources.<sup>16</sup> Again, there was but one training unit - an infantry company. Those reserve officers who were selected for base defense and artillery training were transferred to the Base Defense Weapons Course also located at Quantico.

In general, the 13 week curriculum remained unchanged. The course, divided into three major categories - Basic and Disciplinary, Technical and Weapons, and Tactical - totaled 486 hours of instruction. Profiting from the experience of earlier classes, more time was allocated to field exercises and practical application. It had been realized that increased student participation was a must: classroom lectures lost their impact unless they were followed immediately with actual demonstrations and field application. In the opinion of the instructors, however, there was still too much classroom work.<sup>17</sup>

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(16) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941. ROC class period was 19Aug40-15Nov40.

(17) CMC ltr to CMCS, 11Jul40, 1520-30-120. Col Wayne H. Adams memo to Head HistBr, G-3, 3Aug56, HistBr HQMC.

Unfortunately, much of the personal experience of the earlier staffs was lost to the third class. Contrary to the reiterated suggestions of the previous staffs, the newly assembled Third ROC had a new instructional group of officers and noncommissioned officers. This lack of continuity robbed the staff of the knowledge gained during the training of the First and Second ROC's.<sup>18</sup> Like his predecessors, Major Hall recognized this failing, and he recommended that the incumbent instructional staff be retained.

The faculty of the Third ROC was not only inexperienced, it was also too small. As a result, only 10 hours of instructor's time could be allotted for each hour of instruction. This was supposed to allow for the preparation of the lecture or problem, review by a senior instructor before presentation, the marking of papers, holding a critique, and other similar matters. The 10 hours proved to be wholly inadequate. Many lectures were given without review, some of them were given "off the cuff," and some field problems were not followed by a critique.<sup>19</sup>

#### The Basic School ROC

An additional reserve officers' course was organized at the Basic School in Philadelphia on 24 February 1941.

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(18) CMC ltr to CMCS, 23Aug40, 1520-30-120. The CMC approved the temporary duty assigned officers of the ROC.

(19) BriGen W. C. Hall ltr to Ass't C/S, G-3 HQMC, 23Jul56, HistBr HQMC.

The call-up of the Organized Marine Corps Reserve on 15 October 1940 brought on active duty many junior officers with limited experience and training. As the ROC at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, was scheduled to train graduates of the Officer Candidates' Class, it could not accommodate any additional students. It was to train the junior officers ordered to active duty with the Organized Reserve that the Basic School ROC was organized at Philadelphia.

The Basic School First ROC commenced on 24 February 1941, with a group of 155 first and second lieutenants drawn from a pool of some 220 such reserve officers, all of whom were in need of training prior to assignment to general duty.<sup>20</sup> By comparison with the ROC at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, the Basic School curriculum was weak in small unit tactics, a weakness which may have been unavoidable, owing to the lack of suitable training areas at the Marine Barracks, Philadelphia Navy Yard.<sup>21</sup>

The Basic School First ROC completed its schedule on 31 May 1941. One hundred and forty-five officers were graduated; of the original input of 155, seven returned to inactive status prior to the completion of the course

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(20) Proposed School Schedule (Regular Officers, Reserve Officers, Candidates and Platoon Leaders). Undated chart in folder 1990-50-5 MCS.

(21) Col L. C. Shepherd memo to CMCS, re Basic School Training Program, undated, 1520-30-120-10 MCS.

because of their inability to maintain the required standards, and the other three did not complete the course because of hospitalization.<sup>22</sup>

#### The Officer Candidates' Program

For the first year of gradual expansion, the Marine Corps satisfied its officer requirements without resorting to additional procurement from outside sources. But after the authorization of 34,000 enlisted strength for fiscal year 1941, and with further increases in sight, the Commandant and his staff realized that new sources of officer personnel would have to be sought. A shortage of 800 officers was anticipated by the end of fiscal 1941, and further shortages could be expected in subsequent years.<sup>23</sup>

The Marine Corps proposed to meet this shortage by organizing a new program to train and commission candidates as second lieutenants. This candidates' class would be made up of an original input of between 1,100 and 1,200 recent college graduates (meeting in three successive classes of approximately 400 each), who were unmarried, under 25 years of age, of good character, physically qualified, and willing to serve on active duty for a period of one year. Successful candidates would be appointed second lieutenants in the Marine Corps

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(22) Dir Basic Sch to CMC, 31May41, Rpt of graduates, Basic Sch, 1st ROC, 24Feb41-31May41, 1520-30-120-10 MCS.

(23) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 3Sep40, 1520-30-120.

Reserve and continue their training with the ROC. Some 800, the anticipated yield, would then be available to serve in Marine combat units.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, if the Corps was subject to additional increases, the Candidates' Class would be continued to train new officers, and, in the event of war, could expand to provide the necessary officer requirements.

On 3 September 1940, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal, submitted the Marine Corps plan to the President.<sup>25</sup> Shortly thereafter, President Roosevelt gave the green light for the Corps to initiate the candidate program.

In accordance with the plan, letters were addressed to presidents of a number of colleges and universities, explaining the recruitment program and seeking their cooperation. The prospects whom they recommended would be invited to apply.<sup>26</sup>

The initial instruction to the applicants noted that possibly some of the men enlisted in the Candidates' Class would not qualify for commissioning because of

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(24) Ibid.

(25) Assistant SecNav memo to the President, 3Sep40, 1520-30-120. Although the authors have not been able to locate any further references which would indicate the immediate relationship between Forrestal's memo and the P&P study, obviously the two are related. In all probability, the CMC transmitted a recommendation, based on the P&P study, to the SecNav, via the chain of command. And the resultant memo, which contains the pertinent factors outlined in the study, followed.

(26) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 3Sep40, 1520-30-120.

physical, scholastic, or military disqualifications. Those students would then be offered the choice of completing the year's tour of active duty as enlisted men, or taking an honorable discharge.

While Headquarters Marine Corps conducted the procurement program, the Commandant, Marine Corps Schools, proceeded to carry out General Holcomb's instructions to "...organize a class of not to exceed four hundred (400) candidates for appointment as second lieutenants, Marine Corps Reserve..." at Quantico.<sup>27</sup>

On 21 October 1940, Colonel Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., assumed command of the First Candidates' Class. He immediately issued General Order No. 1....1940, which set forth the Class' mission and the program for its promulgation. He noted that the Candidates' Class detachment was to:

train the candidates appointed in the fundamentals of military discipline, and in the school of the soldier, squad and platoon, to afford candidates every opportunity to demonstrate qualities required of commissioned officers, to observe and carefully grade each candidate in the performance of his duties and to select those qualified for a commission in order to provide capable and well fitted officers for the Marine Corps Reserve.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to a Headquarters Detachment, the First Candidates' Class, was organized into four rifle companies, A, B, C, and D, of one hundred men each. While

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(27) CMC ltr to CMCS, 8Oct40, 1520-30-120.

(28) GO No. 1....1940, 1st Candidates' Class, 21Oct40, 1520-30-35 MCS.

the instruction of the candidates was under the general supervision of the Class Plans and Training Officer, who drew up the master schedule, the four company commanders were held "directly responsible for the individual training of the candidates of their respective companies."

Arrival dates of 266 incoming candidates were staggered through the month of November. The first of these candidates arrived at Quantico on 1 November and were immediately organized into training platoons and companies. Each of the companies was commanded by a regular captain, and the platoons by reserve and regular lieutenants, assisted by platoon sergeants.<sup>29</sup> In view of the differences in reporting dates, the length of the training program varied for each company. The earliest arrivals received 16 weeks training; the latest received 13 weeks.<sup>30</sup>

It should be remembered that there was a marked difference in the training levels of the Candidates' Class as opposed to the ROC. While the ROC students were commissioned officers, and for the most part, graduates of the PLC's, NROTC's, ROTC's, the candidates were

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(29) CMC had authorized the transfer of additional personnel to the MCS Detachment, to provide the necessary enlisted staffs for the Candidates' Class.

(30) The companies' organizations were effected as follows: Company "A" - 1Nov40, Company "B" - 10Nov40, Company "C" - 15Nov40, and Company "D" - 20Nov40. From modification No. 1 to GO No....1940, CG, MCS, 1520-30-120 MCS. No date or number on Order.

novices and, in general, totally lacked military experience. As a result, the candidate program required a different approach.<sup>31</sup>

From the onset, it was estimated that the candidates would require closer scrutiny and more individual guidance on the part of the instructors. Accordingly, the curriculum, was essentially a basic training program, totalling about 550 hours, and included: drill, marksmanship, small arms, parades and ceremonies, customs and traditions of the Corps, combat principles, and map reading.<sup>32</sup> Field demonstrations and exercises were included to supplement class room lectures.

The training program's shortcomings lay in the fact that the instructional organization foisted the burden of the teaching load upon the companies: the success of this instruction was dependent upon the teachers' professional military experience. Unfortunately, some of the 12 platoon commanders were themselves still relatively "wet behind the ears."<sup>33</sup>

The character of the Candidates' Class presented the staff with a special problem. In addition to training the class, the staff was charged to "...select therefrom

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(31) Col Shepherd memo to CMCS, 25Nov40, 1975-100 MCS. Gen Torrey (CMCS) memo to A. F. Howard (Col Howard was ACMS), 4Oct40, 1520-30-120 MCS.

(32) Subjects which fell under the scope of the ROC were not included in the CC; the instruction was basic, disciplinary, technical, and tactical. Memo No. 1-40, Col Shepherd, undated but presumably Oct-Dec40. 1520-30-120.

(33) CO, Candidates' Class, memo to CMCS, 12Nov40, 1975-100, 1520-30-120.

and recommend for further promotion and training those who appear to possess those qualities of character and military leadership..." which would eventually qualify them as Marine Corps officers.<sup>34</sup>

This necessitated the operation of a careful and accurate system of grading to chart the progress and military proficiency of each candidate. Toward this end, Colonel Shepherd authorized a "...detailed and uniform system of marking each candidate..."<sup>35</sup> a method which was in use by mid-March.<sup>36</sup> Each company commander was charged with maintaining a progress record for each candidate in his unit. Since the candidate's recommendation for commissioning depended upon the marks he made, under the two divisions, "General Characteristics," and "Military Qualifications," each category was scored by different criteria.<sup>37</sup> The 10 subjects listed under "General Characteristics" were separately weighted and scored on the basis of the individual and combined opinions of the candidate's company commander, platoon commander, and platoon sergeant. The scores given for subjects listed under "Military Qualifications" were the result of classroom examinations and field tests.

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(34) Gen Torrey memo to Col Howard, 4Oct40, 1520- MCS.

(35) GO No. 1-1940, 21Oct40, 1st CC Folder, 1520- MCS.

(36) GO No. 2-1940, 18Nov40, 1st CC Folder, 1520- MCS.

(37) See sample record card at end of this chapter.

Students who failed to maintain the prescribed minimum standards were listed as deficient. After the monthly recordings were made, the deficient students were interviewed by their company commanders and the commanding officer, Candidates' Class. The candidate's problems, personal and scholastic, were discussed with him with the aim of helping him make the adjustments necessary to attain the minimum class standards. From the beginning of the program, it was appreciated that some men would not be able to make the transition from civilian to military life.<sup>38</sup> However, the foreknowledge that as a group the candidates represented a select body of healthy, vigorous college graduates, many of whom had already initiated successful civilian careers, served to augur a successful first class.

This expectation was fulfilled. Although the four candidate companies were convened at different dates, all successfully completed the course as outlined in the master schedule.

By the second week of February 1941, the First Candidates' Class was ready for graduation. Of the 266 candidates who reported for training in November of 1940, 233 were commissioned second lieutenants, USMCR, on 20 February 1941. While not apparent at this time, the

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(38) Gen Torrey memo to Col Howard, op. cit.

attrition rate was rather low.<sup>39</sup> Some 12 per cent of the class failed to meet all the standards; some were physically disqualified while others were found wanting in either one, or both, "Military Qualifications" and "General Characteristics."

The Second Candidates' Class convened on 14 March 1941. A total of 407 candidates reported and were organized into four companies. With the exception of a new commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Dubel, the organization and staff were unchanged.

The experience gained from the first class began to pay dividends. Accordingly, the candidate companies were relieved of all administrative details in order that they might devote all their time to training. The early release of the master schedule afforded each company ample time for making adequate preparations for the unit's instruction and training. All instruction was prepared and presented by the officers of each company with the exception of training in marksmanship and special combat weapons, i.e., 37mm antitank gun.

Most of the company-level instruction was provided in small classrooms, one assigned to each training unit. And weather permitting, terrain and range exercises followed lectures and classroom demonstrations.

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(39) Later classes showed an average attrition of 20 per cent.

The four training companies were commanded by officers of the regular Marine Corps. While the original complement of three lieutenants per company, as platoon leaders, was continued, executive officers of the companies were dropped, with a resultant increase in the administrative work on the company commanders.

Colonel Dubel recommended that future classes reassign an executive officer to each company. The executive could relieve the company commander of the burden of administrative details and prepare the company's field problems. The company commander should be free to devote his time to the class' training in order to grade the candidates and make recommendations for commissioning.<sup>40</sup>

Colonel Dubel made two other recommendations: one, that the class size be limited to 400; and the second, that boats be made available to demonstrate landing operations. These recommendations were endorsed by the CMCS and forwarded to the CMC, who accepted the recommendations in substance but advised that any increase in the officers T/O to provide the executive officers was not feasible because of the expansion of FMF and activation of additional units.

The Second Candidates' Class continued to use the marking system adopted in the First Candidates Class. And it was constantly stressed, both to the class and to

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(40) CO 2d CC to CMCS, 17Jun41, Final Rpt, 2d CC, 25Jun41, 1520- MCS; 1st End by CMCS on 2d CC Final Rpt; CMC to CMCS on same rpt, 12Jul41, 1520-30-120.

the staff, that the individual candidate's recommendation for commission would continue to be determined by his proficiency under the two general headings, "General Characteristics," and "Military Qualifications."<sup>41</sup>

Of the 407 candidates originally enrolled in the Second Candidates' Class, 322 measured up to the rigorous "General Characteristics" and "Military Qualifications" standards. They received their commissions on 29 May 1941.

The original plans for OCC had provided for only two classes, but the increases in authorized enlisted strength for fiscal 1942, led to a continuation of the candidates' program.

Accordingly, the Third Candidates' Class was organized during the last week in June and commenced preparations to train a class of about 400. By 14 July the final increment of students totaling 403, had reported and the schedule was set into operation. Although the headquarters detachment assumed much of the Class administrative duties, the lack of company executive officers prevented the company commander from devoting his full attention to the training program.

This class followed along the lines of the foregoing classes; and in accordance with the Candidates' Class mission, instruction continued to emphasize the

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(41) MCS GO No. 1-1941, 14Feb41, 1520-30-35 MCS.

school of the soldier, marksmanship and weapons familiarization, terrain appreciation, squad tactics, and ceremonies and drill.

The class completed its 13-week training cycle by 15 October, and 304 of the original 403 candidates were graduated and commissioned on 1 November.<sup>42</sup>

#### ROC Becomes Post-Graduate Training for OCC

For the first three classes, the ROC had been used to prepare reserve officers called to active duty for service afloat and with the FMF. The Fourth ROC represented a departure from this practise. It was made up of the entire graduating body of the First OCC, an action taken in recognition of the fact that OCC graduates would require additional training before they were ready to assume command of troops in the field. This they **received** in the ROC. The same practise was observed for all subsequent OCC classes, resulting in a two-part basic officer training program, designed to transform civilians into competent troop leaders. In this form, officer training was to continue until the beginning of 1945.

The 233 members of the class started to train during the first week of March 1941. From the very beginning, they were cautioned that although they had successfully

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(42) CO CC to CMCS, Final Rpt, 2d CC, 3Nov41, 1520-30-35 MCS.

completed the candidates program, and been commissioned, this was no cause to let up.<sup>43</sup>

The master schedule called for a course of 15 weeks length and of about 643 hours of basic training, including: small arms marksmanship, field fortifications, and tactics up to and including company level. As weather permitted, instruction and tactical demonstrations were conducted in the field. Most of the remaining time was devoted to landing operations, map reading, and drill and command exercises.

Because of its size, the 233 recently commissioned graduates of the First Candidates' Class, the Fourth ROC was organized into two companies. The senior instructors and staff were regular officers assisted by junior officers who were either graduates of the Basic School, recent students in the Junior Course, Marine Corps Schools or former reservists. Despite personnel shortages, Marine Corps Schools provided a staff of sufficient size. The major portion of administrative detail was eased by the

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(43) In his welcoming address to the class, the Commanding Officer, Col E. O. Ames, emphasized that whereas the Candidates Class represented intensive education in basic and military subjects designated to provide the minimum essentials for the squad leader, the Reserve Class was a course of advanced training to fit commissioned officers for duty as platoon leaders. Remarks of CO 4th ROC, 3Mar41, 1952- MCS.

assignment of additional clerical personnel from the Marine Corps Schools Detachment.<sup>44</sup>

The progress and degree of proficiency of the individual officers was carefully observed and recorded. The ROC employed a grading system which was similar to the one employed at Candidates' Class. It, too, was divided into two categories, "General Characteristics" and "Military Proficiency." The latter measured by written tests and answers to marked problems; the former, by the personal evaluation of each officer by the ROC staff.<sup>45</sup> Those students who failed to measure up to the established criteria of proficiency were eliminated prior to the date of graduation. The unsuccessful were returned to inactive reserve status.

Training for this class culminated in an amphibious landing exercise. The students were formed into an assault battalion, and, under the close supervision of their instructors, landed and seized a beachhead. They generally demonstrated a sound knowledge of tactical principles and usually made the correct decisions, but they were often unable to translate these decisions into orders or to move their units in the field. To correct this serious deficiency, the troop leading exercise was developed. It

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(44) CO 4th ROC, op. cit.; and undated pencil memo from Col A. F. Howard to CMCS re comments on Maj Kerr's Estimate of Training Situation for 4th ROC, 1520- MCS.

(45) Administrative memo No. 2-41, 26Feb41, ROC, 1520- MCS.

consisted of a series of squad, platoon, and company tactical exercises in which the student, acting as unit commander, was presented with a tactical problem, given an approved solution, and required to perform all the steps necessary for the movement of the unit in carrying out the given solution.<sup>46</sup>

The first class to mark the initiation of the new Candidates' Class - Reserve Officers' Class training program was graduated on 29 May 1941. Of the original input of 232, 216 successfully completed the course.<sup>47</sup> While some remained at Quantico to assist in the training of new candidates, and others were assigned to the Base Defense Weapons Class (at Quantico) for further training, the majority were transferred to other Marine Corps activities, the FMF in particular.<sup>48</sup>

The last of the peacetime ROCs, the Fifth, began its program in June. The output of the Second Candidates Class, 322 second lieutenants, plus three hold-overs from the Fourth ROC, entered training on the 9th. There were no apparent differences between either the conduct or curriculum of this class and its predecessors,

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(46) Col J. E. Kerr ltr to CMC, 25Jun56, HistBr HQMC.

(47) OIC RecSec MCS rpt, 1520-30 MCS.

(48) While the records of the 5th ROC indicate that two officers of the 4th were assigned to this class, because of their hospitalization during the course of the 4th, none of the available records indicate the percentage of deficient and how many were physically disqualified.

both the course's content and the class organization adhering to the pattern established during the operation of the Fourth ROC.

The course was completed by the first week of September, and 304 officers were graduated on the 10th.

In accord with the military establishment's continued build up, the same pattern of officer procurement and training was continued during the late months of the fall of 1941. The Fourth Candidates' Class and the Sixth ROC were organized in November and began their training the first week of the month.

#### On the Eve of War

During the 27-month period preceding Pearl Harbor, 1,089 Marine officers completed elementary training courses. Of this total, only 299 were graduates of the regular Basic School. The remainder were graduates of the Reserve Officers' Course at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, or the Reserve Officers' Course at the Basic School. Some of them had entered the Marine Corps as Officer candidates. They had completed the Officers Candidates' Class at Marine Corps Schools before entering the Reserve Officers' Course.

These figures clearly indicate the extent to which the Marine Corps had come to rely on the OCC and ROC for the training of new officers. These two schools, organized during the short-of-war period, provided the

great part of basic officer training by December 1941. They were destined to continue in this capacity until 1945. Thus the Marine Corps had utilized the partial mobilization of the short-of-war period to organize the school system which was to train the vast majority of new ground officers who entered the Marine Corps during the first three years of World War II.

CANDIDATES' CLASSES - PRE-PEARL HARBOR:  
November 1940 - January 1942\*

	DATE	COMMISSIONING DATE	INPUT	DISCHARGED**	OUTPUT
1st CC	1Nov40	20Feb41	266	33	233
2d CC	1Mar41	29May41	407	85	322
3d CC	1Jul41	31Oct41	402	98	304
4th CC	1Nov41	31Jan42	410	104	306

(\*) Compiled from Div of Res folder 90-a-Candidates' Class.

(\*\*) Discharged: Honorable discharges for the following reasons: a.) physical disabilities discovered during the training period or during the initial physical examination after reporting to Quantico, b.) fraudulent enlistment, i.e., marriage (candidates were required to remain single during their training status), c.) the convenience of the student, i.e., hardship suffered because of candidate's absence, d.) because of candidate's inability to maintain the standards of the course in either scholarship or military characteristics, or both.

**RESERVE OFFICERS' COURSE:**  
**October 1939 — January 1942\***

	DATES OF CLASSES	INPUT	OUTPUT
1st ROC	20Oct39 10Nov39	114	114
2d ROC	20Mar40 1Jun40	51	49
3d ROC	19Aug40 15Nov40	108	108
4th ROC	1Mar41 31May41	233	215
5th ROC	9Jun41 10Sep41	324	304
6th ROC	3Nov41 31Jan42	350	343
(*) Untitled Chart 5600-28-9,9A; from a collection of charts listing ROC and PCS classes, from October 1939 through December 1945, MCS.			

## CHAPTER 5

### OFFICER ADVANCED AND SPECIALIST TRAINING

The short-of-war period witnessed sweeping changes in the advanced training of Marine officers. What had been a balanced program, including progressive command and staff courses had been discontinued by December 1941, and participation in those offered by the Army and Navy had been greatly reduced. Specialist courses not only increased in number during the period, but the Marine Corps, which had relied almost entirely on the other services in 1939, assumed most of the burden for this type of training.

#### Peacetime Training

In 1939, Marine officers were afforded the opportunity for advanced professional training in a graduated system of schools and courses. Included were courses offered by the Army, Navy, and foreign governments as well as of the Marine Corps.

The Junior Course, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, represented the most elementary level of command and staff training. Senior lieutenants and captains attending this course were provided with "a sound basic military education; a thorough knowledge of the tactics and techniques of land and amphibious warfare; a sufficient knowledge of the weapons, tactics, and technique of sea warfare to insure intelligent collaboration with the Navy...."<sup>1</sup>

(1) Col P. A. Del Valle memo to Dir P&P, 15Nov39, 1975-80.

The Senior Course, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, represented the intermediate level of professional schooling. Here field grade officers and senior captains were taught "the art of command; a thorough understanding of naval and military strategy and tactics and the national policies they tend to support; and a good working acquaintance with world politics and history...."<sup>2</sup>

Education at a comparable level was also afforded by the Army Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

For colonels and lieutenant colonels, there were opportunities to attend service schools of the highest level. These included the Army War College, Navy War College, the Army Industrial College, and the Ecole Superieure de Guerre in Paris.<sup>3</sup>

The only Marine Corps specialist course for officers was the Base Defense Weapons Course. A component of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico, the course was designed to train company officers in the use of weapons employed in the defense of advanced bases, and light field artillery. Thus the Base Defense Weapons Course was also the primary source for artillery officers for the brigades of the Fleet Marine Force.

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(2) Ibid.

(3) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

One class completed the course each year, beginning in August and graduating the following May. The 13 students pursued their studies at a relatively leisurely pace, averaging about 27 hours of instruction a week during the 41 weeks period. A fairly even balance between base defense and field artillery was maintained, with 330 hours devoted to base defense and 300 to field artillery. The remaining 467 hours were devoted to general military subjects. For most of the course, the students remained at Quantico. It was not until the last four weeks that they moved to Parris Island to engage in actual firing, the first two weeks being devoted to anti-aircraft artillery and the last two to field artillery. In 1939 there was no opportunity to fire coast artillery weapons.<sup>4</sup>

To supplement the limited opportunity for officer specialist training within the Marine Corps, the Army made available small quotas in their regular officers' courses at the Ordnance Field Service, Engineer, Signal Corps, Coast Artillery, Field Artillery, Chemical Warfare, Infantry, and Cavalry Schools. Advanced technical training was available at the Navy Post Graduate School's Radio Engineering course, and at the Sperry Gyroscope Company. The latter offered two courses in the operation and maintenance of antiaircraft equipment, one in

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(4) Encl C (Tentative Schedule, Base Defense Weapons Class, 1939-40) of CMCS ltr to CMC, 12Jun39, 1520-30-120.

sound locators and searchlights, and another in fire control directors (M-4). For those officers interested in languages, there were courses in Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese, at Mexico City, Peiping, and Tokyo respectively. Other schools open to officers included George Washington University Law School and the Lowell Textile Institute.<sup>5</sup>

**APPROXIMATE OUTPUT OF MARINE OFFICERS FROM  
SPECIALIST SCHOOLS, FISCAL 1939\***

COURSE	OUTPUT	SOURCE
Base Defense Wpns	13	1520-30-120 HQMC GenFiles
Army Cavalry	1	Muster roll
Army Chem Warfare	2	1520-10-25
Army Coast Arty	3	1520-10-25
Army Engineer	1	Muster roll
Army Field Arty	6	1520-10-15
Army Field Service	3	Muster roll
Army Infantry	6	Muster roll
Army Signal Corps	3	CMC Rpt, Fiscal 1939
Navy Post Grad	5	1520-35-90
Sperry Gyro Corp	5?	
Lowell Textile Inst	1	Muster roll
GWU Law School	2?	
Spanish (Mexico City)	2	
Japanese (Tokyo)	2	
Chinese (Peiping)	3	
Total	58	

(\* ) All figures which do not have a source indicated have been estimated on the basis of P&P Memo 6769, 18Sep39, 1520-30-120, which gives a list of officers attending schools as of 18Sep39.

Expansion Begins

During the three months following President Roosevelt's declaration of limited national emergency, Marines at

(5) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

Headquarters and at Quantico engaged in a reappraisal of the officer training program to determine what changes, if any, should be made in the light of an enlisted strength expanded to 25,000. Included was a proposal to accelerate the Base Defense Weapons Course. Fearing that a worsening emergency might require the transfer on short notice of officers attached to the Marine Corps Schools to combat units, the Commandant on 16 October directed the Commandant, Marine Corps Schools and the Commanding General, 1st Marine Brigade, to draw up plans for a special three-month Base Defense Weapons Course.<sup>6</sup>

The commanders of both organizations convened special boards during the fall of 1939 to study the problem. The 1st Brigade board, under the presidency of Lieutenant Colonel Raphael Griffin, reported first, recommending that the Base Defense Weapons Course be divided into an Artillery Course and a Base Defense Weapons Course. Both of these courses should be mainly technical, with adequate amounts of artillery materiel available for use in instruction.<sup>7</sup> The Marine Corps Schools board, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Graves B. Erskine, reached the same conclusions. They, too, urged that base defense and field artillery be separated and that instruction should stress technical application.<sup>8</sup>

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(6) CMC ltr to CMCS, 16Oct39, 1520-30-120.

(7) LtCol Raphael Griffin ltr to CG 1stMarBrig, 4Nov39, 1520-30-120.

(8) LtCol G. B. Erskine, et al., ltr to CMCS, 31Oct39, 1520-30-120.

These reports were forwarded to the Commandant in December. They arrived just as the Division of Plans and Policies was completing a study of over-all Marine Corps officer needs for a force of 25,000 enlisted men. On the basis of this study, the Commandant decided that no changes in the officer training program were necessary at that time.<sup>9</sup>

During the early months of 1940, further studies were made. In response to a recommendation from the Marine Corps Schools, the Commandant approved the splitting of the Base Defense Weapons Course into artillery and base defense sections.<sup>10</sup> But it was not until May that any action was taken. On the 25th of that month, the Commandant issued a directive to Marine Corps Schools reducing the length of the 1940 class from 41 to 18 weeks. This action was taken to release officers to the Fleet Marine Force as rapidly as possible. At the same time, the Commandant wished to maintain the "continuity of instruction and the present high standards at the Marine Corps Schools."<sup>11</sup>

The task of reconciling these two seemingly contradictory goals fell to the staff of Marine Corps Schools. Their solution was to put into effect the separation into base defense and artillery sections already authorized

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(9) P&P memo 6900, 26Dec39, 1520-30-120.

(10) CMCS ltr to CMC, 1 Mar40, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CMCS, 7Mar40, 1520-30-120.

(11) CMC ltr to CMCS, 25May40, 1520-30-120.

and to reduce the time devoted to general military subjects.<sup>12</sup> The 480 hours offered in the previous class were reduced to 182 in the Base Defense Section and to 154 in the Field Artillery Section. The time saved was put to good use. Not only were there more hours available for artillery instruction, but more time was scheduled for actual firing. The 54 hours devoted to firing of all weapons the previous year was increased to 165, 75 of them for field artillery and 90 for base defense artillery.<sup>13</sup>

Thirty-five students, an increase of 22 over the 1939 class, were ordered to report for the Base Defense Weapons class beginning on 26 August and graduating on 23 December 1940. In addition to the 24 regular officers assigned to instruction, 11 reserve officers were included in the class. Of the 35 students, 10 were assigned to the Base Defense Section and 25 to the Field Artillery Section.<sup>14</sup>

The policy of sending officers to Army, and Navy and civilian schools was continued during 1940, with quotas filled at the same schools as the year before. At the Coast Artillery School, the Marine Corps was granted an additional seven billets, making a total of

(12) Encl C (Tentative Schedule, Base Defense Weapons Class, 1940-41) of CMCS ltr to CINC, 18Jun40, 1520-30-120.

(13) Ibid.

(14) CMC ltr to CMCS, 25Jun40, 1520-30-120. CMCS ltr to CMC, 19Nov40, 1520-30-120.

eight. These billets were filled by officers assigned to defense battalions who were not graduates of the Base Defense Weapons Class or of the Army Field Artillery School.<sup>15</sup>

#### 1941 Developments

The Junior and Senior Courses at Marine Corps Schools, untouched by the initial expansion of the short-of-war period, were discontinued upon completion of the 1940-41 term. For the Junior Course, graduation day was set ahead to 26 December 1940. The Senior Course graduated a month later. Valuable as these advanced courses had proved for the professional education of Marine officers, shortages of officers to command the growing Marine Corps left no alternative to the suspension of the courses. So serious was the shortage of officers that in the 2d Division it was normal to have only one officer in each battalion above the rank of second lieutenant.<sup>16</sup>

A reduction also took place in the utilization of command and staff schools of the other services. L'Ecole Superieure de Guerre in Paris had closed in 1939 when France went to war. At the Army Command and General Staff School and War College the Marine quotas were dropped following the 1940 school year. For 1941, only the Naval

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(15) P&P memo 7189, 28Jun40, 1520-10-15.

(16) CMCS ltrs to CMC, 26Dec40 and 16Dec40, both 1520-30-120. LtGen K. E. Rockey ltr to CMC, 6Nov55, HistBr, HQMC.

War College and the Army Industrial College were utilized for advanced Marine officer training.<sup>17</sup>

The year 1941 saw sweeping changes in the officer specialist program as well. Increasing pressures of mobilization increased the demand for trained specialists at a time when Army and Navy schools, the traditional source of supply, were not only unable to provide additional facilities, but in fact had to reduce Marine quotas in order to meet their own requirements. As a result, the Marine Corps had to expand its own officer specialist training program. This was done by stepping up the output of the Base Defense Weapons Course and by instituting new programs in the specialist schools of the Training Center at Quantico.

Hardly had the 1940 Base Defense Weapons Class graduated, when the Marine Corps announced the officer training program to cover 1941 and the first half of 1942. Four Base Defense Weapons Classes were projected for the period.<sup>18</sup> The first of these began on 20 February and ran for a period of 16 weeks, graduating on 10 June. Of the 40 students, 25 were recent Naval Academy graduates, 13 were graduates of Platoon Leaders Class.<sup>19</sup> As in the previous class, the Field Artillery Section with 22 students, was favored.<sup>20</sup>

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(17) CMC rpts, fiscal 1940 and 1941.

(18) Encl A to P&P memo 7690, 26Dec40, 1520-30-120.

(19) Ibid.

(20) CMC ltr to CMCS, 13Jan41, 1520-30-120.

A total of 498 hours of instruction was offered in the Field Artillery Section and 496 in the Base Defense Weapons Section, a few hours more than in the previous course. But in the Field Artillery Section and in the antiaircraft course of the Base Defense Weapons Section, the hours devoted to purely artillery subjects, in contrast to general subjects, decreased, in the former from 317 to 245 hours, and in the latter from 217 to 159 hours. Only in the coast artillery course was there an increase, from 72 to 137 hours.<sup>21</sup>

The second class, beginning on 20 June, was made up of 75 students, two-thirds of whom were graduates of the Fourth ROC. Once again, the Field Artillery Section was favored, with 45 students, the remaining 30 being assigned to the Base Defense Artillery Section.<sup>22</sup> The hours of instruction were reduced below those offered in the previous class, this time to 420. By cutting the hours devoted to general military subjects, it was possible to increase the time given to artillery instruction. The fact that the students had just completed intensive basic training in ROC or its equivalent made it possible to concentrate on artillery subjects without detriment to the general military education of the student.<sup>23</sup>

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(21) MCS pamphlet, "Master Schedule, Base Defense Weapons Course, Feb-Jun 1941," 1520-30-120.

(22) P&P memo 9128, 9May41, 1520-30-120.

(23) MCS pamphlet, "Master Schedule, 2d BDWC, Jun-Sep 1941," 1520-30-120.

**HOURS OF INSTRUCTION, BASE DEFENSE WEAPONS SCHOOL**

SUBJECT	1939			1940			1941	
	Class	Range	Total	Class	Range	Total	Feb	Jun
FIELD ARTY	255	54	309	242	75	317	245	242
COAST ARTY	115	0	115	54	18	72	111	137
AA ARTY	149	54	203	145	72	217	159	170
GEN SUBJ			480			182 154	BDS226 FAS253	114 178
TOTAL			1,107			496 498	BDS496 FAS498	421 420

(\* ) Compiled from Master Schedules, BDWC, filed in 1520-30-120.

These changes in the Base Defense Weapons Class were designed to provide the expanded Marine Corps with adequate numbers of artillery officers. In other specialist fields, rapid expansion created a similar problem, for the demands for trained officers far exceeded the supply from the small quotas at Army and Navy schools. Unable to secure larger quotas, the Marine Corps was obliged to provide training facilities of its own.

A program was developed during the spring of 1941 to send graduates of Reserve Officers' Courses and the Basic School to attend the specialist courses in the Training Center, Quantico.<sup>24</sup>

At the Engineer School, officer students took an informal course in camp construction and all the enlisted courses, e.g., demolition, camouflage, refrigeration, water distillation and purification. During the summer and fall of 1941, five officers from the Fourth ROC and six from the Fifth ROC successfully completed the full cycle of engineer courses.<sup>25</sup> The Ordnance School set up a separate officers' course, held at the Army Ordnance School during 1941, pending the completion of the Marine Ordnance School at Quantico. Four officers completed this course each month.<sup>26</sup> Motor transport officers were trained in the Mechanics' course at the Motor Transport School, with from six to eight officers, graduates of ROC and Basic School, in each class.<sup>27</sup> Amphibian Tractor officers received their training at Dunedin, Florida.

Despite the inauguration by the Marine Corps of its own specialist training programs, the old policy of sending officers to schools of the other services and civilian

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(24) CMC ltr to CMCS, 8May41, 1520-30-120.

(25) CO TC MB Quantico ltrs containing graduation lists of the EngrSch, 17Jul41 to 4Dec41, 1520-30-70. BrigGen Nelson K. Brown ltr to CMC, 23Jul56, HistBr HQMC.

(26) P&P memo 9321, 28Jun41, 1520-30-125.

(27) CO TC MB Quantico ltrs to CMC, 20Aug41, 24Nov41, 1520-30-90.

institutions was continued. The Marine Corps had to make a few minor modifications to meet reorganizations of these schools, particularly those of the Army, but, for the most part, the program remained the same.

The Marine Corps retained its quotas at the Army Field Artillery, Signal Corps, Engineer, and Chemical Warfare Schools. It lost its quotas at the Infantry, Cavalry, and Field Service Schools.<sup>28</sup> New programs were started at the Ordnance Service School, and at the Armored Force School, where Marine Officers attended the Tank Maintenance Course and the Company Officers' Course.<sup>29</sup> Although Marine officers attended many of the same schools, the courses had been changed. In place of the old regular courses, the Army had substituted short basic courses, usually titled Company or Battery Officers courses.<sup>30</sup>

### Conclusions

On 7 December, the Marine Corps was certainly not prepared to meet the new demands for trained specialists brought about by the coming of war. Not only were there still difficulties to iron out in existing schools, but the tremendous expansion following the outbreak of war

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(28) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941.

(29) P&P memo 7742, 9Jan41, 1520-30-180. P&P memo 9696, 23Sep41, 1520-10-15. P&P memo 8022, 22Mar41, 1520-10-115.

(30) Robert R. Palmer, Bell I. Wiley, William R. Keast, The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Troops - United States Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), 260-261. Hereinafter cited as Palmer, Wiley, and Keast.

created demands for specialists on an unprecedented scale. Still, the groundwork had been laid. The activation of the Training Center at Quantico with its component schools furnished the pattern for the majority of specialist training in the Marine Corps during World War II. It was only necessary to perfect and expand this system to meet the demands of a rapidly expanding Marine Corps for trained specialists.

The discontinuing of advanced command and staff training, unavoidable as it was under the circumstances, left a gap in the officer training program. The significance of this gap was to become apparent after Pearl Harbor when Marine units went into combat. Then the shortage of trained staff officers would require the reestablishment of an advanced professional officer school.

## CHAPTER 6

### TRAINING IN NON-FMF UNITS

Although the main effort of the Marine Corps was directed towards the maintenance of the Fleet Marine Force, Marines were called upon to perform other duties both ashore and afloat. In fiscal 1940 there were Marine detachments aboard 57 combatant vessels of the Navy of the size of cruisers and larger. A total of 3,583, or six per cent of the total strength of the Marine Corps was assigned to this duty. An additional 14,000 were manning Marine and Navy installations ashore. These included housekeeping troops at Marine posts and stations and guard detachments at naval installations.<sup>1</sup>

Training at these units emphasized basic infantry subjects in an effort to prepare as many individuals as possible for FMF duty. For it was the FMF that was charged with the execution of the amphibious assignments which were the primary mission of the Marine Corps.

To this end, three programs were established. These were annual small arms qualification for all Marines, a program of basic individual infantry training as directed by Marine Corps Order 146, and small unit training under Mobilization Plan A.

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(1) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941. The figure 14,000 is an approximation, based on the figures in CMC rpt for Naval and Marine activities ashore, less an estimate for Marines in primarily a training status.

The small arms marksmanship program was organized to give as many enlisted men and officers as possible an opportunity to qualify with rifle and pistol each year. This program, which had its origins about the turn of the century, continued until 20 January 1941, when it was limited to those who had not fired a qualification course during 1940.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the number firing for qualification took a sharp drop. In 1939, approximately 90 per cent of the Marines on active duty fired the rifle for record. Two years later, in 1941, this figure had dropped to 60 per cent. That year, 31,755 officers and men fired for record and 24,207, or 78 per cent of them qualified. For the pistol, the figures are not so high. A total of 20,265 officers and men fired for record, and of these 15,280 qualified.<sup>3</sup>

Marine Corps Order 146 called for the training of all individuals in basic infantry subjects. To assure uniformity in the program, all unit commanders were required to submit a training schedule covering the MCO 146 subjects for each fiscal year. Thus the basic infantry training throughout the non-FMF units of the Marine Corps was brought under central control, and a large measure of uniformity was achieved.<sup>4</sup> MCO 146 remained in effect throughout the "short-of-war" period without modification.

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(2) SecNav dispatch to all MarCorps Activities, 13Jan41, 2400-60.

(3) CMC rpt, fiscal 1941.

(4) P&P memo 6598, 27Feb39, 1975-60.

TABLE I: MCO 146 SUBJECTS<sup>5</sup>

Pvt, PFC, Field Music

- \*Individual instruction without arms
- \*Individual instruction with the rifle
- \*Close Order Drill, rifle squad
- \*Service rifle caliber .30
- \*Automatic pistol, caliber .45
- \*Automatic rifle, caliber .30
- Thompson submachine gun
- V. B. rifle grenade
- Hand grenade
- \*Pack, equipment, and clothing
- Musketry
- Extended Order, rifle squad
- Scouting and Patrolling
- \*Shelter tents
- \*Field sanitation
- \*Personal hygiene
- \*First Aid
- \*Duties of a sentinel on post and over prisoners
- \*Military courtesy
- Patrolling in small wars

Corporals

- \*Close order drill, rifle platoon
- \*Combat signals
- Extended order, rifle platoon
- Marches, security on the march, and outposts
- \*Interior guard duty
- Combat principles, rifle squad

Sergeants, all grades

- \*Close order drill, rifle company
- Combat principles, rifle platoon
- Tactics and technique of the rifle company
- Shelter
- Defense and attack of cities, riot duty

(\* ) Only these subjects will be taught to artillery, antiaircraft, signal, and chemical units.

(5) Encl A to Ibid.

Realization of the goals set forth in MCO 146 varied considerably between shore-based and shipboard units, depending upon the training requirements of the units themselves. In shore based units these requirements were negligible. It did not take very much additional training to prepare a Marine who had already completed his recruit training for interior guard duty. Personnel assigned to administrative and service duties at Marine Corps bases received their training in specialist schools or on the job, so it was not necessary to maintain training programs for these duties within the unit. As a result, in almost every case, all the MCO 146 subjects could be covered.<sup>6</sup>

But training for shipboard detachments was a different story. Marines were assigned to secondary batteries and to other duties aboard ship. Training in these duties naturally was given first priority, the remaining time being devoted to training under MCO 146. In addition, the cramped living conditions aboard ship limited instruction in most subjects to lecture and prevented practical demonstration and drill.

The training schedule of USS Salt Lake City given in Table II is typical of the training in ship's duties required of Marine detachments.

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(6) Training Schedules for fiscal 1941 in 1975-60-20.

TABLE II: TRAINING SCHEDULE, MARINE DET.  
 USS Salt Lake City<sup>7</sup>

Antiaircraft Battery

Pointing drill	Daily
Runs with plane target	When plane available
Sight setting drill	Daily
Loading drill	Daily
Casualty drill	Daily
Safety precautions instruction	Daily
Ammunition supply	Weekly
Firing practices	When prescribed

General Drills

General Quarters	As prescribed
Fire	Weekly
Collision	Weekly
Abandon ship	Weekly
Fire and Rescue	Weekly
Man overboard	Weekly
Landing force	As prescribed
Surf landing	As prescribed

Chemical Warfare

Gas mask instruction	As prescribed
Gas chamber	As prescribed

(7) CO MarDet USS Salt Lake City ltr to CMC, 9Aug40,  
 1975-60-20.

The final training program for non-FMF units was prescribed under Mobilization Plan A. Plan A was drawn up in 1938 and revised on 1 March 1940. Its purpose was to increase the Fleet Marine Force to full authorized strength by the "transfer of...personnel from other Marine Corps activities...in order to produce a force of regular Marines of sufficient strength to meet a peace time emergency...."<sup>8</sup>

These "other Marine Corps activities" e.g., Marine barracks, were each assigned a specific quota and given the designation of the specific FMF unit to which their quota would report in event of mobilization.

Under the 1940 revision, Plan A was expected to mobilize a total of 2,663 officers and enlisted who were assigned to units as follows:<sup>9</sup>

Units to be Augmented

Hq Co, Serv Co, Transp Co,  
 1st and 2d Brigades . . . . . 479

Units to be Organized

1st, 2d, 5th, 6th Medical Cos, 7th Marines  
 3d Bn, 6th Marines . . . . . 2,184

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(8) CMC ltr to CG Dept of Pac, et al., 1Mar40. All Plan A references in War Plans Section, General Plans, folder entitled "Plan A: (Revised 1940) General File, 26 Jan 1940 - 22 Apr 1942."

(9) CMC ltr to CG Dept of Pac, 26Jan40.

In preparation under this plan for service with the FMF, quotas were "to be organized into squads, or larger units, as directed, and trained periodically as such combat units....

"Men assigned to machine gun companies, 81mm mortar platoons and antitank platoons...were to be given the necessary preliminary training and target practice."<sup>10</sup>

By comparison with the MGO 146 program, commanding officers were given a large degree of latitude in the training of their Plan A quotas. They did not have to submit annual training schedules, nor were they directed which subjects to teach. Lacking these requirements, it was more difficult to achieve uniformity in training throughout the Marine Corps.

Plan A was never put into operation. With the increases in authorized strength and the mobilization of the Reserve, the 1st and 2d Brigades (later divisions) were built up without resort to Plan A. On 3 September 1940 the quotas were reassigned to "new units of similar type, the designation of which will be prescribed by the Major General Commandant."<sup>11</sup>

These new assignments were not forthcoming before the attack on Pearl Harbor. In fact, they never were

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(10) Ibid.

(11) CMC ltr to CG Dept of Pac, et al., 3Sep40, filed in folder "Plan A: (Revised 1940) General File, 26 Jan 1940 - 22 Apr 1942."

made. However, the Plan A contingents continued to train as before. And, as many individual members were subsequently transferred to the FMF, their training under Plan A was by no means a loss.

## CHAPTER 7

### TRAINING IN THE FMF

#### Background

Fleet Marine Force training was primarily concerned with the preparation of units for the execution of the amphibious mission. It was in the FMF that the trained individuals, graduates of the various programs described in previous chapters, were brought together in tactical units to perfect the teamwork so necessary to the successful amphibious operation.

During the six years which had elapsed between the organization of the FMF in 1933 and the declaration of limited national emergency which followed the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, many hours had been spent in amphibious training. A progressive system had been worked out, beginning with basic individual training, progressing through the training of units from the squad through the brigade, and culminating in joint amphibious training in conjunction with the Fleet. At each level, the tactics and techniques applicable to it were mastered before the more advanced stages of training were introduced.

The annual fleet landing exercise constituted the final stage of training. In the twenties there were occasional exercises, but commitments in the Caribbean and China prevented more frequent training. It was not until two years after the formation of the FMF that they were

put on a regular annual basis. Beginning in 1935, the Annual Schedules of Operations of the Training Squadron, Atlantic Fleet, included fleet landing exercises. Known as Flexes, these exercises were held every winter except 1937 on the islands of Vieques and Culebra off the coast of Puerto Rico.

It was not possible for all FMF units to participate in Flexes. With the exception of 1937, only the 1st Brigade, stationed on the East Coast, took part. In that year, the 2d Brigade from the West Coast and a provisional Army brigade joined the East Coast unit in an exercise on the island of San Clemente off the coast of California. In other years, minor fleet landing exercises at San Clemente gave the 2d Brigade an opportunity for joint amphibious training.<sup>1</sup>

These joint exercises had two main purposes. First, they were intended to develop the coordination and teamwork so essential to the successful amphibious operation. In a joint exercise, all components of a naval attack force, the commanders and staffs, the combat troops, the logistical organization, the naval gunfire groups, the transport elements, and the supporting air forces were brought together to train as a team. In addition, the joint landing exercise was the closest approximation in training to the actual conditions of war. When these

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(1) U. S. Marines and Amphibious War, 45-56.

exercises were conducted as two-sided maneuvers, all hands, from the lowliest rifleman to the commanding general were able to test their ability to plan and act on the basis of intelligence of the enemy.

Needless to say, the utmost in realism was essential to the realization of both these goals. If the landing exercise contained any considerable number of constructive troops and supplies, if commanders and staffs were permitted to formulate plans and take actions without regard for the enemy situation as presented in the exercise, if troops were not compelled to take the security measures vital to survival in combat, then the joint exercise fell short of its goal.

The annual schedule for this progressive training was coordinated with the annual fleet employment schedule so that the FMF would be ready for participation in the fleet landing exercise. A typical training schedule of the late thirties was organized by fiscal year quarters as follows:

a) First phase. 1 July - 30 September. Individual training small arms firing, combat training and firing for smaller units.

b) Second phase. 1 October - 31 December. Combat training of all units up to and including the brigade....

c) Third phase. 1 January - 31 March. 1st Marine Brigade: Combat training and tactics, Fleet Landing Exercise No. 5....2d Marine Brigade: Combat training and tactics of all units up to and including the brigade....

d) Fourth Phase. 1 April - 30 June.  
1st Marine Brigade: Combat training - annual  
small arms record firing. 2d Marine Brigade:  
Combat training and tactics, landing exercises,  
preparation for annual small arms firing.<sup>2</sup>

Steady progress was made in training during these six years. The progress, however, was toward the limited objective of bringing the very limited available forces to a state of combat readiness so far as the limited, and in many cases, unsatisfactory available equipment would permit. In 1939, the ground formations of the FMF totalled only 3,254 officers and men. The only landing craft available to them were a few experimental prototypes, most of which were unsatisfactory, and there were no troop transports except the old Henderson. In spite of these deficiencies, enough progress had been made so that the FMF did not have to start from scratch when 8 September 1939 ushered in an era of expansion and enlarged responsibilities.

#### Fleet Landing Exercise Six

The executive order of 8 September authorized an increase for the Marine Corps from 19,000 to 25,000 officers and men to be achieved by 30 June 1940. Of this total 4,831 were allotted to the FMF, increasing its strength from 3,254 to 8,085. From this 150 per cent increase, six new units were organized. These included four defense battalions (the 1st through the 4th), the 8th Marines and the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines.<sup>3</sup>

(2) CMC rpt, fiscal 1939.

(3) CMC rpt, fiscal 1940.

Training policy for this period does not appear to have undergone any major change.<sup>4</sup> The same progressive training program, arranged by fiscal year quarters, was drawn up, including provision for two landing exercises. These were Flex-6 and a minor exercise at San Clemente. But these two exercises did not provide training opportunities for all FMF units. Only the 1st and 2d Brigades and the 2d Defense Battalion were included. In this regard, at least, training in the FMF did not keep pace with expansion.

Flex-6, the first joint exercise since the outbreak of World War II, was held on the islands of Vieques and Culebra and in the surrounding Caribbean waters during the winter of 1940. But it was rather the last episode of a past era than the opening scene of a new one. Both in general organization of the training program and in composition of participating forces, Flex-6 resembled the fleet landing exercise of the previous year. With only 2,200 Marines of the 1st Brigade in the landing force, 16 combatant ships, one cargo ship, and one destroyer transport, and only 29 experimental landing craft, Flex-6 was still a very limited effort.

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(4) Lack of records does not permit an evaluation of unit or basic individual training, so this statement applies only to the organization of the over-all program and to joint amphibious exercises. For the same reason, the discussion to follow will be confined to this last phase of training.

All forces engaged in Flex-6 were under the command of Rear Admiral Hayne Ellis, Commander Atlantic Fleet. Designated the Farragut Attack Force, they included the battleships, Texas, New York, and Arkansas, the cruisers, Wichita, Vincennes, Tuscaloosa, and San Francisco, five destroyers, four submarines, the cargo ship Capella, the destroyer transport Manley, and training ship Wyoming. The 1st Marine Brigade, made up of Brigade Headquarters, the 5th Marines, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, and Brigade Tank, Engineer, Transportation, and Chemical Companies, comprised the ground element. Air forces included the 1st Marine Aircraft Group and a Navy patrol squadron.

The Marines loaded out of Norfolk and Quantico during the first two weeks of January 1940. Materiel was loaded aboard the USS Capella, the only cargo ship available. Her 1,000-ton capacity was insufficient to stow all the Brigade and Air Group gear, so the overflow of 113 tons had to be loaded aboard battleships and cruisers of the Attack Force. No effort was made at combat loading, as the gear was to be landed at Culebra and Puerto Rico where the Marines were going to establish base camps.

No troop transports were provided, with the result that Marines of the landing force had to be packed aboard the already crowded warships and in the Capella. To make the voyage to the West Indies under these conditions was a hardship to the individual Marine, but far more serious

was the inability to practice combat loading of troops and materiel aboard transports and cargo ships. Thus one of the greatest shortcomings of previous landing exercises was repeated in Flex-6.

Arriving at Culebra on 16 January, the 1st Marine Brigade landed and set up camp. The next 29 days were devoted to unit training ashore, including squad, platoon, company, and battalion problems. Infantry units engaged in squad landings from rubber boats, rifle and machine-gun antiaircraft fire at towed targets, and platoon and company combat firing problems. In addition, the antitank platoon engaged in an antiboat exercise, firing at towed wooden sleds, and 81mm mortars fired both defensive and offensive problems, the former involving defense of a landing area, and the latter the support of a battalion in the attack.<sup>5</sup>

Culmination of infantry training came with four day battalion bivouacs on Vieques. The Capella carried each battalion individually in turn across from Culebra, landed them, then withdrew, so that battalion commanders and staffs would be able to test their skill in independent operations. While ashore on Vieques, the battalions conducted field exercises and maneuvers controlled by umpires.

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(5) CinCLant, rpt on U. S. Fleet Landing Exercise No. 6, 13Jun40, hereinafter cited as CinCLant Flex-6 Rpt. Unless otherwise noted, all sources are in Div P&P Files, HistBr, HQMC.

The 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, conducted 13 days of firing, using all methods of terrestrial observation, and a battalion survey problem using an aerial photograph mosaic. Landing exercises included a full strength battery landing on Vieques, followed by four days of training ashore. The four days were spent in reconnaissance for and occupation of a position, simulated fire in support of an infantry attack, a night displacement to new positions in support of a developing attack, and support of this attack with scheduled and observed fires.

Training for other units was of a similar nature. The tank company fired at stationary and moving targets and practiced loading and landing tanks from lighters. The Chemical Company fired their 4.2 mortars, prepared and fired land mines, and made practice landings. The Land Transportation Company engaged in intensive practice in handling vehicles from ship to shore.<sup>6</sup>

The culmination of the preliminary training phase came on 15 February with a full Brigade landing. Called the "Makee Learn Problem," it was designed to familiarize all hands with the techniques of ship-to-shore movement. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 5th Marines, each supported by a platoon of tanks, landed on Culebra and advanced to seize a force beachhead line. The 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, landed one battery on Luis Pena Cay, a small adjacent island, and two batteries on Culebra, and went

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(6) CG 1stMarBrig, rpt on Flex-6 to CMC, 29Apr40.

into position to deliver supporting fires. Except for the landing of two platoons of the left flank assault company in inverse order, and a shortage of boats for the artillery, the problem was carried out very smoothly.<sup>7</sup>

With the completion of the preliminary training phase, all hands turned to the amphibious maneuvers which were the main purpose of Flex-6. In an effort to achieve as much realism as possible, a problem was set up on the assumption that an enemy power, Red, was attempting to gain control of the Caribbean. Red bases at Jamaica and Trinidad had been reinforced and skeleton forces landed at Vieques, Culebra, and St. Thomas. The Red commander had been directed to hold the islands at all costs to prevent the friendly (Blue) forces from exploiting Vieques Sound as a major fleet base. (See maps in back).

Blue forces, in the execution of their war plans, moved to gain control of the Caribbean by establishing a system of defensive positions on which to base naval forces. At the time of the occupation of Vieques, Culebra, and St. Thomas by Red, the 1st Marine Brigade was en route to the Caribbean training area aboard vessels of the Atlantic Squadron. This force was directed to seize the Red-occupied islands and to secure Vieques Sound as a major naval base.

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(7) Rpt of critique, "Fleet Exercise Number 6, Makee Learn Problem, Culebra."

This general situation was drawn up to provide a realistic background for the actual landing exercises. These were two in number, one on Vieques and the other on Culebra, to represent the attack by Blue forces to capture these islands from Red.

The Blue Forces for the Vieques exercise were commanded by Rear Admiral Ellis and included an offshore fire support group of three battleships, an inshore fire support group of four destroyers, a submarine group, an air group made up of Naval Patrol Squadron 33, a transport group including the Wyoming, Capella, and Manley, and a landing force.<sup>8</sup>

Brigadier General H. M. Smith, commander landing force, divided his force into three groups. The landing group, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel A. H. Noble, included the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, Company A, 5th Marines, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines (less Battery A), 1st Chemical Company, 1st Tank Company, and an Engineer Detachment. The Air element, Lieutenant Colonel Field Harris, consisted of the 1st Marine Air Group, less detachment assigned to Red. Major H. B. Liversedge's 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, constituted the reserve group.<sup>9</sup>

Colonel Charles D. Barrett's Red forces included Headquarters Company, 5th Marines, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines (less Company A), Battery A, 10th Marines, 1st

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(8) Commander, Farragut Attack Force, Annel J, Pt III (OpOrder) to Campaign Order 4-40, 14Feb40.

(9) Landing Force Op Order 1-40, 2Feb40.

Engineer Company, a platoon of the 1st Tank Company, detachments of the 1st Chemical and Motor Transport Companies and 14 aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Group. In addition, the Red commander was given the following simulated weapons: four 6-inch naval guns, four 3-inch antiaircraft guns, 16 .50-caliber machine guns, four mobile searchlights and sound locators, land mines sufficient for a 200 yard square area, enough TNT for a 200-yard-square booby trap, and all types of wire.<sup>10</sup>

Planning by both sides was an integral part of the maneuvers and was intended to be as realistic as possible. But certain artificialities could not be avoided, particularly on the Blue side. Because the unit training program had ended only seven days before D-Day, it was impossible to emplace Red forces on Vieques far enough in advance to permit the landing plan to be developed from intelligence gained from actual enemy positions. As a result, beaches were selected and units assigned missions in the attack without regard for actual enemy dispositions ashore.

The Blue Landing Force Order, issued on 2 February, called for a main landing by 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, reinforced on beaches on the south shore of the island. Employing two companies in assault and one in reserve, the battalion was to seize the Force Beachhead Line and

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(10) Defense Force Op Order 1-40, 2Feb40.

be prepared for further advance on order to seize the airfield. At H-minus 3 hours, Company A, 5th Marines, Reinforced, was to land from rubber boats 2,000 yards west of the main beaches, advance inland to seize Pole Hill, and be prepared to support the main landing by fire and movement.<sup>11</sup>

After this operation order had been issued, Blue air and surface forces began reconnaissance of Vieques. Aircraft flew photo missions over the island, and submarines took photographs of the landing beaches while submerged at periscope depth. Two patrols landed from submarines on the night of 20 February. Some information was gathered about the beaches which had already been designated for the landing, but neither the patrols nor the aircraft were able to furnish the Blue commander with any information concerning Red defenses.<sup>12</sup>

The Red dispositions that Blue reconnaissance failed to discover were based on two factors. First, the sparse forces available to Red made a defense of the beaches impractical. Second, the Red mission, to deny Vieques Sound to Blue as a major fleet anchorage, meant that it was only necessary for him to maintain himself in an easily defensible position from which to bring to bear

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(11) Landing Force Op Order 1-40, 2Feb40.

(12) Rpt of Critique, Flex-6 Landing Exercise No. 1, Vieques, 20-23Feb40.

air power and land-based artillery. With these two considerations in mind, Red forces withdrew into very strong natural defense positions in the eastern end of Vieques and emplaced their 6-inch guns to cover the adjacent waters of the Sound.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the actual troop dispositions, there was a "constructive" airfield within the Red perimeter on the eastern end of the island. It was the creation of this field by the chief umpire which made the Red plan of defense possible, for it provided the air base from which aircraft could operate to deny Vieques Sound to Blue. Obviously, the Blue airfield could not detect this constructive field. Attack plans were accordingly drawn to seize the actual airfield on the island.

When it became apparent that the Blue commander was unaware of the dispositions of Red and had drawn up his landing plan in ignorance of enemy positions, the chief umpire originated a dispatch from the 1st Marine Air Group, revealing Red positions. In response to the new information, Blue drew up an alternate plan calling for the landing of only two companies of infantry to seal off the causeways leading to the eastern end of the island.

Artillery was also to land and, in conjunction with naval gunfire ships, destroy the Red positions. But for training purposes, the original landing plan was executed so

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(13) Defense Force Op Order 1-40, 2Feb40. Rpt of Critique, Flex-6, Problem 1.

that the full dress landing operation could be carried out. The Brigade Commander, Brigadier General H. M. Smith, expressed the reaction of the commanders and staffs when he remarked:

The unexpected receipt from the Chief Umpire of complete information concerning Red tended to take the heart out of the problem...Not only was it desired to test all of the major operating agencies of both floating and shore forces in team action, but the skill of the various commanders...And since every effort was directed at operating as would be done in war the problem should have been allowed to progress as it would have under such conditions. Otherwise a chart maneuver would suffice.

With the decision to execute the original plan, the attack force approached Culebra on 22 February. In the early hours of 23 February, Manley debarked Company A in rubber boats. Landing slightly out of position, the company was still able to advance without opposition to capture Pole Hill.

At 0515, troops of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, went over the side into waiting ships' boats to make the main landing. Debarkation and movement of boats to assembly areas went off smoothly, and at about 0600, the leading wave crossed the line of departure. At about 1,000 yards from the beach, the control boat of the first wave veered to starboard, pulling the whole wave off course, with the result that it landed to the east of the designated beaches. The fault of poorly trained naval personnel, this error pointed up the necessity for

thorough team training for all members of the landing team. Red's decision not to defend the beaches permitted the Blue assault units to rectify the landing error by shifting along the shore.

The movement inland to seize the force beachhead line was carried out swiftly and smoothly. But in view of the fact that the intention of Red not to contest the movement was known to the attackers, this part of the exercise was singularly lacking in realism. No further advance was planned, so the seizure of the force beachhead line marked the end of the infantry phase of the problem.

The artillery, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, less one battery, was landed from tank lighters and set up on the beach ready to fire. All these operations were carried out smoothly, but there was no opportunity to displace forward or to train in the ammunition supply problems which would be encountered in an actual operation.<sup>14</sup>

Training in the logistics aspects of an amphibious landing was extremely limited. It was not possible to carry out the build up of supplies ashore, nor was there sufficient transportation to move supplies forward to front line units. Shortages of everything, ships, supplies, men, and time prevented it. Logistics was confined to the operations necessary to maintain the landing force

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(14) Rpt of Critique, Flex-6, Problem 1.

ashore for one day. Shore and beach parties landed, but they had nothing to do, as no supplies were landed other than those carried by the troops.<sup>15</sup>

Medical training was more complete. First aid stations were set up in positions protected from enemy gunfire and weather. Casualties in a logical variety were tagged and evacuated to the beach. At that point, the medical detail of the beach party loaded casualties aboard ambulance boats for evacuation to the designated hospital ship, where they were taken aboard using the litter hoist.<sup>16</sup>

Problem No. 2, the attack on Culebra, was planned as a part of the over-all naval exercise involving the securing of Vieques Sound as a fleet anchorage. The Blue and Red forces were about the same in strength and composition as in Problem No. 1. Again the Blue attackers had a fleet of three battleships organized as an offshore fire support group, four destroyers acting as an inshore fire support group, and a transport group made up of the Wyoming, Capella, and Manley. The landing force was of the same strength as in the previous problem, but this time the troops who had been defenders before exchanged allegiance with an equal number of the landing force thus assuring that all troops would have experience in making a landing.<sup>17</sup>

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(15) Ibid.; and Landing Force Admin Order 2-40, 2Feb40.

(16) Rpt of Critique, Flex-6.

(17) Commander Farragut Attack Force, Annex K, Part III, to Campaign Order 4-40, 26Feb40.

The Blue Landing group, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel C. D. Barrett, included the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Company E, 5th Marines, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, less Battery B, the 1st Chemical and 1st Engineer Companies, both less detachments assigned to Red, and the 1st Tank Company, less the 2d Platoon. The Air consisted of the 1st Marine Aircraft Group, less a detachment, and the brigade reserve was made up of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines.<sup>18</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel A. H. Noble's defense force was made up of Headquarters Company, 5th Marines, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, less Company E, Battery B, 10th Marines, 2d Platoon, 1st Tank Company, and detachments of 1st Chemical, Motor Transport, and Engineer Companies. In addition, the Red commander had 15 aircraft, one destroyer, two submarines, and the following simulated forces: four 6-inch guns, four 3-inch antiaircraft guns, 16 .50-caliber antiaircraft machine guns, and land mines and TNT.<sup>19</sup>

Plans for both sides were generally similar to those employed in Problem 1. The Blue attackers intended to make a preliminary landing on the northeastern tip and their main landing on beaches located on the southeastern tip of the island. Landing at H-minus 4 hours from rubber boats, Company E was to push inland to seize Dolphin Head, a hill dominating the main landing beaches, and link up

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(18) Landing Force Op Order 2-40, 29Feb40

(19) Defense Force Op Order 2-40, 2Feb40.

with the main landing force, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, to establish the force beachhead line. From this position, a line running across the eastern end of the island, the landing force was to advance to clear the enemy from the rest of the island.<sup>20</sup>

The Red commander on Culebra, like his counterpart on Vieques, was charged with the mission of refusing Vieques Sound to Blue as a fleet anchorage. His solution to the tactical problem was generally the same. Selecting the best natural defensive position on the island to deploy his limited force, Lieutenant Colonel Noble emplaced his 6-inch guns there in position to bring Vieques Sound under fire. The terrain selected by Red for his defense was the Mt. Resaca area in the center of the island. As the position could be approached from east or west, two defensive lines, covering the approaches from both directions were prepared, with the defending force in a position to man either one, depending on the direction of the attack. Not content merely to conduct a passive defense of an inland stronghold, Lieutenant Colonel Noble planned to take all suitable landing beaches under artillery and mortar fire. In addition, a small delaying force, consisting of tanks and four machine guns was placed in a position to meet an advance from either direction.<sup>21</sup>

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(20) Attack Force Op Order 2-40, 2Feb40.

(21) Defense Force Op Order 2-40, 2Feb40.

The Blue Attack Force put to sea on 4 March to begin the Culebra problem. During the night, reconnaissance patrols landed on the island from a destroyer. All but one man were captured, and he was unable to gather any information about enemy positions.

On D-Day, 7 March, Company E embarked in rubber boats and was towed inshore to make the preliminary landing. The boats were towed in by a circuitous route, so Company E did not land until 0430, two hours late. The delay turned out to the invaders' advantage, however, for Red was unable to organize a counterattack before the main Blue force landed, and Company E was able to reach its objective unopposed. As one of the umpires commented, "A Red counterattack...might have made Easy Company mighty uneasy during the four hours it had to wait on the main attack."<sup>22</sup>

At 0455 the first troops of the main landing force went over the side into waiting landing boats. By 0630, the first wave of the two assault companies, Company C on the left and B on the right, crossed the line of departure. The whole ship-to-shore movement was carried out very smoothly and showed a marked improvement over Problem 1. The assault companies, supported by 81mm mortars and a platoon each of machine guns from Company D, advanced rapidly inland to seize the high ground along the O-1 line at 0715. At this point, the reserve company, Company A, passed through Company B to continue the attack

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(22) Col P. A. del Valle, in Rpt of Critique, Flex-6, Problem 2.

in conjunction with Company C on the left. By 0830 the O-2 line was reached, and by 0915, assault elements had reached the Brigade Beachhead Line.<sup>23</sup>

The only Red opposition to the landing was made by tanks in two attacks. The first attack at 0805, reached the beach before it was stopped by Blue tanks which had just landed. An hour later, another attack was launched at the battalion CP and reserve company. Blue tanks once again intervened, forcing the Red tanks to withdraw.

After reorganizing, the Blue forces resumed the attack. Intelligence concerning enemy positions had not been provided the regimental commander by brigade, nor had he been able to discover these positions using his own sources. It was not until Blue, advancing with three companies in line and one in reserve, had moved west along the main axis of the island for about 800 yards that enemy resistance was encountered. At this point, advance elements came under severe machine gun and small arms fire from the Red MLR on Mt. Resaca. The regimental commander then committed his reserve battalion. A final assault on Mt. Resaca was planned, using the third battalion on the right to make the main effort and Companies A and B on the left. Supporting naval gunfire, mortar, and artillery fire was planned for 1330. The exercise was terminated before the attack was made.<sup>24</sup>

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(23) Rpt of Critique, Flex-6, Problem 2.

(24) Ibid.

At the conclusion of Flex-6, the 1st Marine Brigade had achieved a very satisfactory state of training under existing conditions. It was not possible to learn combat loading of nonexistent transports, nor could troops practice landing from imaginary landing craft. Commanders and staffs could not be trained in the control of large units in large scale operations when there were only 2,244 officers and men in the whole 1st Brigade. But all hands had demonstrated considerable skill in battalion size landings, made from combat ships in standard ships' boats.

Minor Landing Exercise, San Clemente Island, May-June 1940

Joint amphibious training for FMF units on the west coast was conducted in conjunction with Pacific Fleet elements at San Clemente from 27 May to 1 June 1940. Admiral Richardson, Commander in Chief U. S. Fleet, issued the basic directive for the exercise, designating CO, Battleship Division Five as the naval attack force commander and Major General Clayton B. Vogel, commanding general of the 2d Marine Brigade as the commander of the landing force.<sup>25</sup>

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(25) This whole section is taken from "Comments, Recommendations, and General Observations of Umpires and Observers, Fleet Landing Exercise, San Clemente Island, 27 May-1 June 1940," filed under 2dMarDiv, HistBr, HQMC.

These two commanders and their staffs drew up four operation plans, the preferred plan complete with all annexes, but the alternate plans with only the basic document. The preferred plan was selected, but before it could be put into effect it had to be modified because of the unexpected retention of the Pacific Fleet in Hawaiian waters. Only six combatant vessels, four destroyers and two mine sweepers, remained in the attack force. Two troop transports were eliminated, necessitating the leaving behind of 10 per cent of the enlisted strength of the landing force.

The plan as modified called for an amphibious landing on San Clemente by the 2d Marine Brigade. Composed of the 6th Marines at two-battalion strength, 2d Battalion, 10th Marines, and Brigade troops, the 2d Brigade had a strength of approximately 2,400 officers and men.<sup>26</sup> The 2d Defense Battalion, 750 strong and reinforced by a few aircraft, made up the defending force, marking the first participation by a defense battalion in a fleet landing exercise.

The defending force took up positions on San Clemente prior to the beginning of the exercise on 27 May. Faced with the problem of defending a large area with a limited

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(26) Actual strength figure is not available. This approximation made by taking strength figure for 30 June 1940, given in CMC rpt, fiscal 1940 and subtracting 10 per cent of enlisted strength to account for those left behind.

force, the defense force commander emplaced his 5-inch seacoast guns and his 3-inch antiaircraft guns inland in positions from which they could fire missions against land targets as well as those in the air and on the sea. Antiaircraft machine guns were also emplaced to fire both on air and ground targets.

On the opening night of the exercise, the attackers landed reconnaissance patrols from a destroyer in rubber boats. The mission ended in failure when all patrol members were captured before they could reembark. Aerial reconnaissance was more successful in spotting defense positions, permitting the landing force commander to gain a fairly accurate picture of the defenses, which were concentrated in the northern part of the island. But he was not able to adapt his scheme of maneuver to this information. For reasons beyond his control, the attack force commander decided to land all troops at Northwest Harbor.

The attack force sailed from San Diego on 27 May and approached San Clemente during the night. Although all ships were blacked out, an alert defending force picked up the approaching vessels with searchlights. Arriving off the landing beaches before dawn, the ships took up their positions in the transport and fire support areas. With the coming of daylight, the ship-to-shore movement got under way and proceeded smoothly, in spite of a shortage of boats which dictated landing battalions

in column instead of abreast. For the same reason, the landing of artillery and reserve forces had to be started sooner than planned, so that they could all be brought ashore in time to participate in the exercise. As a result, artillerymen were dragging their pieces across the beach almost in the faces of the defending forces.

The advance inland was delayed by the umpires until the few available boats could land enough troops to begin the attack. The attacking troops themselves demonstrated a frequent indifference to the realities of combat. They failed to take advantage of cover, even continuing to advance in regular formation under machine-gun fire. There was also a tendency to disregard machine guns firing from the flanks. All echelons overestimated the speed with which enemy automatic weapons could be neutralized.

A final artificiality occurred in the handling of casualties. Although casualties were assessed by the umpires, unit commanders continued to operate with all their troops, with the result that they frequently pushed their units beyond their capabilities.

For supporting units, the San Clemente exercise was of such limited size and contained so many "constructive" elements that it offered very little training. Supply actually landed was limited to rations, water, and rifle ammunition. All other ammunition was "constructive." Medical training was similarly handicapped. No casualties

were evacuated from shore to ship because of the landing craft shortage, and, on the battlefield, simulated casualties were permitted to walk to the rear. As a result, corpsmen got little training in the evacuation of casualties to aid stations. Lack of motor transportation prevented further evacuation from aid stations to the beach.

Communications training, for the defense force at least, was more satisfactory. The defenders installed a complete wire net connecting their command posts, observation posts, and gun positions, giving communications personnel good training in planning, installing, and operating this type of system.

#### Fall of France - Further Expansion and New Training Problems

The crisis brought on by the fall of France served to lend new urgency to Marine Corps expansion. For the units of the FMF were inadequate to discharge the new missions assigned to them. The proposed operations against Martinique and the Azores, both of which called for Marine landing forces, pointed up the necessity for a much stronger FMF. On 30 June 1940, the FMF (Ground) had a strength of only 8,236. The 1st Brigade, made up of the 5th Marines, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, and Brigade troops, accounted for 2,609 of the total. On the west coast, the 2d Brigade included 2,654 officers

and men divided among the 6th and 8th Marines, both with only two battalions, the 2d Battalion, 10th Marines, and brigade troops. The remaining 2,973 officers and enlisted in the FMF were organized into the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Defense Battalions.<sup>27</sup>

To fulfill its responsibilities during this period, the Marine Corps planned to expand the FMF in two stages. The first stage, to be completed by 1 January 1941, would see the two existing brigades expanded to full wartime strength. By the same date, three additional defense battalions were to be organized, bringing the total to seven.<sup>28</sup>

The second stage saw the two brigades expanded to triangular divisions. Organized on 1 February with an authorized strength of 13,800, the 1st and 2d Divisions totalled 7,445 and 8,197 respectively. Neither division could be built up to full strength under existing personnel ceilings. Under the authorized ceiling of 50,000, the Marine Corps was only able to muster 67 per cent of each division by 30 June 1941. The defense battalions were in better shape. All but one of the six reported approximately their full authorized strength. Still, the growth of the FMF from February 1940 to February 1941 had

(27) CMC rpt, fiscal 1940.

(28) Memo to CNO, Availability and Readiness of Marine Expeditionary Forces, 11Oct40.

been phenomenal. In one year it had increased from 6,875 to 20,899.<sup>29</sup>

With expansion came larger training burdens. The organization of new units and the expansion of old ones called for a greater effort in small unit training, while the jump from brigade to division, and even to corps size when combined with the Army during maneuvers, presented commanders and staffs new tactical and logistical problems involved in the handling of the larger units.

Ironically, the very urgent need to complete training at all levels impeded the realization of that goal. For units of the FMF which were assigned to specific operations engaged in joint amphibious exercises before they had completed the more elementary phases of the progressive training cycle. Other units were assigned garrison duties at remote outposts. The resulting dispersal prevented the participation of some units in joint exercises. In addition, the long periods spent aboard ship and in camp construction interfered further with training schedules.

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(29) Ibid.; and Memo for RAdm Horne, Proposed Strength of the Marine Corps, 28Feb41, HQMC. Strength figures from muster rolls in Unit Diary Section, HQMC.

## Fleet Landing Exercise Seven

Training of the 1st Brigade on the east coast illustrated many of these difficulties.<sup>30</sup> As in previous years, training was organized in a progressive cycle, culminating in a fleet landing exercise. During the summer months, the 1st Brigade was under alert for the Martinique operation. In September, it sailed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to be in a better position to carry out that mission.<sup>31</sup>

The move to Guantanamo, whatever else it may have accomplished, did not facilitate the training of the 1st Marine Brigade. For the first month, brigade personnel spent almost all of their time constructing a base camp. During the next two months, base camp construction continued, combined with rehearsals ashore and afloat for the Martinique operation. January 1941 was spent in preparation for Flex-7 and in reorganizing the brigade as a division. These various activities constituted a serious interruption of training in small unit tactics at a time when this type of training was badly needed.<sup>32</sup>

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(30) The minor fleet landing exercise scheduled for June at San Clemente was cancelled when the 6th Marines departed for Iceland aboard the only available transports. There is no information available concerning other phases of training for the 2d Division or the 1st, 2d, or 6th Defense Battalions stationed on the west coast for all or part of 1941.

(31) Interview MajGen D. R. Nimmer, with LtCol R. D. Heintz, 11Apr49, HistBr, HQMC.

(32) 1stMarDiv Rpt of Readiness, 5Sep41, HistBr, HQMC.

The 4th Defense Battalion, which was the other major FMF ground unit on the east coast, was not included in Flex-7. But failure to participate did not result from Marine Corps indifference to its training progress. As early as April 1940, the Commandant directed the Commanding General FMF to arrange for the movement of the 4th Defense Battalion to Guantanamo and its inclusion in Flex-7. He proposed that the defense battalion be set up in defense of the naval base at Guantanamo to oppose a landing by the 1st Marine Brigade. The move to Guantanamo was made, but participation in Flex-7 was not approved.<sup>33</sup>

The last of the numbered fleet landing exercises, Flex-7 was held in the Culebra area during late January and early February 1941. This was not only the last but also the largest of the Flexes both in numbers and in types of forces represented. The Marine contingent was more than twice as large as the year before. The Navy, too, made a larger contribution, furnishing aircraft carriers and troop transports for the first time in a fleet landing exercise. The Army, demonstrating an interest for the first time since 1937, contributed two battalion combat teams from the 1st Infantry Division. With these quantitative and qualitative increases, the units participating in Flex-7 more nearly represented than in any previous training exercise the forces which would

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(33) CMC ltr to CG FMF, 1Apr40; CG FMF ltr to COMINCH, 19Apr40. No records have been discovered to explain disapproval of participation in Flex-7.

actually be employed in the amphibious operations of World War II.

On the other side of the ledger, must be noted the fact that a smaller percentage of available Marines participated in Flex-7 than in the landing exercise of the previous year. With a strength of 7,445 on 1 February 1941, the 1st Marine Division sent only 5,288 or 72 per cent to Culebra, compared with an 86 per cent participation in Flex-6.<sup>34</sup> This was due to the fact that the Navy was unable to transport a larger number. It had increased its transport facilities, but the growth of the Marine Corps and inclusion of the Army outweighed this increase. Thus Marine mobilization was outrunning the ability of the Navy and Marine Corps to provide training facilities.

Another retrogression was the failure to represent the enemy. Previous Flexes had been organized as two-sided maneuvers, with both offensive and defensive forces represented. Although these exercises were not all that could be desired in realism, at least the effort was made. Flex-7, on the other hand, was not a two-sided maneuver but rather a large scale ship to shore exercise. As such, it was valuable for training in the mechanics of amphibious landings. It could not give commanders

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(34) Flex-7 Rpts do not record the number of Marines participating. Figure compiled by subtracting the strength of units not included in the exercise from the total strength of the division. Figures from muster rolls, filed in Unit Diary Section, HQMC.

experience in evaluating intelligence of the enemy and in acting upon the results, nor could it reproduce for all ranks anything resembling the conditions of the battlefield.

The forces participating in Flex-7 were organized as a naval attack force. Three battleships, nine cruisers, and five destroyers constituted four fire support groups, while two aircraft carriers made up an air support group. There were five transports in the transport group, and a destroyer transport group made up of three ships. In addition, there were a screening group, control and salvage group, and mine sweeping group.<sup>35</sup>

The Landing Force, embarked aboard the vessels of the transport group, included the Marine Landing Group, the Army Landing Group, Air Group, Mobile Landing Group, and Force Reserve. The Marine Landing Group was made up of the 5th Marines, less the 3d Battalion, and the 1st Battalion, 11th Marines. These troops were organized into two combat teams, each built around an infantry battalion and including a field artillery battery and other supporting groups. The Army Landing Group included two similarly organized combat teams built around a battalion of the 16th Infantry and a battalion of the 18th Infantry. Organized as the Mobile Landing Group were three reinforced companies of the 7th Marines aboard

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(35) Attack Force Op Plan 2-41, 14Jan41; LANTF1t, Transport Group Op Order 1-41, 1Feb41. Unless otherwise cited, Flex-7 records are in Div P&P Files, Box 41, HistBr, HQMC.

destroyer transports. The third combat team of the 5th Marines was held in Force reserve.<sup>36</sup> The 1st Marine Air Group, which comprised the Air of the Landing Force, flew from land bases to join the Navy fliers from the carriers in providing air support.

The training program for Flex-7 included a preliminary training period and five landing exercises, divided into three phases. Phase One included two regimental size landings, one by the Marines and one by the Army with Marine reinforcement. Phase Two was a repetition of Phase One using different beaches, and Phase Three was a brigade size landing including the whole landing force.<sup>37</sup>

The preliminary training period consisted mostly of indoctrination for the Army in the mechanics of ship-to-shore movement. These activities continued until 31 January, five days before the first landing exercise.

With only five days between the end of preliminary training and the beginning of landing exercises, there was no opportunity for the preparation of defenses ashore, with the result that the attacking forces could not develop a picture of the enemy situation on which to base their plans.<sup>38</sup> Reconnaissance personnel, commanders, and staffs were deprived of the opportunity for realistic training in the jobs they would have to perform in actual combat.

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(36) Landing Force Op Order 3-41, 15Jan41.

(37) CG 1stMarDiv, Flex-7, 6Mar41.

(38) CG 1stMarDiv, Flex-7, Rpt.

On 4 February, phase one of the landing exercises got under way. The landings conducted during this phase took place on the Firewood Bay and Seine Bay beaches located on the west coast of Culebra. These beaches were separated by about 2,000 yards. Lying offshore between the two beaches was the small island of Luis Pena Cay. The Landing Force order called for one company of the Mobile Landing Group to land on Luis Pena at H-3 hours, followed by a two CT main landing, with one CT going ashore on each beach. Following the landing, the CT's were to make contact, then advance to seize the O-1 and force beachhead lines.<sup>39</sup>

On 4 February, the Marines carried out the Phase One plan, with Company E, 7th Marines, making the preliminary landing and CT's 1 and 2 acting as the main landing force. They reembarked the next day, and on the sixth, the Army executed the same exercise. Once again, Company E, 7th Marines, made the preliminary landing, while CT's 4 and 5 carried out main landings similar to those of CT's 1 and 2 two days previously.<sup>40</sup>

Phase Two, which was similar to Phase One, saw a change of locale to the Mosquito Bay beaches on the southwestern end of the island. The scheme of maneuver employed in this exercise called for a main landing by two CT's,

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(39) Landing Force Op Order 3-41, 15Jan41.

(40) COMLANFOR Mailgram to LANFOR, 2Feb41. 1stInfDiv Task Force Field Order 7, 2Feb41.

preceded by a landing of one company of the Mobile Landing Group on Luis Pena Cay. In addition, the other two companies of the Mobile Landing Group were to stage a diversionary landing at Seine Bay. As in Phase One, the landing force was to advance inland to occupy the O-1 and Force Beachhead Lines. Both the Marine and Army Landing Groups carried out exercises in accord with this plan. In the case of the Marines, there was a substitution of CT 3, formerly in Force reserve, for CT 2.<sup>41</sup>

The final phase consisted of a landing by the whole landing force organized as a division. But as the Marine and Army landing groups composing this special division amounted only to a regiment apiece, the landing exercise was actually of brigade rather than division size. The scheme of maneuver was a combination of those used in the two other phases, with the Army Landing Group going ashore at Mosquito Bay and the Marines at Firewood and Seine Bays. The Mobile Landing Group landed one company on Luis Pena Cay to support the main landing and the two others on Culebra as a diversion.<sup>42</sup>

These landing exercises afforded valuable training in ship-to-shore movement, in the handling of small craft, and in the establishment and operation of command installations. But the operations were too close together to

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(41) 1stInfDiv Task Force Field Order 8, 9Feb41.  
COMLANFOR dispatch to COMMARLANGRP, 7Feb41.

(42) 1stInfDiv Task Force Field Order 9, 10Feb41.  
COMSPECDIV mailgram to SPECDIV, 10Feb41.

permit landing of combat equipment or for extended attack inland, nor was there time to assemble commanders and staffs of lower echelons for critiques of the exercises. A further impediment to training was the shortage of landing craft which prevented the movement of more than two CT's at a time and made the landing of reserves almost impossible. In one instance, the reserve CT began landing at 1500; in another it began landing piecemeal at 1830.<sup>43</sup>

The logistics aspects of Flex-7 were hampered by shortages of time, of personnel, and of materiel. Lack of time to continue the advance inland from the beaches prevented any extended exercise in logistics problems ashore, so logistics plans were made only for the establishment of engineer, signal, and ammunition dumps and for the resupply of one unit of fire for each problem.<sup>44</sup>

Personnel shortages, which existed in the Marine shore parties, were overcome by assigning personnel from the 7th and 11th Marines to shore party duty. This expedient served to weaken combat units, depriving them of essential troops. It also deprived the combat personnel

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(43) These observations are those of MajGen H. M. Smith, CG, 1stMarDiv, and are contained in his Flex-7 rpt, 6Mar41. This is the only Marine rpt of Flex-7 available. It is general in nature and does not contain a narrative of the exercise or specific criticism of individual landing exercises. Rpts at Regt'l and Bn level, if they ever existed, have either been destroyed or lost. As a result, the author is unable to make any more elaborate evaluation of Flex-7 landing opns than is given here.

(44) Landing Force Admin Order 1-41, 17Jan41.

assigned to shore party duty of training in their combat duties. Nor was it a real solution to the problem except for the particular exercise, for the regular trained shore parties so necessary for successful amphibious operations.<sup>45</sup>

Shortages of equipment were equally serious. There were not enough landing craft to bring ashore the planned levels of ammunition, nor was it possible to land adequate motor transport to carry forward the meager supplies actually landed. As a result, assault elements would have been out of ammunition by 1500 of D-Day. All these factors combined to limit the value of training in logistics problems as they would actually be encountered in combat.<sup>46</sup>

#### Carib Plan - New River Exercise

The Nazi successes in the first half of 1941, followed by the Japanese moves into French Indo-China during the summer, served to give new urgency to amphibious training. The Joint Board (predecessor to the JCS) issued Plan No. 350, calling for joint amphibious training of the Army and Navy. Joint Board 350 consisted of two subordinate plans, the Carib Plan for east coast training and the Pearl Plan for training on the west coast.<sup>47</sup>

(45) Addendum to Landing Force Op Orders 1-41 and 2-41: Shore Parties.

(46) CG 1stMarDiv, Flex-7 Rpt, 6Mar41.

(47) K. R. Greenfield, R. R. Palmer, B. I. Wiley, The War Department - The Organization of Ground Combat Troops - United States Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947), 87. As there is no other information concerning FMF training on the West Coast, the remainder of this chapter will deal with East Coast Training.

The Carib Plan, which was approved on 24 June, created the 1st Joint Training Force and provided for its training. Made up of the 1st Marine Division, Army 1st Infantry Division, 1st Marine Air Group, and Navy transports and cargo vessels, the 1st Joint Training Force was under the over-all command of Rear Admiral E. J. King, Commander Atlantic Fleet. The Marine and Army troops were under the command of Major General H. M. Smith, USMC.

The joint amphibious training was to be carried out in two stages. The first stage, preliminary training for Army and Marine combat teams, was to be held at New River, North Carolina, terminating on 20 July. This was to be the first large scale exercise held at the new Marine Corps base. Procured the previous fall, New River provided an extensive maneuver area to replace Culebra and Vieques, which were no longer big enough to accommodate the expanded amphibious forces.

The second stage was to be a joint amphibious landing on Puerto Rico, to be held from 30 July to 11 August. For the joint exercise, appropriate types and numbers of Navy combatant ships would join. Troops of the Puerto Rican Department would serve as the defending force.<sup>48</sup>

#### New River Exercise

Even before the issuance of Joint Board 350, 1st Marine Division units had begun to load out for New River. Embarkation, carried out at Quantico and Parris Island,

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(48) Ibid.

was completed about 9 July. The Army's 1st Infantry Division moved by rail from Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, to embark at New York.<sup>49</sup>

Embarkation of both divisions was seriously hampered by shortage of shipping. Only 10,255 of 15,216 available Army troops could be embarked. And in the 1st Marine Division, 6,213 out of a total of 8,385 could be accommodated. This constituted 74 per cent, about the same as in Flex-7. Failure to improve on the percentage of participation in spite of increased transport shipping was the result of increases in both Marine and Army contingents which more than offset the additional shipping capacity. Service units of both divisions were left behind, thus depriving these outfits of the opportunity for training and also denying commanders and staffs the opportunity to direct and coordinate service troops in support of the combat elements.<sup>50</sup>

Not only were there too few transports, but many of those provided were too small to accommodate a full strength combat team. Marine combat teams, which were still at reduced allowance, could be accommodated without

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(49) CG 1stMarDiv, New River Exercise Rpt, 28Aug41, filed in Rpt on Landing Exercise, New River, 5Jun-13Aug41. H. M. Smith, "Amphibious Tactics in the U. S. Navy," MC Gazette, Oct 1946, 53.

(50) CG Lant PhibFor, Prelim Rpt, 1st Joint Trng Force Exercises, New River 4-42, Aug41, FMFLant File, 1975, 27Aug41. Unless otherwise cited, New River rpts are in HistBr, HQMC.

cutting but the Army combat teams were compelled to reduce their combat strength in order to fit into available shipping. According to Major General H. M. Smith, "Rifle battalions were reduced below war strength to such an extent that they lacked sufficient power for sustained action against a well coordinated defense."<sup>51</sup> Even the reduction of rifle battalion strength was not adequate to permit the loading of reinforcing elements of all the Army combat teams. Two of these sailed without their motor transport, one left behind its artillery, and two others had neither artillery nor motor transport.

Although every effort was made to combat load all shipping, two large transports carrying four Army combat teams sailed with commercial loads. Even those ships which were combat loaded were not all stowed most efficiently, for transport quartermasters and unit commanders who had no previous experience in landing operations could not be properly trained in the time available.<sup>52</sup>

Upon the completion of the first phase, combatant ships of the Atlantic Fleet joined to participate in the joint landing exercise.<sup>53</sup> For purposes of the exercise,

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(51) CG LantPhibFor, Final Rpt and Prelim Rpt, 1st Joint Trng For Landing Exercises, New River, 4-12Aug41, folder entitled "Rpt on Landing Exercises, New River, 5Jun-13Aug41."

(52) Ibid.

(53) There is no information available regarding the preliminary phase.

Task Force 17 was formed as the naval attack force. The landing force, designated Task Force 18, included the 1st Marine Division, less the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, the 1st Infantry Division, less the 18th Infantry, the Air Assault Group, made up of Company A, 2d Marine Parachute Battalion, the Mobile Landing Group, composed of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, and the 18th Infantry as Force Reserve. In addition, combatant ships of the Atlantic Fleet formed fire support groups. To make the exercise a true two-sided maneuver, troops of the Puerto Rican Department, U. S. Army were designated as the defending force.<sup>54</sup>

On 25 July, Rear Admiral King notified Commander Task Force 17 that the joint landing exercise was to be transferred from Puerto Rico to New River. D-Day was set at 4 August, leaving only 10 days in which to modify plans and issue new orders. Changes were kept at a minimum. The same task force organization was kept in effect, but it was not possible to substitute another maneuver enemy for the Puerto Rican Department troops.

Task Force 17 rendezvoused off New River on 3 August. During the night, it put to sea with courses set to arrive in the designated transport and fire support areas the

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(54) TF 18 Op Plan Roger 1-41, 16Jul41; CinCLant ltr to ComTrainLant, subj Exercises in Mass Landings in Force, Puerto Rico, 10Jul41, both filed in GHQ files, 354.2, AGO Departmental Records Branch, Alexandria, Va.

following morning. Shortly after daylight, the ships arrived in their assigned positions and began to debark troops. The scheme of maneuver called for a two divisional landing, with the 1st Infantry Division on the left, and the 1st Marine Division on the right. Each division landed two regiments in assault. Under ideal weather conditions, the ship-to-shore movement proceeded smoothly. The 4,000 troops of the first wave hit the beach at the scheduled H-Hour of 1100. Landing of succeeding waves continued throughout the day, with a total of 3,640 Army and 2,528 Marines landing on D-Day.<sup>55</sup>

Debarkation of troops continued for the next three days. On 5 August, 5,721 troops were landed. The total dropped the next day to 4,127, and on the 7th a final 694 Army troops were landed, for an over-all total of 15,746. A total of 722 troops embarked on transports could not be landed because of a shortage of landing craft. These were Army reserve echelons, including some organic artillery.<sup>56</sup> In spite of the failure to land all available troops, the ship-to-shore movement of personnel was excellent, with a minimum of confusion and delay.<sup>57</sup>

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(55) Commander TF 17, Prelim Rpt, New River Landing Exercise, 4-12Aug41, 14Aug41, filed in folder 1975 Opns & Trng # 1.

(56) CG LantPhibFor, Deficiencies in Landing Exercises, August 1941, 14Nov41, filed in folder 1975, Opns & Trng # 1.

(57) Maj R. E. Hogaboom, Rpt of Observations, Encl D to ComMarCorps Schools Rpt to CMC, Observations of Maneuvers at New River, N. C., 4-5 Aug and 7-9 Aug, by officers of the Marine Corps Schools, 25Aug41.

By contrast with the landing of personnel, the landing of materiel was far from satisfactory. A number of causes combined to produce this result. Chief among them was the shortage of tank lighters, resulting in failure to land sufficient armored vehicles. Nor was it possible to land sufficient motor transport to support the seizure of a beachhead with sufficient depth for the size of the landing force. Approximately one half of the embarked motor transport could not be landed. Arrangements for the handling of supplies across the beach were inadequate as originally planned. It was only by reinforcing shore parties with combat troops that these organizations could function. The shore party of the 5th Marines, for instance, was reinforced with 100 men from the 7th Marines.<sup>58</sup>

The operations ashore were on a much larger scale than in any previous Marine landing exercise. For two days, both divisions advanced inland deployed as though they were attacking a defending enemy. In conjunction with the main attack, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, a paratroop company, and tanks made an attack on the right, the ground troops advancing around the flank to join up with the paratroopers who had dropped in the enemy rear. On 7 August, the advance was halted, and the landing force

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(58) Ibid.; and CO 5th Marines, Rpt on New River Lndg Exercises, 22Aug41, filed in folder, Rpt on Lndg Ex, New River, 5Jun-13Aug41.

took up hasty defensive positions. For the next three nights, troops withdrew to the beach and were reembarked aboard ship. This phase of the operation was given some semblance of realism by the designation of the 1st Marine Air Group as the enemy air force, to bomb and strafe the withdrawing troops. By 11 August, all troops had returned aboard ship in a smoothly conducted exercise.<sup>59</sup>

Plagued as it was by the absence of a maneuver enemy, shortages of trained staff personnel in various echelons, of motor transport, and of service troops, the advance inland phase was still of great value for training at all levels.<sup>60</sup> This was the first opportunity for Marines to participate in division size maneuvers involving a long advance inland. The system of supply, ability of commanders to handle troops over unfamiliar terrain, exercise of command with daily displacement of command posts, and the maintenance of troops in the field over a period of days were all tested.

Inevitably, deficiencies showed up. The greatest of these was in logistics, where the absence of service units and the motor transport shortage made movement of supplies from the beach to forward units extremely difficult. Those

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(59) CG LantPhibFor, Prelim Rpt, 1st Joint Trng Force Exercises, New River, 4-12Aug41, 27Aug41. Commander TF 17 Prelim Rpt, New River Landing Exercises, 14Aug41.

(60) Ibid.

supplies which were landed were piled on the beach where they made an ideal target for enemy aircraft.<sup>61</sup>

In addition, troops showed an indifference to the necessity for concealment and an unwillingness to camouflage. Deployment in dense woods with few landmarks pointed up the need for more map reading and compass training. And the introduction of paratroops lent realism to the necessity for command post security. Although commanders and staffs demonstrated some skill in the control of supporting arms, there was still room for improvement, particularly in the control of aircraft.<sup>62</sup>

#### Return to Fundamentals

With the completion of the New River exercises, plans were made for further amphibious training of the 1st Joint Training Force, now redesignated the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet. But these were cancelled so that deficiencies in training and organization brought out at New River could be corrected. General Smith, in his final report of the New River Exercises, recommended that no further joint exercises be held before November. Then, with the decision of the Army to include the 1st Infantry Division in regular Army maneuvers during that month, the

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(61) Maj R. E. Hogaboom, op. cit., CG LantPhibFor, Prelim Rpt, 1st Joint Trng Force Ex, New River, 4-12Aug41.

(62) CO 5th Marines Rpt, New River Exercises, 22Aug41, filed in folder, Rpt on Landing Exercise, New River, 5Jun-13Aug41.

next joint exercise of the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet was postponed until January 1942.<sup>63</sup>

The deficiencies in the training of the 1st Marine Division were the end result of a chain of events dating back a year to the previous September. As has already been pointed out, the transfer of the division to the Caribbean and preparation for and participation in Flex-7 prevented the carrying out of a unit training program. Upon return to the United States the division was dispersed to Quantico, New River, and Parris Island, and engaged in reorganizing in anticipation of the Azores operation. Then came the embarkation and movement to New River for the Carib Force exercises. All these activities left little time for individual and unit training. As a direct result, the commanding general reported that his division was inadequately trained in the following: "...combat principles [of the] squad and platoon. Tactics [of] small units. Combat firing Tactics [of all] units to include reinforced regiments."<sup>64</sup>

As a first step towards correcting these training deficiencies, an effort was made to concentrate the division at New River. However, the 1st Battalion, 5th

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(63) CG LantPhibFor, Final Rpt, 1st Joint Trng Force Landing Exercises, New River, 4-12Aug41. Memo BriGen H. J. Maloney to Gen McNair, 17Oct41, subj: Training of the 1st Division, GHQ Files, A44-159/74, AGO, Departmental Records Branch, Alexandria, Va.

(64) CG 1stMarDiv, Rpt of Readiness, 5Sep41, HistBr, HQMC.

Marines, remained at Quantico, and the 11th Marines at Parris Island. In November, all but the 4th Battalion of the 11th had shifted to New River.<sup>65</sup>

The 1st Marine Division was a division in name only in September 1941. It still lacked a third infantry regiment and two of its four battalions of artillery, and two tank companies. Its total strength was only 7,881 out of an authorized 15,916. By December, strength had increased to 9,389. The additional infantry regiment, the 1st Marines, had been organized but consisted of only 160 key personnel. And one additional artillery battalion had been organized. Training, then, was confined to the existing units and to the 4th Battalion, 11th Marines. Training for the 1st Marines could not begin until additional personnel reported, and the division problems suffered from the lack of a balanced triangular structure.

During October, the units at New River and Parris Island concentrated on field training, emphasizing combat principles and tactics. For staff and communications personnel there were two command post exercises, one of divisional size at New River and another of regimental size at Parris Island. In addition, all intelligence personnel trained in coordination with unit field exercises. At Quantico, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines conducted combat firing and rubber boat training.<sup>66</sup>

(65) Ibid.; and CG 1stMarDiv, Rpts of Readiness, 15Oct, 1Nov, and 15Nov41, HistBr, HQMC.

(66) Ibid.

After the arrival of the 11th Marines at New River early in November, a division field exercise was held with satisfactory results. All units present at New River participated, including six aircraft. Special stress was laid on operations when the enemy has control of the air. Following the field exercise, the emphasis in training shifted to night exercises, combat firing problems, and air-ground communications. Training in these subjects was still under way when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

#### Conclusion

During the 27 months of the short-of-war period, officers and men of the FMF had made definite progress towards the goal of amphibious preparedness. Admittedly, the practice of conducting two-sided maneuvers had been abandoned. It was also true that a smaller percentage of the FMF was able to participate in joint landing exercises. More important, these exercises had grown to approximately division size. In addition, the availability of new equipment, landing craft and troop transports gave Marines an opportunity to train with the equipment they were actually to use in combat. As a result, the training in the FMF more nearly resembled the conditions of actual operations. There remained the final test of combat, and, with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, it was soon to come.

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**PART II**

**PEARL HARBOR TO V—J DAY**

**7 DECEMBER 1941 TO 14 AUGUST 1945**

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## CHAPTER 8

### THE WAR PERIOD - INTRODUCTION

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 put an abrupt end to 27 months of gradually increasing American involvement in World War II. For the next 44 months, the United States was at war with Germany, Italy, and Japan. Marines were present at Pearl Harbor, and they continued to take a vital part in subsequent operations against the Japanese. Theirs was the first American offensive in the Pacific, at Guadalcanal in August 1942. They participated in the campaign to isolate Rabaul and played a leading role in the drive across the central Pacific, beginning at Tarawa and ending at Okinawa.

To carry out its combat missions, the Marine Corps expanded sevenfold, from about 66,000 to about 485,000, officers and men. An expansion of this size created serious training problems. To teach military skills to the great number of new Marines, and to indoctrinate the many newly formed units in the intricacies of amphibious warfare were tasks of the first magnitude.

The Marine Corps was not unprepared to face the test of war on 7 December 1941. In this regard, there is a striking difference between World War I and World War II. On 6 April 1917, the date of American entry into World War I, the Marine Corps numbered only 13,419. Nearly a

year before, authorized strength had been increased to 18,093, but only about 2,300 officers and men had been added during the following months just prior to the declaration of war. Next to nothing was done to prepare for training additional personnel, with the result that training facilities and organization had to be created after the United States entered the war.

On 7 December 1941 there was a very different condition. Since September 1939 the Marine Corps had been expanding. With expansion of personnel, there had been a comparable development of training activities. By Pearl Harbor day the main patterns of training which were to be used by the Marine Corps during World War II had been evolved. These included:

(1) Recruit training little changed in concept since 1939. The basic principles had proved sound and were to continue in effect throughout the war;

(2) The OCC-ROC system for training officers, which was to remain in effect until the last year of the war;

(3) The training center system for training specialists which was used throughout the war.

Of course, many problems arose in carrying out the training programs during World War II. Many changes were made, but the basic procedures proved sound, even though they were extensively modified in execution.

Some of the training problems which arose during World War II, the solutions to these problems, and their success or failure are taken up in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER 9  
RECRUIT TRAINING

The Mobilization Crisis, 7 December 1941 - 1 March 1942

On 7 December 1941, the Japanese launched their attack on Pearl Harbor. The next day Congress declared war on the Axis Powers, and thousands of young Americans besieged Marine recruiting stations seeking to enlist in the service of their country. At this time, the Marine Corps had an enlisted strength of about 63,000 and was working towards an authorized ceiling of 75,000. The President raised this figure to 104,000 on 16 December, and the Commandant decided to institute all-out recruiting to attain the full authorized strength by 1 March, an increase of about 60 per cent in less than three months.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the monthly enlistments leaped from 1,978 in November to 10,224 in December, 22,686 in January, and 12,037 in February.<sup>2</sup>

An increase of these proportions placed a staggering burden on the recruit depots. To achieve the goal of 104,000 would require each depot to train an average of 6,800 men per month in December, January, and February. As both depots had been operating on the basis of an

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(1) M-3 Op Diary, 7Dec41-31Dec44. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 21Dec41, 1975-60-20.

(2) U. S. Naval Administration in World War II: "The Marine Corps" (MS, H1stBr, HQMC).

average output of 1,600 per month, they were now faced with a four fold expansion.<sup>3</sup>

In anticipation of heavier recruiting, the Commandant had already directed a cutback in the recruit training cycle from seven to six weeks. Under the reduced schedule, recruits went to the rifle range after only two-weeks instruction at the main station. Thus the recruit depot staffs had to complete the physical hardening and grounding in fundamentals in only two-thirds of the time formerly allowed. The three-week rifle range period, during which recruits fired the rifle and pistol for record and familiarized themselves with other infantry weapons, and the final week of combat training and review of previous instruction remained unchanged.<sup>4</sup>

The shortened training schedule did not speed the flow of recruits through the depots enough to prevent serious shortages in housing. Efforts to alleviate the shortage ran into one snag after another. At San Diego, for instance, recruit depot personnel began to erect Nissen huts only to have them assigned to the 2d Defense Battalion. Then tents were procured and decks constructed for them. The first tents were taken away and others had

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(3) Ibid.

(4) CG MCB SD ltr to CMC, 11Dec41, 1975-60-20. CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 21Dec41, encl 1, 6 wk trng sched, 1975-60-20-10.

to be obtained from the 2d Base Depot. The Quartermaster then advised that a contract had been let for the erection of 700 Hosite huts, but construction did not actually begin until three weeks later.<sup>5</sup>

Personnel shortages in the training staffs were also serious. The Adjutant and Inspector recommended increases of 50 per cent in all enlisted grades, but so great were the demands for trained manpower throughout the Marine Corps that no additional personnel were authorized until April. As an emergency measure, certain personnel were ordered to recruit depots on a temporary duty basis. These included all enlisted men selected for the Officer Candidates' Class, all second lieutenants awaiting assignment to Basic School, and 121 NCO's from the 1st Division.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of these additions to training center staffs, the Commandant realized by the end of December that the Marine Corps could not achieve the 1 March mobilization goal without a further reduction in the training cycle. On 21 December the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies pointed out that, under the six-week cycle, a capacity of 15,000 at each depot would be required. If a one-week reduction were made, mobilization goals could be

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(5) 4th Ind, CG MCB SD to CMC, 20Jan42, to CMC ltr to CG MCB SD, 16Jan42, 1975-60-20-10.

(6) M-3 Op Diary, 7Dec41-31Dec44. CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 26Jan42, 1975-60-20-10.

reached with only 12,500-man capacities. Realizing that facilities could not be expanded to accommodate the larger figure in time, the Commandant directed the institution of five-week schedules at both depots effective 1 January.<sup>7</sup>

The five-week schedules called for three weeks at the main station and two weeks at the rifle range. At San Diego, 188 hours of instruction were scheduled during the five-week period. Of these, 96 were devoted to weapons training, 32 to field subjects, four to physical conditioning, and 56 to garrison-type subjects.<sup>8</sup>

By mid-January, Parris Island had encountered further difficulties. Owing to the heavier recruiting in the eastern United States, the east coast depot was receiving a disproportionate number of recruits and was unable to accommodate them. To meet this situation, east coast recruiting stations diverted some of their recruits to San Diego. As a temporary solution Parris Island sent 500 recruits a week to Quantico for rifle range instruction, beginning 24 January. By 15 February, the redirection

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(7) Dir Div P&P memo to CMC, 21Dec41, 1975-60-20. Dispatch, CMC to CG's, MCS SD and MB PI, 26Dec41, 1975-60-20-10.

(8) Encl A (Emergency Schedule dtd 1Jan42) to CO Recruit Depot MCB SD ltr to CMC, 7Jan42, 1975-60-20-10. No Parris Island 5-week schedule is available. Garrison subjects include close order drill, interior guard, ceremonies, etc.

of recruits to the west coast and the increasing rifle range facilities made it possible to discontinue this practice.<sup>9</sup>

During January, physical facilities were gradually increased. At Parris Island, housing capacity was increased by 7,040 on the main station and by 4,128 at the rifle range. Construction was started on 50 additional targets.<sup>10</sup>

Concurrently with the completion of facilities, enlistments declined. From a high of 22,686 in January, the number of recruits fell to 12,037 in February and was due for a further decline in the succeeding months. The drop in enlistments, combined with the completion of new facilities at the recruit depots, permitted resumption of longer training schedules. On 15 February the schedule was back to six weeks, and on 1 March to seven. Thus the Marine Corps had gained its object of achieving the initial buildup within three months; but not without cost, for recruits who joined the Corps during these months did not receive the amount of training which the Marine Corps had learned by experience was most desirable.<sup>11</sup>

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(9) Memo of telephone conversation between Col L. R. Jones and LtCol W. W. Rogers, 18Jan42, 1975-60-20-10. CMC dispatch to CG MB PI, 20Jan42, 1975-60-20-10. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 7Feb42, 1975-60-20-10.

(10) "History of Marine Barracks, Parris Island, S. C.," 18. Unsigned MS, dtd 14Aug46, in HistBr, HQMC. Hereinafter cited as Parris Island Hist. A&I memo to CMC, 30Dec41, 1975-60-20-10. CMC ltr to CG MB PI, 13Jan42, 1975-60-20-10.

(11) CMC ltr to CG MCB SD, 14Dec42, 1975-60-20-10.

### Seven Week's Recruit Training

Under the seven-week program, recruits spent their first three weeks at the main station, and the fourth and fifth weeks on the rifle range. For the final week, they returned to the main station. At San Diego, 271 hours were scheduled for instruction. More than half of them, 138 hours, were devoted to weapons instruction. Garrison-type subjects consumed 62 hours, while field training took up 57. Only 14 hours were scheduled for physical conditioning.<sup>12</sup> (A much larger number of hours was actually spent in physical training but was not shown as such in the published schedule.)

In the new schedule, greater emphasis was placed on achieving combat readiness. Field subjects, which made up about 21 per cent of the five-week schedule, now constituted 30 per cent of the scheduled hours. Garrison subjects showed a corresponding decrease from 21 per cent to 17 per cent. Physical conditioning, with a rise from two per cent to six per cent of scheduled hours, also received greater stress.

During the first four months of operations under the seven-week program, the monthly input of recruits was well within the capacity of the recruit depots. In March, only

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(12) Encl A (7 wk schedule for recruits) to CO Recruit Depot MCB SD ltr to CMC, 4Mar42, 1975-60-20-10. No Parris Island schedule is available.

7,600 new Marines entered the service. During succeeding months, the numbers of new recruits gradually increased until in July it reached nearly 16,000, a figure which was larger than the recruit depots could handle. Faced with a planned monthly input in excess of 16,000 for at least the remainder of the year, the Marine Corps was forced to take emergency steps to increase recruit training facilities.

At both depots, the bottleneck was on the rifle range. It was estimated that there would be an excess of 800 men a week at each range, a figure on the conservative side for Parris Island where the actual number was about 1,000. From August through December the overflow was transferred upon the completion of four weeks of training to the Training Centers at New River and at Camp Elliott for range instruction. By this expedient, a cut in the training cycle was avoided.<sup>13</sup>

The seven-week schedule of recruit training was not only kept in effect, but it was improved. Through more efficient scheduling and lengthening of the working day, the hours actually devoted to instruction were increased by about 25 per cent by the end of 1943.<sup>14</sup> Most of the additional time was devoted to physical training. Not only did this subject enjoy the greatest quantitative

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(13) CMC ltr to CG's, PhibCorpsPacFlt, MB PI, MCB SD, and TC MB New River, 26Jul42, 1975-60.

increase - about 300 per cent at San Diego - it also underwent the greatest qualitative change. While other subjects remained pretty much the same, physical training became much more realistic. Physical contact exercises, boxing, wrestling, judo, hand-to-hand fighting, and swimming were added to the program which had previously been predominantly concerned with calisthenics and physical drills.<sup>15</sup>

By May 1943 the physical training program at Parris Island included 30 minutes of accelerated calisthenics and body contact exercises and 30 minutes of massed bare-handed boxing daily. In addition, there were two 30-minute periods each week devoted to hand-to-hand fighting and unarmed combat, and daily half-hour periods of swimming instruction for recruits who could not meet the minimum qualification.<sup>16</sup>

#### Some Selective Service Problems

Recruit depot staffs had barely recovered from the burdens imposed by the heavy recruiting of the fall of

(14) Encl A (Present 7 wk trng sched) to CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 24Dec43, 1975-60-20-10. Encl D (Basic sched now in effect) to Basic Trng Bd rpt to CG Dept of Pac, 18Nov43, 1975-60-20.

(15) This is an interpretation deduced from the absence of specific mention of physical contact and swimming in early schedules and its inclusion in later ones.

(16) LtCol R. E. Hanley ltr to CMC, 6May43, 1975-60-20-10.

1942 when they were confronted with a new set of problems.<sup>17</sup>  
On 5 December 1942, President Roosevelt issued an executive order stopping voluntary enlistment of all men of draft age. Henceforth, Marine recruits were to be furnished through selective service.

For the first year of the war, volunteers filled the Marine ranks. They had to be in excellent physical condition, to be able to read and write, and possess an aptitude for learning. Thorough screening at recruiting stations assured that the great majority of recruits reaching Parris Island and San Diego had the mental and physical qualities to absorb recruit training.

One result of the change from volunteer to draftee was a lowering of the physical and intellectual standards of recruits. To cull out those who could not be expected to complete the normal recruit training cycle, a screening unit was established at each recruit depot. Staffed by qualified psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers, and by specially-trained Marine officers and enlisted men, the unit interviewed all recruits during their first week of training. Those found to have defects which would prevent their completing the training cycle with their platoons were placed in the casual company for further observation. Some were obviously unfit for service and were discharged. Others, by special training, could be saved for useful service to their country.

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(17) This section is based on BriGen Charles A. Wynn ltr to CMC, 21Mar56, and Parris Island Hist. Both in HistBr, HQMC.

Special treatment took two forms. First, for those who possessed sound physiques and natural aptitude but who had never received formal education, an elementary school was set up. Organized in August 1943, this school aimed at giving its students the equivalent of a sixth-grade education in a period of from three to six months. Upon completing this education, they were transferred to regular platoons for recruit training.

Men who were slow mentally or who had physical defects were placed in special casual platoons. The "A" Platoon, for slow learners, gave special instruction in the subject matter of the regular recruit training cycle. The "B" Platoon, for men with physical defects, covered the recruit cycle, omitting the more strenuous phases.

#### The 1944 Reforms

As the second year of the War came to an end, officers at Headquarters and in the field began a reappraisal of the recruit training effort. There was general agreement that there was room for improvement. The Commanding General, FMF in the San Diego Area, a command which included all training activities on the west coast, pointed out that inadequacies in recruit training were so great that from 25 to 50 per cent of the time in the Replacement Training Centers had to be devoted to very basic instruction.<sup>18</sup>

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(18) CG FMF in SDA ltr to CMC, 17Sep43, 1975-60-20-10.

The Commandant and his staff were dissatisfied with the shortcomings of recruit training. They had under study a proposal to extend it to 12 weeks. To get a broader expression of opinion from the training activities, the Commandant directed the commanding generals at Parris Island and San Diego to appoint boards to "consider all aspects of the current and proposed systems, and to submit recommendations and proposed training schedules...for eight, ten, and twelve-week periods of Recruit Training...."<sup>19</sup> On 18 November, when the San Diego board reported, it recommended a 12-week training schedule, but the board members felt that the last four weeks, which were to be devoted to rigorous field training, could better be conducted at a training center than at the recruit depot.<sup>20</sup>

Their recommendation for four weeks of field training was not accepted, however, and on 1 December, orders were issued to extend training at recruit depots to 12 weeks, effective on 1 February.<sup>21</sup> Within the Division of Plans and Policies a period of field training at the training centers was looked on with favor. Writing on 19 January, the Director of the Division pointed out to the Commandant the advantages of conducting field training at training

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(19) CMC ltr to CG's Dept of Pac and MB PI, 27Oct43, 1875-60-20-10.

(20) Basic Trng Bd ltr to CG Dept of Pac, 18Nov43, 1975-60-20. No copy of the Parris Island Board rpt is available.

(21) CMC ltr to CG Dept of Pac and CG MB PI, 1Dec43, 1975-60-20-10.

centers where proper facilities were available. He recommended extending recruit training to eight weeks and adding an eight-week period of basic field training.<sup>22</sup> The Commandant accepted this proposal. On 26 January he rescinded his previous order by issuing a new one calling for eight weeks of recruit training, to take effect on 1 March.<sup>23</sup>

Variations between the eight-week schedules submitted by the depots led the Commandant to take effective steps for the first time to assure uniformity of training at the two recruit depots. Previously, it had been the practice to issue only generalized instructions and to leave the details of the schedules to the commanding officers of the recruit depots. The Commandant's directives for the establishment of the six and seven-week schedules included the following instructions:<sup>24</sup>

The six-week recruit training schedule will become effective on February 15, 1942; the seven-week schedule, on March 1, 1942.... Both the six-week and the seven-week schedules will include three weeks' instruction on the rifle range. The rifle range schedule may be fitted into the entire training schedule so that recruits will have a few days at the depot after completing their range work, if so desired.

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(22) Dir P&P memo to CMC (unnumbered), 19Jan44, 1975-60-20-10.

(23) CMC ltr to CG's Dept of Pac and MB PI, 26Jan44, 1975-60-20-10.

(24) CMC ltrs to CG's MCB SD and MB PI, 14Feb42, 1975-60-20-10.

Two years later, the Commandant's directives for the institution of the eight-week schedule were equally "broad brush."

The schedule of recruit training should be confined to such subjects as will enable recruit depots to fulfill their function, which is to give all Marine recruits proper basic individual instruction. The recruit, when he has completed his recruit depot training, should have completed the transition from a civilian to a Marine and be ready to begin his training as a member of a team at the training center.<sup>25</sup>

Recruit depots were required to submit their schedules to Headquarters for approval, but these schedules were not reviewed for consistency with each other. As a result, wide variations, both in subject matter and in the hours devoted to each, existed between the two depots. The table below indicates the differences between the eight-week programs submitted for approval by Parris Island and by San Diego in February 1944.

It was the obvious disparity between these two schedules that led the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies to recommend, and the Commandant to approve, the issuance of a master training schedule by Marine Corps Headquarters. This schedule listed the subjects to be taught and prescribed the hours to be devoted to each.<sup>26</sup>

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(25) CMC ltr to CG's Dept of Pac and MB PI, 26Jan44, 1975-60-20-10.

(26) CMC ltr to CG's Dept of Pac and MB PI, 24Feb44, 1975-60-20-10.

PROPOSED EIGHT WEEK SCHEDULES<sup>27</sup>

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HOURS	
	San Diego	Parris Island
Arms and equipment		
M-1 rifle mechanical training	3	4½
M-1 carbine "	1	note 1
Hand and rifle grenades	4	note 1
Infantry pack	3½	4
Bayonet	19½	17
Chemical warfare	4	3
Infantry drill	22	49
Interior guard duty	8	9
Marches, camps, bivouacs	5	10½
Military courtesy	10	7
Military sanitation	10	7
Organization, classification, indoctrination	22½	9
Parades and ceremonies	2½	0
Physical training	40	38
Rifle range instruction	112	147½
Protective measures	4	0
Use of compass and maps	3	0
Care and marking of equipment and clothing	1	0
Inspections	24½	13
Shelter tents	1	4
Combat principles (squad)	4	5
Technique of rifle fire	1	2½
Individual emplacements	3	0

Note 1: These subjects probably covered at rifle range.

(27) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 23Feb44, 1975-60-20-10.

The eight-week schedule promulgated by Headquarters Marine Corps provided five weeks on the main station and three weeks on the rifle range - the fourth, fifth, and sixth weeks. A total of 421 hours of instruction were called for. Of these, 195 were devoted to weapons instruction, 39 to physical training, 89 to garrison subjects, and 98 to field subjects. In general, the new schedule was similar to the seven-week schedules which it replaced. As indicated in the table below, the percentage of scheduled hours devoted to each of the major categories of instruction varied little percentage-wise from the old program.

COMPARISON OF RECRUIT TRAINING SCHEDULES <sup>28</sup>						
Subject	7 wk Parris Island		7 wk San Diego		8 wk HMHC	
	hours	% of total	hours	% of total	hours	% of total
Weapons	144	43%	151	46%	195	46%
Physical	45	14%	24	8%	39	9%
Garrison	75	23%	93	29%	89	22%
Field	69	20%	54	15%	98	23%
Total	333		322		421	

(28) Encl A (7 wk trng sched) to CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 24Dec43, 1975-60-20-10. Encl D (Basic sched now in effect) to Basic Trng Bd ltr to CG Dept of Pac, 18Nov43, 1975-60-20.

A final change in recruit training came at the end of July 1944. Thirty-six additional hours of instruction were scheduled within the eight-week cycle, all of them devoted to weapons training. A proposed increase to nine weeks, tentatively approved by the Commandant in May 1945, was dropped the following month, and the eight-week schedule remained in effect for the remainder of the war.<sup>29</sup>

#### The Drill Instructor Problem

"At Parris Island, after December 7, 1941, there was always a shortage of able D. I.'s."<sup>30</sup> In these words, Colonel Charles A. Wynn, Commanding Officer, Recruit Depot Parris Island, summed up what was one of the most serious of World War II recruit training problems. The increase in the number of recruits under training, combined with the demands of the FMF for experienced noncommissioned officers, led to a situation where there were seldom enough competent drill instructors to staff all recruit platoons. It was often difficult to assign even one experienced instructor to each platoon.

During the early days of the war, assistant drill instructors from platoons already in training were transferred to take charge of new platoons. Likely noncommissioned officers, and even privates, were brought in

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(29) Encl A (Eight wks rcrt trng) to CG MB PI ltr to CMC, 1Aug44. Encl A (Rcrt sched of instr) to CO RD SD ltr to CMC, 4Aug44. Both 1975-60-20-10. M-3 Op Diary, 1941-45. CMC dispatch to CG MB PI, 28Jun45, 1975-60-20-10.

(30) BriGen C. A. Wynn ltr to CMC, 20Apr56, HistBr, HQMC.

as assistants "with the hope that they would prove of some value and eventually become qualified for permanent assignment as D. I.'s."<sup>31</sup> Under this system, quality of instruction suffered. The senior drill instructor could not give all instruction himself. Some of it he had to delegate to his inexperienced subordinates.

To improve the quality of instruction, the Drill Instructors' School was organized in the recruit depot. Staffed by specially selected officers and noncommissioned officers, the school trained drill instructors for duty at Parris Island. Standards were high and results were excellent.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of the efforts of the Drill Instructors' School, the maintenance of a competent staff of drill instructors was extremely difficult as long as skilled noncommissioned officers were shipped out in replacement drafts after only short service in the recruit depots. Recognizing the shortcomings of such a policy, the Commandant, on 4 July 1944, froze all instructors for one year.<sup>33</sup>

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(31) Ibid.

(32) Ibid.

(33) Parris Island Hist, 26-27. CMC ltr to CG Lejeune, CG PI, and CG MCB SD, 4Jul44, 1975-60-20-10.

## Conclusion

From Pearl Harbor to V-J Day, the Parris Island and San Diego recruit depots trained approximately 450,000 new Marines.<sup>34</sup> The course of instruction, seven weeks long at the beginning of hostilities, had been increased to eight weeks by the end of the war. In content, much greater emphasis was placed on weapons instruction, field subjects, and physical conditioning - subjects which contributed directly to combat readiness. Instruction in garrison-type subjects underwent a comparable decrease. Instructional methods were little changed. As in 1941, the hard-working enlisted drill instructors and rifle range coaches transformed raw American youths into good basic Marines, ready to pass on to the FMF or to replacement training centers for intensive combat training.

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(34) This figure represents the total number of Marines enlisted and inducted from 1 Dec 1941 through 31 Jul 1945. As all new Marines received recruit training, this figure should be very nearly accurate for total recruit depot output. No actual recruit depot output figure is available.

## CHAPTER 10

### THE TRAINING OF INFANTRY REPLACEMENTS

During World War II, the Marine Corps replaced combat losses on an individual basis. Rather than allow veteran units to be so reduced in size as to become ineffective, combat organizations were generally maintained at effective strength by replacing individual losses. This was not always so. In the Civil War, regiments fought until they were so reduced in numbers that they were disbanded and new regiments raised to take their places.

The individual replacement system was introduced during World War I. Based on the experiences of that conflict, the Marine Corps, in the years between the wars, planned to use a similar system in a future conflict. For the training of replacements, special training centers were to be organized. This was essentially the system put into effect.

These training centers had a twofold mission. They conducted formal schools for the training of those technical specialists who could not be efficiently trained in units, an activity which had already begun before Pearl Harbor at the Training Center, Quantico. They also operated infantry replacement training activities to provide individual instruction in the basic combat subjects.

The instruction of infantry replacements was both the biggest and the most exacting operation confronting training center staffs. By far the greatest percentage of casualties occurred in infantry units, and, as infantry casualties were frequently replaced during combat, their training in the replacement training system was of the utmost importance.

### Replacement Training Begins

Five months passed after the attack on Pearl Harbor before the Commandant issued his first directive for the organization of replacement training establishments and for the beginning of replacement training. So urgent was the training and preparation for overseas movement of FMF units, particularly the 1st and 2d Divisions, that it was not until 22 May 1942 that he issued his first directive for replacement training. The directives issued on that day and on the following day called for the organization of Training Centers at New River and in the San Diego area.<sup>1</sup>

Infantry replacement training got under way first on the west coast at Camp Elliott, where the 2d Replacement Battalion began training on 1 September, one month ahead of schedule. Training for this first battalion was limited to two weeks of physical conditioning.<sup>2</sup>

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(1) CG PhibCorps PacFlt ltr to CMC, 17Sep42, 1520-30.

(2) Ibid.; Replacement battalions were purely administrative organizations for the movement of replacements to the theater of operations. They had no tactical organization and were disbanded upon arrival, their members being assigned to combat units on an individual basis.

Training for the infantry components of subsequent battalions, beginning with the 4th, which was organized on 18 September, was of eight weeks duration. A 42-hour week provided a total of 336 hours of instruction during the eight week period. These hours were divided into three parts - basic, 68 hours; tactical, 97 hours; and technical, 171 hours. The first two phases were given to all infantry replacements.

Technical training consisted of four courses, and each enlisted man was assigned to one of them. These were rifle and BAR, machine gun, intelligence, and mortar.

Infantry replacement training based on this schedule was handicapped by inadequate facilities and a shortage of competent instructors during the last months of 1942. The activation of the Training Center, Camp Pendleton, in February 1943, and the transfer of the Artillery, Engineer, and Amphibian Tractor Battalions there served to ease the pressure on school facilities, but the instructor problem was not so easily solved.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of November, the commanding general of the Training Center, Camp Elliott, reported: "The number of instructors for one replacement battalion is adequate, but the quality of those available is decidedly inferior; there is a particular shortage of qualified instructors

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(3) Camp Elliott Rpts of Readiness, 1Dec42 and 1Feb43, S&C Files 24-50-1. FMF SDA SO 16-43, 23Jan43, 2385/70-6410.

in tactics and in the 60mm and 81mm mortars. Roughly 50 per cent of our enlisted instructors are, either through lack of experience or intelligence, unqualified for giving adequate instruction in the subject at hand."<sup>4</sup>

To improve the caliber of enlisted instructors, an NCO school was started and was held four nights a week. By the end of December, only "moderate" progress had been made.<sup>5</sup>

It was not until January that anything was done about the quantitative problem. During the month, nine officers - two captains and seven lieutenants - and 20 enlisted men joined the instructor staff. However, the addition of these new instructors did little to improve the quality of instruction. None of the lieutenants had any field experience, while of the enlisted men, only five were experienced instructors.<sup>6</sup> No immediate solution of the instructor problem was reached, and this was to be a continuing problem throughout the war.

The experience gained in training infantry replacements, plus the lessons of combat which began to filter back from the Pacific, led to modifications in the training program during the summer of 1943. These changes were summed up in the master schedule of 25 August. Under it, riflemen and BAR men received a total of 409

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(4) Camp Elliott Readiness Rpt, 1Dec42, S&C 24-50-1.

(5) Camp Elliott Readiness Rpt, 1-31Dec42, 1520-30.

(6) Camp Elliott Readiness Rpt, 1-31Jan43, S&C 24-50-1.

hours of training, an increase of 73 hours over the 336 hours offered formerly. For machine gunners, mortar men, intelligence specialists, and antitank gunners, the hours of instruction increased from 336 to 383.<sup>7</sup>

The most significant innovations in the new schedule were those increasing realism in training. The combat reaction course, 200 yards of trenches, barbed wire, sage and cactus, was the heart of the new realism. Men crept and crawled over ground swept by machine-gun fire aimed a little over their heads. They moved around, over, and through obstacles erected to teach combat discipline and mental conditioning. Dynamite caps and small charges of nitrostarch provided an explosive background. From a final trench, men leaped to bayonet dummies, attack a mock village, and plunge into foxholes while a tank passed over their heads.<sup>8</sup>

Other subjects added were night operations, swimming, field sanitation, and demolitions. In addition, the curriculum was adjusted to accommodate changes in weapons. The pistol was replaced with the carbine, and the Thompson submachine gun was dropped. Two other changes saw close order drill and rifle marksmanship discarded on the ground

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(7) TC Camp Elliott, Master Training Schedule, 25Aug43, 1975-60-20.

(8) John H. Gleason and Martin J. Maloney, "School for Combat," MC Gazette, October 1943.

that men had mastered these subjects in recruit depot and could use the time better in other instruction.<sup>9</sup>

For mortarmen, machine gunners, and antitank gunners, there was a further change involving the tactical training phase. Under the old schedule, the hours allotted to this section had been devoted to the tactics of infantry platoons, companies, and battalions. Under the new schedule, offensive and defensive tactics of section and squad armed with machine gun, mortar, or antitank gun as appropriate, were taught.<sup>10</sup> Infantry replacement training on the west coast continued on this basis for the remainder of 1943.

#### Infantry Replacement Training in Samoa

Meanwhile, in the fall of 1942, the decision was made to train the replacement battalions organized at New River in Samoa. Beginning with the 1st Replacement Battalion, which arrived about 17 December, a total of seven battalions, 1st, 3d, 5th, 7th, 13th, 15th, and 19th, were trained before July 1943, when replacement training in Samoa was discontinued.<sup>11</sup>

Responsibility for replacement training was delegated by the Commanding General of the Samoa Defense Force to

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(9) Master Training Schedule, Op. Cit.

(10) Ibid.

(11) P&P memo 11042, 30Oct42, 2385/70-5010. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 27Feb43, 2385/70-6410. CO RTC 2d DefBn ltr to CG Samoa DefFor, 31Jul43, S&C 54-50-16.

the 2d and 3d Brigades, which were the major tactical components of his command. Replacement Battalions, which were expected to arrive at monthly intervals, would be assigned alternately to the 2d and 3d Brigades, beginning with the 1st Battalion assigned to the 2d Brigade. Initially, training would have to be carried out within the tactical units, with defense battalion replacements training with defense battalions, infantry replacements with infantry regiments, and so forth. As soon as possible, both the brigades were to organize replacement training centers for the specific purpose of training replacement battalions.<sup>12</sup> Although units of both brigades trained replacements, only the 2d Brigade organized a training center.

To prepare infantry replacements to take their places in combat organizations, training programs stressed conditioning marches and exercises, individual combat, cover and concealment, field fortifications, infiltration tactics and countermeasures, sniper tactics and countermeasures, infantry weapons, jungle warfare, small unit tactics, and amphibious training.<sup>13</sup>

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(12) Samoa DefFor TrngO 6-42, 5Dec42, HistBr, HQMC.

(13) Samoa DefFor TrngO 1-43, 22Jan43, HistBr, HQMC.

These subjects were covered in an eight week schedule, the first four weeks devoted to basic individual training with all weapons, and individual and squad technical and tactical training. During the second four weeks, troops took to the field for progressive training in offensive and defensive small unit exercises in jungle warfare, half of them at night. Finally, there were exercises in embarking into and debarking from landing craft. Weapons firing included combat rifle firing in jungle terrain, indoctrination and combat firing of heavy and light machine guns, 60mm and 81mm mortars, and weapons of the regimental weapons company.<sup>14</sup>

Training in these subjects got under way with the arrival of the 1st Replacement Battalion in the middle of December 1942. It was assigned for training to the 2d Brigade, and, as that unit had not yet organized its replacement training center, the training was "farmed out" to the 2d Defense Battalion, a brigade unit. Under this system, the 1st and the 3d replacement battalions were trained by the 2d Brigade.

Training during this period was far from satisfactory. Instructors were inexperienced, and, in a few cases, incompetent. Schedules had not been prepared in advance and had to be improvised from day to day depending upon the availability of equipment. There was no Quartermaster

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(14) Ibid.

section at first, so supply initially was practically nonexistent. Buildings were all under construction, and it was not until the middle of February that the first mess hall was ready for occupancy.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the 3d Brigade was conducting training for the 5th Replacement Battalion. The infantry component, 12 officers and 600 enlisted men strong, was trained by the 22d Marines. With the departure of the 5th on 26 March, training of the 13th Replacement Battalion began, using the same training plan. The 13th, which was the last replacement battalion trained by the 3d Brigade, departed on 25 May.<sup>16</sup>

The opening of the Samoan replacement training center as a component of the 2d Defense Battalion on 31 March enabled the 2d Brigade to handle the increased burden. The staff had been bolstered by 54 men of the 3d Replacement Battalion who had been given a special six week course at the 2d Brigade school at Mormon Valley. The rifle range and amphibious mock-up were also ready for use.<sup>17</sup>

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(15) CO RTC 2dDefBn ltr to CG Samoa DefFor, 31Jul43, and 1st End, CO 2dDefBn to CG Samoa DefFor, 4Aug43, S&C 54-50-16.

(16) 3dMarBrig TrngO 1-43, 16Jan43, HistBr, HQMC. Reason for discontinuing replacement training in the 3d Brigade is not indicated in available records.

(17) CO RTC 2dDefBn ltr, Op. Cit.

With these improvements in staff and equipment, the Replacement Training Center trained the 7th, 15th, and 19th Replacement Battalions with excellent results. Based on experience in training the 7th, the officers and noncommissioned officers of the other two battalions were given special six week courses at Mormon Valley, to equip them for the job of infantry leadership.<sup>18</sup>

During the training periods of these battalions, facilities were gradually improved. At its peak of development, the Replacement Training Center included the following ranges and courses:

- One 20-target rifle range with 200, 300, and 500 yard firing lines;
- two 20-target 1,000 inch ranges;
- one 10-man regulation bayonet course;
- one four-man assault and obstacle bayonet course;
- one two-man obstacle course;
- three one-man combat firing courses;
- three two-man combat firing courses;
- three squad combat firing courses;
- one six-unit regulation grenade throwing court;
- five mock-up landing craft;
- one 30-foot platform with cargo nets over the side and mock-up Higgins boats at the bottom for debarkation exercises.

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(18) Ibid.

Just as the Replacement Training Center was hitting its full stride, the high incidence of filariasis forced the discontinuance of replacement training in Samoa. As a result, the Training Center, Camp Lejeune, assumed the duty of training the individuals included in replacement battalions formed there. Training procedures at Camp Lejeune were similar to those in force at Camp Elliott.

#### The 1944 Reforms

After two years of war, Marines had accumulated sufficient experience, both in the conduct of training and in the use of the training center graduate in battle to appraise the shortcomings of the system which had been used since the outbreak of hostilities.

From the field came discouraging reports that replacements received were not ready to take their places in combat organizations. The Commanding General of the 2d Division, commenting on the replacements received to rebuild the division after Tarawa, made the following remarks:

The general state of training of replacements received by this division on January 4, 1944 was most unsatisfactory. A careful survey by Battalion and Regimental Commanders of these replacements reveals the following:

- a No knowledge of elementary problems of first aid or field sanitation.
- b In most cases, nothing is known of elementary field fortifications; few replacements, if any, have ever dug a fox hole.

- c Did not know the difference between a slit and a straddle trench.
- d Little or no time has been devoted to combat firing....
- f Grenade training was inadequate.
- g Men attending the infantry school had no knowledge of mortars or machine guns....

This list of comments could be prolonged indefinitely, but the essence of all remarks is that although replacements have been, in most cases, exposed to a certain amount of instruction, there is little evidence that it has been assimilated.<sup>19</sup>

Further evidence that replacements failed to learn what they were taught was revealed by a practical examination of graduates of an eight-week machine gun course. The following deficiencies were noted: poor gun drill, inability to search and traverse, ignorance of machine gun squad and platoon organization, ignorance of nomenclature of the gun, and inadequate practical experience in field firing.<sup>20</sup>

Marines in the training organizations were fully aware that there were deficiencies in the replacement training program. One major shortcoming was pointed out by the Commanding General FMF in the San Diego Area as early as September 1943. He drew the attention of the Commandant to the fact that recruits received in the

(19) Encl A (CG 2dMarDiv ltr to CG VAC, 25Jan44) to CMC ltr to CG's MB PI and NOB SD, 15Feb44, 1975-60.

(20) Ibid.

Training Centers of his command were so poorly trained that from 25 to 50 per cent of replacement training time had to be devoted to basic Marine training. As a result, there was insufficient time to complete the amount of advanced training that was desirable if a replacement were to take his place in an infantry unit during combat.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, training centers were still plagued by inadequate instructor staffs. The quantitative difficulties experienced earlier in the war had largely been overcome, but quality left something to be desired. There was a serious shortage of qualified infantry instructors with combat experience. This was particularly true of officers, and to a lesser extent of noncommissioned officers.<sup>22</sup>

Another criticism of the replacement training system was directed against the replacement battalion of fixed composition. Experience showed that combat losses did not always correspond to the quota of specialties called for by the standard replacement battalion table of organization. The Commanding General, Training Center, Camp Pendleton, recommended that replacements should be dispatched to overseas theaters in response to personnel requisitions from the theaters.<sup>23</sup>

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(21) CG FMF in SDA ltr to CMC, 17Sep43, 1975-60-20-10.

(22) BriGen O. R. Cauldwell and LtCol E. W. Snedeker memo to Dir P&P, 4Apr44, 1975-60. CMC ltr to CGs FMF SDA and Lejeune, 7Apr44, 1975-60.

(23) Ibid.

The first six months of 1944 saw extensive reforms designed to remedy all these deficiencies. Most important of these was the extension of the training cycle. On 4 July the Commandant issued a new directive extending infantry replacement training from eight to 12 weeks. For infantry specialists, the first four weeks were to be devoted to basic infantry training. Following the initial four week period came eight weeks of specialist training in the weapon to which the individual was assigned. Riflemen and BARmen took a straight 12 week course.<sup>24</sup>

For riflemen and BARmen, the new schedule provided 720 hours of instruction, as compared to 409 in the old schedule. Additional time permitted the introduction of more advanced training in joint exercises with supporting weapons such as machine guns, mortars, and artillery, and also an exercise in the attack on a village. Other changes in curriculum reflected the shift in combat operations from the south to the central Pacific. Jungle warfare was dropped, to be replaced by a course in bunker problems, emphasizing the specialized tactics developed by Marines in assaulting the heavily fortified islands of the central Pacific. In addition, riflemen and BARmen were given familiarization courses in the light machine gun, 60mm mortar, and 2.36" rocket launcher.

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(24) CMC ltr to CG's FMF SDA and Lejeune, 4Jul44, 1975-60-20-10.

Changes in the basic infantry course for machine gunners, mortarmen, and antitank gunners were similar to those in the rifleman course. With an increase from 201 to 240 hours of scheduled instruction, it was now possible to teach fire team, squad and platoon tactics, and to conduct combat practice firing. As in the rifleman course, bunker problems were substituted for jungle warfare.

The training schedules for machine gunners, mortar men, and antitank gunners increased from 218 to 484 hours. But with the exception of the mortar school, where an observers' course was added, the changes were mostly quantitative. The extra hours were added to old courses rather than being assigned to new ones.

To improve the quality of instruction in replacement centers, the Commandant issued a directive "freezing" all instructional personnel in place for one year. To assure conformance with the directive, commanding generals of Training Centers were required to submit a list of all personnel stabilized, and additional lists showing changes on the 15th of every month.<sup>25</sup>

Infantry instructors were to be chosen from combat veterans whenever possible. Before taking up their duties as instructors, both officers and enlisted men went through a "super infantry school" where they received thorough

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(25) Ibid.

instruction in all phases of infantry warfare.<sup>26</sup>

In presenting the expanded replacement training program to the training centers, the Commandant broke with the existing policies by listing all the courses to be offered and also the hours to be devoted to each. Previously, the Commandant had followed the policy of permitting commanders of training activities extensive powers to organize and conduct training within the framework of very broad directives.

In setting up the Training Centers on east and west coasts in May 1942 for replacement and specialist training, the Commandant merely specified the duration of courses as two months. He also enclosed a list of schools but hastened to add, "The schools listed are merely indicative of the fields of training to be covered and you are authorized to combine or subdivide at discretion the actual schools."<sup>27</sup>

The 4 July directive, by spelling out the training program in detail, in effect shifted responsibility for the preparation of the training program from the field to Headquarters. The reasons for this were two in number. Most important was the critical response from the field regarding the inadequate training of combat replacements.

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(26) Ibid.; and "Administrative History, Marine Training and Replacement Command, Camp Pendleton" (unsigned, undated MS, HistBr, HQMC). Hereinafter cited as Pendleton Hist.

(27) CMC ltr to CG PhibCorpsPacFlt, 22May42, 1520-30.

Second was the lack of uniformity between the training schedules at the various training centers and depots. To remedy these defects the Commandant felt it necessary to exercise much more direct control through a detailed training program prepared by Headquarters Marine Corps.

#### Breakdown of Infantry Replacement Training

The completion of the 1944 reforms should have provided units in the field with well-trained infantry replacements. However, reports from the field were still disappointing. Commenting on the inadequacies of replacements during the Iwo Jima operation, the commanding officer of the 27th Marines pointed out that "replacements were certainly totally unsatisfactory.... Having had little or no previous combat training, they were more or less bewildered and in many cases were slow in leaving their foxholes."<sup>28</sup>

There were several reasons for the failure of replacements to measure up to expected standards in combat. First, the infantry replacement training system had not been designed to train a man so thoroughly that he could step directly from the training center into a strange infantry unit in combat. It was originally contemplated that Marine operations would be of short duration. Marines would make an amphibious assault to seize an advance base, then would be relieved by garrison troops

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(28) Annex R (27th Mars) to 5thMarDiv Iwo Jima SAR, 28Apr45, HistBr, HQMC.

to rehabilitate and prepare for further operations. In the interval between action, there would be time to receive replacements and to integrate them into the units.

It was not until the Marianas operation that provisions were made to replace losses during an operation. For Saipan, this was an afterthought. Original plans did not provide for replacements. After the operation was underway, the plan was reconsidered and a hasty call was sent out for immediate replacements.<sup>29</sup>

The Peleliu operation, where an infantry regiment suffered such heavy losses in the first week that it had to be withdrawn, served to confirm the necessity for planning the replacement of losses during combat.<sup>30</sup> For the Iwo Jima operation, therefore, each division was provided two replacement drafts, to be used initially to augment the shore party, then to be released as individual combat replacements.<sup>31</sup>

Had the members of these replacement drafts completed the full cycle of training in Training Centers, they would have been well-grounded in basic infantry subjects, for the program set forth in the 4 July 1944 directive was

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(29) Encl F (G-1) to TF 56 Rpt on FORAGER, 20 Oct 44, HistBr, HQMC.

(30) Maj Frank O. Hough, The Assault on Peleliu (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950).

(31) LtCol W. S. Bartley, Iwo Jima: Amphibious Epic (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1954), 35-36.

basically sound.<sup>32</sup> But this was not the case. So great was the demand for replacements, that few men were able to complete the 12-week cycle prescribed by the 4 July directive. Of the two replacement drafts attached to the 5th Marine Division, the 27th had received eight to 10 weeks training and the 31st only five to six weeks. The 34th Replacement Draft received only four of the prescribed 12 weeks infantry training, and the 28th departed for the Pacific with training deficiencies in almost all infantry subjects.<sup>33</sup>

There was, in addition, a psychological problem involved in replacement training which was almost impossible to solve. As Major General Oscar R. Cauldwell, Commanding General, Training Command, Camp Pendleton, put it, "I found it very difficult to appeal to replacements. They were no longer recruits looking forward with pride to becoming Marines, nor did they belong to any organization. They were individual students in a vast school system.... Men in newly-formed combat units automatically adopt... teamwork.... Such a desire was superficial among replacements because they knew they would finally be members of a different organization in combat."<sup>34</sup>

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(32) CG FMF SDA ltr to CMC, 14Mar45, 1975-60-20.

(33) Interview Maj Charles S. Nichols, 1Sep54. Annex A (Administration) to 5thMarDiv Iwo Jima SAR, HistBr, HQMC. Readiness Rpts, 28th and 34th Repl Drafts, 3-4Jan45, HistBr, HQMC.

(34) MajGen O. R. Cauldwell ltr to CMC, 27Feb56, HistBr, HQMC.

The long periods between the departure of replacements from the training centers and their assignment to combat units also served to undo much that they had learned in training. The intensive training in a great many unfamiliar subjects compressed into a short time was quickly forgotten during the long voyage on transports and longer periods performing labor duties in various camps overseas. No adequate training program for replacements was provided to keep up their knowledge during this period.<sup>35</sup>

The breakdown in infantry replacement training cannot be attributed to the personnel or training program of the Training Centers. The training scheduled for infantry replacements was probably as good as could be provided in the time allotted. That trainees were shipped out before they completed the prescribed training resulted from the pressing personnel requirements in the theater of operations. Over this the training centers had no control. Nor were they responsible for the feeding of their graduates into units engaged in combat. Training center personnel were responsible for conducting an individual replacement training system. This they did to the best of their ability. Inherent shortcomings of the replacement system could not be attributed to them and could only be cured by adopting a different method for replacing combat losses.

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(35) Ibid.

## CHAPTER 11

### ENLISTED SPECIALIST TRAINING

The Marine Corps traditionally has been a fighting service. It has constantly sought to put the greatest possible number of men on the firing line and to hold supporting functions to a minimum. But the amphibious warfare of World War II was a complex and exacting science. To make a successful assault on a heavily defended enemy shore, and to support the operations of the assaulting force, called for a high order of technical skill in a great variety of specialties. No fewer than 21 occupational fields were employed by the Marine Corps for personnel classification, and each of these fields contained a number of individual specialties. The table below shows the specialist fields and the number of men classified in each on 17 July 1945.

Formal schools were extensively employed for at least some of the training in most of these fields. Their value was clearly recognized at an early date. Writing of engineer training in March 1942, the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies pointed out that "the training of engineer specialists should be accomplished at the Engineer School for the following reasons:

- a. More uniformity in instruction;
- b. Greater economy of equipment...;
- c. Better utilization of available training time;
- d. Easier control of trained personnel."<sup>1</sup>

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(1) P&P memo 10381 to CMC, 6Mar42, 1520-30-70.

MARINE CORPS OCCUPATIONAL FIELDS<sup>2</sup>

Field No.	Title	Personnel	Per Cent
1	Administrative and Clerical	23,131	6.3
2	Artillery	29,835	8.1
3	Aviation	55,786	15.2
4	Band	3,689	1.
5	Communication	32,710	8.9
6	Engineer	23,884	6.5
7	Food	15,568	4.2
8	Infantry	47,052	12.8
9	Intelligence	2,621	.7
10	Motor Transport	22,648	6.1
11	Ordnance	8,285	2.2
12	Disbursing	2,014	1.
13	Photographic	1,106	.3
15	Public Information	451	.1
16	Supply	16,482	4.4
17	Security and Guard	14,415	4.
18	Special Services	638	.2
19	Tank and Amphibian Tractor	7,543	2.0
20	Training Aids	783	.2
21	Miscellaneous	58,143	16.7
	TOTAL	<u>366,784</u>	<u>100.9</u>

(2) Tabulation dtd 17Jul45, in Procedures Analysis Branch, Personnel Dept, HOMC. Occupational fields are described in U. S. Marine Corps Manual of Military Occupational Specialties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948).

Formal schools were nothing new to the Marine Corps, of course. They had been employed for specialist training for many years, and, during the short-of-war period, had been considerably expanded. By December 1941 there were courses in the following occupational fields: administration, band, communications, engineer, food, motor transport, ordnance, photographic, supply, and tank and LVT.<sup>3</sup>

Wartime expansion of the Marine Corps stimulated the demand for specialists. By April 1942 formal school facilities had been expanded to include courses in barrage balloon, parachute, chemical warfare, landing boats, and the Japanese language.<sup>4</sup> In the well established occupational fields, additional courses had been organized, notably the radar operators' and maintenance courses in the communications field.<sup>5</sup>

The expansion of formal specialist training continued throughout the war. By 1945 instruction in intelligence and disbursing had been added to the occupational fields represented by formal schools in 1942. A classification course was added to the administrative field; bridging, carpentry, electrician, photogrammetry, photolithography, relief mapping, and shore party courses to the engineer

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(3) See Chap 3 of this History.

(4) These courses were listed under the miscellaneous field.

(5) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.

field; and dog training and post exchange accounting to the miscellaneous field.<sup>6</sup>

Numbers of occupational fields and courses cannot, however, give a complete picture of the extent of formal specialist training in the Marine Corps during World War II. The number of students attending these schools would be more accurate. Unfortunately, complete school attendance figures are not available, but some idea of the magnitude of the formal specialist school problem may be gained from the numbers of Marines assigned directly from recruit training at Parris Island to formal schools.

The following table lists the available data.

ASSIGNMENT OF RECRUITS COMPLETING TRAINING AT PARRIS ISLAND <sup>7</sup>					
	May42	May43	Jul43	Oct43	Nov43
Total to Ground Duty	2,652	3,060	3,492	3,015	3,343
Number to Formal School	958	1,428	1,196	1,424	1,933
Per cent to Formal School	37%	41%	34%	47%	58%

(6) George P. Tuttle and Cornelius P. Turner, A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experience in the Armed Services (Washington: American Council on Education, 1954). This data was compiled during 1944 and 1945 and was published in installments during those years. First complete printing was in 1946.

(7) CG MB PI ltrs to CMC, 17Apr43, 16Jul43, 17Sep43, 18Oct43, all 1520-30. CO RD PI ltr to CG MB PI, 25Jun42, 1520-35-70.

## Facilities for Training

After Pearl Harbor, the facilities for training specialists continued to be a combination of Marine, Army, Navy, and civilian schools. During the initial mobilization phase, the Marine Corps relied heavily on the other military services and on civilian institutions. In April 1942, only 39 per cent of available courses were conducted in Marine schools. Army schools accounted for 32 per cent, Navy schools for eight per cent, and civilian institutions for the remaining 13 per cent.<sup>8</sup>

An analysis by occupational fields shows that there were Marine courses in all but one of the fields in which formal specialist training was provided. The missing field was photography. The Army enrolled Marines in courses representing the chemical warfare, engineer, motor transport, ordnance, communications, and tank fields. Of these, courses at the basic level were offered in motor transport, tank, and ordnance. In the other fields, courses were more advanced in nature and required some previous knowledge of the subject. The Navy courses represented the ordnance, communications, and parachute fields. All but the parachute course and one of the two courses in communications were on an advanced level. In civilian schools, courses were offered in the engineer, motor transport, ordnance, photographic, communications,

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(8) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.

and landing boat fields. Of these, photography, motor transport, and landing boats were at the basic level. The remainder were advanced. (See Table I for course facilities on 27 April 1942).

Expansion of Marine Corps schools during the war resulted in a drastic reduction in the use of other than Marine facilities for training. By 1945, 72 per cent of all specialist courses were given in Marine schools. The Army's participation had dropped to seven per cent, while the Navy's had increased to 11 per cent. Civilian institutions accounted for the remainder.<sup>9</sup> The Marine Corps now offered courses in all the occupational fields in which formal specialist training was conducted. The Army contribution had dwindled to engineer, ordnance, and combat dog training. All Army courses were at the basic level. The Navy had expanded its offering of educational opportunities to Marines since April 1942. Courses were now available in six occupational fields - ordnance, administration, engineer, communications, photography, and parachute rigging. The communications and engineer courses were on the advanced level. The remainder were basic. Courses in the communications, motor transport, and tank fields were offered in civilian institutions.<sup>10</sup> (See Table II for course facilities in 1945).

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(9) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

(10) Ibid.

Most Marine schools were located at specially organized training centers. Located where adequate areas for field problems and exercises and the latest in training aids were available, the training centers were designed for efficient instruction in technical skills.

The Quantico training center, the only one in existence at the outbreak of hostilities, soon proved inadequate. On 23 May 1942, the Commandant directed the establishment of an additional training center at Camp Lejeune. Originally conceived as a replacement and unit training organization, it was soon expanded to include specialist schools as well. The first of these was the Parachute School, organized on 15 June 1942. Within five months, the number of specialist schools at Camp Lejeune was increased by the transfer from Quantico of the Engineer and Motor Transport Schools. This move, dictated by a housing shortage at Quantico, left the Training Center at that base with only the Ordnance School. The administrative problems involved in supervising this one remaining school were not sufficient to justify a training center organization. Accordingly, the Training Center, Quantico, was deactivated, and the Ordnance School was placed directly under the Commanding General, Marine Barracks.<sup>11</sup>

(11) CMC ltr to CG, Rear Echelon, 1stMAF Div, 23May42, quoted in "Administrative History of Camp Lejeune, N. C.," 22Aug46 (MS, HistBr, HQMC). P&P memo 11054 to CMC, 7Oct42, 1520-30-135. Memo of phone conversation, Col C. H. Metcalf and Col W. W. Rogers, 17Aug42, 1520-30.

In addition to these schools from the Training Center at Quantico, three others, which had previously been administered directly by the Commanding General, Marine Barracks, Quantico, were also transferred to the New River Training Center. These included the Signal School, with its component radio, field telephone, and radar courses, the Cooks and Bakers School, and the School of Quartermaster Administration.<sup>12</sup>

During these same months, a generally parallel development of training centers was taking place on the west coast. At the time of Pearl Harbor, there was no Marine Corps training center on the west coast, although some formal schools were conducted at the Marine Corps Base, San Diego, and by the 2d Marine Division for its own personnel at nearby Camp Elliott. It was realized that additional training facilities would be required to take care of the needs of a rapidly expanding Marine Corps. Accordingly, the FMF Training Center was organized at Camp Elliott on 20 April 1942 for the purpose of training specialists and infantry replacements. However, during the first few months of its existence, the Training Center was occupied with training infantry battalions which were later combined to form the 22d Marines.<sup>13</sup>

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(12) Ibid.; and CG MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 19Sep42, 1520-30-180-40.

(13) Frederick R. Jones, "A Training Center Chronicle" (MS, HistBr, HQMC).

On 22 May 1942, the Commandant issued a directive specifying the specialist schools to be organized at the Camp Elliott Training Center.<sup>14</sup>

Facilities at Camp Elliott proved inadequate to accommodate all these specialist schools and the replacement training organizations as well. To relieve this overcrowding, specialist schools were then moved to the newly activated Camp Pendleton, beginning in February 1942. In June 1944, the release of Camp Elliott to the Navy led to the transfer also of replacement training activities to Camp Pendleton.<sup>15</sup>

These training centers had been intended to accommodate all specialist training activities in the Marine Corps, but, in actual practice, they were never large enough to do so. Some 15 courses could not be accommodated at the training centers. They were located on posts and stations, wherever facilities were available, as indicated below:

1. Music Schools (band, field music)

Marine Barracks, Parris Island  
Marine Corps Base, San Diego

2. Signal School

Marine Corps Base, San Diego

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(14) CMC ltr to CG PhibCorpsPacFlt, 22May42, 2385/60. The enclosure to this letter giving the list of specialist schools cannot be located.

(15) CG FMF in SDA ltr to CMC, 26Nov42, 2385/70-6410. FMF SDA SO 16-43, 23Jan43, 2385/70-6410. Pendleton Hist.

3. Clerical Schools (clerical, 1st sgts)  
 Marine Barracks, Navy Yard, Philadelphia  
 Marine Corps Base, San Diego
4. Mess Schools (cooks and bakers, mess sgts)  
 Marine Corps Base, San Diego  
 Marine Barracks, Parris Island  
 (cooks and bakers only)  
 Marine Barracks, Quantico
5. Ordnance Schools  
 Marine Barracks, Quantico  
 (Ordnance Repair)  
 Marine Corps Base, San Diego  
 (Armorers)  
 Depot of Supplies, Philadelphia  
 (Armorers, Optical Instr)  
 Depot of Supplies, San Francisco  
 (Armorers)
6. Motor Vehicle Mechanic  
 Depot of Supplies, Philadelphia
7. Quartermaster  
 Depot of Supplies, Philadelphia  
 (Shoe and textile repair)
8. Amphibian Tractor  
 Marine Amphibian Tractor Detachment,  
 Dunedin, Florida.

#### Length of Training

The length of instruction in formal specialist schools decreased slightly during the course of the war. In April 1942 the median length of all courses offered was 10 weeks. Courses ranged in length from two to 36 weeks, but they were heavily concentrated in the lower third of the range. Out of 62 courses, only seven

exceeded 12 weeks. By 1945, the median length for the 83 available courses had decreased to eight weeks. The longest course was 27 weeks, and the shortest three.

SPECIALIST COURSES ACCORDING TO LENGTH			
April 1942 <sup>16</sup>		1945 <sup>17</sup>	
Weeks	Number of Courses	Weeks	Number of Courses
2	1	3	1
3	5	4	11
4	8	5	2
5	2	6	13
6	6	8	14
8	5	10	6
10	6	12	17
12	22	13	1
16	2	14	2
24	3	15	1
32	1	16	2
36	1	17	1
		20	1
		24	1
		25	8
		26	1
		27	1

(16) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.

(17) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

## The Problem of Selection

The mass production of technical specialists during World War II created a serious problem in the selection of students. Of the thousands of Marines completing recruit training each month, which ones should be chosen to make up the approximately 40 per cent to receive further training in formal specialist schools and how were they to be chosen?

At the outset of the war, the Marine Corps had in effect a selection system based on three criteria: education, previous experience, and aptitude. Of the three, only the first could be measured objectively. A definite level of academic achievement was often stated as a prerequisite for certain courses, e.g., two years of high school, four years of high school, or perhaps two years of college. The candidate might also be required to have completed certain courses, e.g., high school mathematics, physics, etc. There was no objective measurement of the other two requirements. A man might be required to state that he had been a carpenter or auto mechanic in civilian life, but he was not obliged to prove his ability by any sort of test. Where aptitude was a prerequisite, the judgment of the commanding officers was employed to advantage in cases where students were selected from organized units. A subjective measurement of aptitude for a large number

of men just completing recruit training, however, was of little value.

One exception to the general rule was communications training. Written examinations in mathematics, spelling, code, tone perception, and general intelligence were required.

There was little change in selection procedures during the first year of war. As in the short-of-war period, great stress was put on subjective evaluations under such categories as "mechanical aptitude" and "previous experience." Both were required for about 30 per cent of the specialist courses listed on 27 April 1942. There was a corresponding minimum of formal testing, either of aptitude or knowledge of subject matter. Only eight per cent of the courses listed such a requirement. Education was an important qualification, appearing for about 40 per cent of the courses. However, in only one instance was education beyond the high school level required. A high school diploma was a prerequisite for admission to specialist schools in about 15 per cent of the cases, and some high school education in a slightly larger number. Finally, a definite amount of prior service or a specified rank was required for nearly 30 per cent of the courses.

SPECIALIST COURSES  
 ACCORDING TO ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS,  
 27 APRIL 1942.<sup>18</sup>

Civilian and/or Military Experience in - 21 Courses  
Field Required  
 (formal schooling not a prerequisite)

- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Photography                  | AA Training Center     |
| Infantry Weapons             | Hercules Motors        |
| Motor Vehicle Operators      | Aerology               |
| Camouflage                   | AA Director            |
| Refrigeration                | Motorcycle Mechanic    |
| Band                         | Ammunition             |
| Artillery Mechanic           | Fire Control (primary) |
| Optical Instrument           | Radar Maintenance      |
| Optical Operators            | Photography            |
| Blacksmithing and<br>Welding | Barrage Balloon        |
| Fire Control Electricians    |                        |

2 years High School - - - - - 6 Courses

- |                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Optical Operators | Fire Control (primary)    |
| Photography       | Gunnery Instructors       |
| Hercules Motors   | Fire Control Electricians |

High School Education - - - - - 11 Courses

- |                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Infantry Weapons              | Parachute Riggers  |
| Parachute                     | Aerology           |
| Radar Operators               | Refrigeration      |
| Elementary Radar              | Ammunition         |
| Phototopography               | Artillery Mechanic |
| Searchlight and Sound Locator |                    |

2 years College Math - - - - - 1 Course

Topographic Computing

High School Math, including algebra and arithmetic - - - 8 Courses

Elementary Radar

Drafting

Fire Control (advanced)

Demolition

Water Purification

Surveying

Heavy Mechanical Equipment

Water Distillation and Purification

"Mechanical Aptitude" - - - - - 20 Courses

Optical Operators

Tank Destroyer

Infantry Weapons

Landing Boats

Hercules Motors

Tractor School

Parachute Riggers

Camouflage

Amphibian Tractor

Gunnery Instructor

Refrigeration

Field Telephone

Tank Mechanic

Barrage Balloon

Automotive Mechanic

Ammunition

Optical Instrument

Artillery Mechanic

Wheeled Vehicle  
Maintenance

Water Distillation  
and Purification

NCO Rank - - - - - 9 Courses

Water Purification

Surveying

Fire Department

Fire Control Electricians

Tank Destroyer

Drafting

Map Reproduction  
and Photography

Searchlight and  
Sound Locator

Heavy Mechanical Equipment

<u>Sergeants or Below</u>	- - - - -	6 Courses
Clerical	Barrage Balloon	
Tank Mechanic	Gunnery Instructors	
Amphibian Tractor	Wheeled Vehicle Maintenance	
<u>Prerequisite Specialist Course</u>	- - - - -	5 Courses
Teletype Maintenance	Fire Control (advanced)	
Searchlight and Sound Locator	Electric Interior Communications	
Telephone Electricians		
<u>Entrance Exam or Classification Test</u>	- - -	5 Courses
Radio Operators	Field Telephone	
Telephone Electricians	Aerology	
Quartermaster School of Administration		
<u>Period of Service</u>	- - - - -	2 Courses
Fire Control (1 year) (primary)		
Clerical (8 months)		
<u>Rank of Sergeant or Platoon Sergeant</u>	- - -	1 Course
First Sergeants School		

Five courses required written entrance examinations. Three of these which were in communications had done so for many years, using the same system of testing in 1942 as in 1939.<sup>19</sup> The Quartermaster School of Administration,

(18) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.  
(19) See Chap 3 of this History.

when it transferred to Quantico in February 1942, began testing general knowledge and aptitude. Included were simple tests in arithmetic, spelling, typing, English composition, and the O'Rourke General Classification Test.<sup>20</sup> For the aerology course, which was run by the Navy, prospective students were given the Army Air Force Classification Test.<sup>21</sup>

These admission standards, the written tests and the experience and educational attainments, were not an unqualified success, particularly in the selection of large numbers of Marines just completing recruit training. The Marine Corps' experience with the Navy electronics program illustrated some of the difficulties encountered.

The Navy agreed to accept 140 Marine students per month at its two Elementary Electricity and Radio Material (EE & RM) Schools beginning on 23 April 1942. The purpose of the EE and RM schools was to give basic training to radar personnel. To meet the quota, students were selected from men completing recruit training. Standards for selection were: a high school diploma, including two years of algebra; a score of 70 per cent on the O'Rourke General Classification Test; a similar score on the Marine Communication School mathematics test; and a satisfactory score on the General Electrical Information Test.

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(20) Dir Sch of GM Admin ltr to CMC, 7Mar42, 1520-30-180-40.

(21) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.

Results from the first group of men selected were far from satisfactory. "Marines assigned to the school," wrote the Commanding Officer, Naval Training School, Grove City, Pennsylvania, "are in a large majority not suited for this particular training and openly resent being forced to study the course. This results from improper selection."<sup>22</sup> In response, the Commanding General, Recruit Depot, Parris Island, pointed out that the selection system was primarily at fault. The requirement for two years of high school algebra was of little value because of the wide variations in material covered among the different schools. The O'Rourke test, as it did not measure education, was of little value in selecting radar students. The Marine Communication School arithmetic test was thought to be too easy. Only the general electrical information test was considered to be useful.<sup>23</sup>

A new set of examinations was adopted in an effort to improve the quality of Marine radar students. Included were a mathematics test and a physics test. The general electrical information test was retained.<sup>24</sup>

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(22) CO Naval Trng Sch, Grove City, Pa., ltr to CMC, 19Jun42, 1520-35-70.

(23) CO RD PI ltr to CMC, 25Jun42, 1520-35-70.

(24) CMC ltr to CG PI, 3Jul42, 1520-35-70.

While these specific modifications in the method for choosing radar students were being made, a comprehensive system of selection of students for all specialist schools was being worked out at Headquarters Marine Corps. Realizing that there was no effective method for cataloging the skills or aptitudes of Marines, the Commandant had directed that an adequate classification system be developed. Because the Army had already developed a workable scheme, the Marine Corps adopted it with minor modifications to meet its own needs.<sup>25</sup>

The new system went into effect in October 1942. Under it, each recruit entering the Marine Corps was to take the Army General Classification and Mechanical Aptitude Tests. He was also to be interviewed by a personnel specialist regarding his civilian background and experience. The results of tests and interview for each man were recorded on a qualification card. The information contained on the card could then be used as the basis for assigning military specialties, catalogued by number and title in an Army manual adopted for Marine use. As an individual gained additional experience, his military specialty numbers were adjusted accordingly.<sup>26</sup>

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(25) Maj W. M. Rossiter, lecture notes in Procedures Analysis Br, Personnel Dept, HQMC.

(26) Ltr of Instr 266, 26Nov42, 1955-20.

With the adoption of the personnel classification system, certain minimum scores in the General Classification and Mechanical Aptitude Tests became a prerequisite for admission to most specialist schools.

Some measure of the effectiveness of the new tests as standards for selection for specialist training was provided by a study of the class entering the Ordnance School on 8 February 1943. As the process of classification had not been completed throughout the Marine Corps, only 60 of 133 students had been classified. Of this number, only ten, or 17 per cent, failed to graduate. By comparison, 30, or 41 per cent, of the 73 unclassified students flunked out.<sup>27</sup>

In all the Marine formal schools, the classification system was an outstanding success as the basis for selecting students. It cut the rate of academic failures from 40 to 5 per cent.<sup>28</sup>

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(27) CO Ord Sch ltr to CMC, 12Mar43, 1520-30-180-25.

(28) Capt Leslie F. Fultze, lecture to conference of G-1 representatives, Oct49. Title: "Organization and Installation of Present Marine Corps Classification System." In Procedures Analysis Br, Personnel Dept, HOMC.

TABLE I. SPECIALIST COURSES: 27 APRIL 1942<sup>29</sup>

Field	Facility	Length, weeks	Level
<u>Administrative and Clerical</u>			
Stenography	MarCorps	24	Basic
Typist	MarCorps	12	Basic
First Sergeant	MarCorps	6	Advanced
<u>Band</u>			
Band	MarCorps	12	Basic
Field Music	MarCorps	16	Basic
<u>Communication</u>			
Automatic Electric Telephone	Civilian	10	Advanced
Electric Interior Communication	Navy	24	Advanced
Field Telephone	MarCorps	8	Basic
Radar	Army	12	Advanced
Radar, Elementary	Navy	12	Basic
Radar, Maintenance	MarCorps	12	Basic
Radar, Operator	MarCorps	5	Basic
Telephone Electrician	MarCorps	24	Advanced
Teletype Maintenance	Civilian	3	Advanced
Special Communication	Army	12	Advanced
Wire	Army	12	Advanced
Radio	Army	12	Advanced
Radio Material	Navy	32	Advanced
Radio Operators	MarCorps	12	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Engineer</u>			
Camouflage	MarCorps	4	Basic
Demolition	MarCorps	4	Basic
Drafting	Army	12	Basic
Heavy Mechanical Equipment	Army	12	Basic
Map Reproduction	Army	12	Basic
Phototopography	Army	12	Basic
Refrigeration	MarCorps	6	Basic
Surveying	Army	12	Basic
Topographic Computing	Army	12	Basic
Water Distillation and Purification	MarCorps	8	Basic
Water Purification	Army	12	Basic
Welding and Blacksmithing	Army	12	Basic
<u>Food</u>			
Cooks and Bakers	MarCorps	8	Basic
<u>Motor Transport</u>			
Automotive Mechanic	MarCorps	12	Basic
Diesel Mechanic	Civilian	3	Basic
Motorcycle Mechanic	Army	10	Basic
Motor Vehicle Operator	MarCorps	3	Basic
Tractor Mechanic	Civilian	4	Basic
Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic	Army	10	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Ordnance</u>			
Ammunition	MarCorps	12	Basic
Ammunition	Army	12	Basic
AA Director	Civilian	6	Basic
Armorer	MarCorps	12	Basic
Artillery Mechanic	MarCorps	12	Basic
Artillery Mechanic	MarCorps	3	Basic
Bomb Disposal	Navy	10	Basic
Fire Control	Navy	12	Advanced
Fire Control	MarCorps	12	Basic
Fire Control Electrician	Army	10	Basic
Infantry Weapons (fire control)	MarCorps	12	Basic
Optical Instrument	Navy	36	Advanced
Optical Instrument	Civilian	4	Advanced
Optical Instrument	MarCorps	12	Basic
Searchlight and Sound Locator	Civilian	5	Advanced
<u>Photography</u>			
Photography	Civilian	10	Basic
<u>Supply</u>			
Quartermaster Administration	MarCorps	16	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Tank and LVT</u>			
Amphibian Tractor	MarCorps	6	Basic
Tank Destroyer	Army	8	Basic
Tank Gunnery Instructor	Army	6	Basic
Tank Mechanic	Army	12	Basic
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
Barrage Balloon	MarCorps	8	Basic
Chemical Warfare	Army		Basic
Fire Department	Civilian	4	Basic
Gas Mask Repair	Army	3	Basic
Landing Boat	Civilian	2	Basic
Japanese Language	Civilian		
Parachutist	MarCorps	4	Basic
Parachute Rigger	Navy	4	Basic
Aerology	Navy	4	Advanced

(29) Ltr of Instr 121, 27Apr42.

TABLE II. SPECIALIST COURSES: 1945<sup>30</sup>

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Administrative and Clerical</u>			
Classification Specialist	MarCorps	5	Basic
Stenography	MarCorps	26	Basic
Stenography	Navy	16	Basic
Typist	MarCorps	13	Basic
<u>Band</u>			
Bandsman	MarCorps	12	Basic
Field Music	MarCorps	12	Basic
<u>Communication</u>			
Central Office Repairman	Civilian	6	Advanced
Field Telephone	MarCorps	8	Basic
Radar Operator	MarCorps	6	Basic
Radar Technician	MarCorps	27	Basic
Radio Operator	MarCorps	12	Basic
Radio Technician	MarCorps	12	Basic
Radio, Primary	Navy	12	Advanced
Radio Material, Field Sets	Civilian	12	Advanced
Radio Material, Advanced	Navy	24	Advanced
Radio Maintenance	Civilian	8	Advanced
Radio-Telephone Mechanics	Civilian	8	Advanced

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Disburing</u>			
Paymaster	MarCorps	6	Basic
<u>Engineer</u>			
Basic	MarCorps	4	Basic
Bridging	MarCorps	8	Basic
Blacksmith	MarCorps	12	Basic
Camouflage	MarCorps	4	Basic
Camouflage	Army	8	Basic
Carpentry	MarCorps	4	Basic
Demolitions	MarCorps	6	Basic
Drafting	MarCorps	12	Basic
Electrician's Mate	Navy	16	Advanced
Engineer Equipment	MarCorps	10	Basic
Field Electricity	MarCorps	6	Basic
Machine Shop	MarCorps	12	Basic
Photogrammetry	MarCorps	17	Basic
Photolithography	MarCorps	12	Basic
Phototopography	MarCorps	16	Basic
Relief Mapping	MarCorps	4	Advanced
Refrigeration	MarCorps	6	Basic
Shore Party	MarCorps	4	Advanced
Surveying	MarCorps	12	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
Utilities Refresher	MarCorps	6	Basic
Water Distillation and Purification	MarCorps	8	Basic
Water Purification	Army	12	Basic
Water Supply	MarCorps	4	Advanced
Welding	MarCorps	12	Basic
<u>Food</u>			
Cooks and Bakers, Primary	MarCorps	8	Basic
Cooks and Bakers, Advanced	MarCorps	6	Advanced
Mess Management	MarCorps	4	Advanced
<u>Intelligence</u>			
Combat Intelligence	MarCorps	8	Basic
<u>Motor Transport</u>			
Automotive Mechanic	MarCorps	12	Basic
Diesel Engine Mechanic	Civilian	8	Basic
Diesel Tractor Mechanic	MarCorps	4	Basic
Motor Vehicle Operator	MarCorps	5	Basic
Stockroom Procedure	MarCorps	4	Advanced
<u>Ordnance</u>			
Ammunition	MarCorps	25	Basic
Artillery Mechanic	MarCorps	25	Basic
Bomb Disposal	Navy	8	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
Chief Ordnanceman, Artillery	MarCorps	25	Advanced
Chief Ordnanceman, Fire Control, Heavy	MarCorps	25	Advanced
Chief Ordnanceman, Fire Control, Light	MarCorps	25	Advanced
Fire Control, Systems	MarCorps	6	Basic
Fire Control, Systems	Army	10	Basic
Fire Control, Directors	MarCorps	6	Basic
Fire Control, Directors	Army	10	Basic
Fire Control, Electrical	MarCorps	6	Basic
Fire Control, Electrical	Army	10	Basic
Instrument Technician	MarCorps	25	Basic
Munition Technician	MarCorps	10	Basic
Machinist's Mate	Navy	8	Basic
Optical Repair	Navy	25	Basic
Watch Repair	MarCorps	25	Basic
<u>Photography</u>			
Photography	Navy	8	Basic
Sound Motion Picture Technician	Navy	10	Basic
<u>Supply</u>			
Quartermaster Administration	MarCorps	14	Basic

Field	Facility	Length, Weeks	Level
<u>Tank and LVT</u>			
LVT Operator	MarCorps	4	Basic
LVT Maintenance	MarCorps	12	Basic
LVT(A) Gunnery	MarCorps	6	Basic
Tank Gyrostabilizer	MarCorps	4	Advanced
Turret Accessories	Civilian	15	Advanced
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
Dog Trainers	MarCorps	8	Basic
Dog Trainers	Army	15	Basic
Parachute Rigger	Navy	12	Basic
Post Exchange Bookkeeping	MarCorps	6	Basic

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(30) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

## CHAPTER 12

### BASIC OFFICER TRAINING

#### Initial Expansion

On 7 December 1941, the Marine Corps was operating two separate basic officer training programs. The Basic School, which all newly commissioned regular officers attended, was conducting one seven month course per year. The Officer Candidates' Class (OCC) and the Reserve Officers' Course (ROC), established to train reserve officers for the expanding Marine Corps of the short-of-war period, offered a combined course of 30 weeks. This latter program, which accounted for 67 per cent of the 560 officers commissioned during fiscal 1941, had become the major source for new Marine officers.<sup>1</sup> When the entry of the United States into the war created a demand for vastly increased officer procurement, it was the OCC-ROC program which was expanded to meet the new officer training requirements.

A telephone call a few days after the declaration of war from the Division of Plans and Policies at Headquarters Marine Corps to Marine Corps Schools at Quantico set in motion the planning for a basic officer training program adequate to meet wartime needs. In response, Brigadier General S. M. Harrington, Commandant of the Marine Corps

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(1) See Part I of this History.

Schools, presented two proposals. Under the first plan, the number of candidates' classes would be increased from three to four per year, the number of students in each class would be enlarged from 400 to 450, and the length of candidates' classes and reserve officers' classes would be reduced from 14 to 12 weeks. No increase in staff or training facilities would be required. Output of ROC would climb from the current 900 per year to 1,368, a gain of 50 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

The other plan called for conducting three classes, each of 800 candidates, per year. Under this plan, additional instructors and expanded training facilities would be required, both in the candidates' class and the reserve officers' class. An output of approximately 1,900 per year, or double the current rate, could be expected.<sup>3</sup>

Neither of these proposals was adopted. Faced with demands for 3,000 new officers during fiscal 1943, the Commandant adopted a block system prepared in the Division of Plans and Policies. Beginning 1 May 1942, with the sixth class, a new candidates' class would begin every four weeks. As the course of instruction was to be 12 weeks long, three classes would be undergoing instruction at all times. On 1 August the 10th class would inaugurate the same three block system for the ROC.<sup>4</sup>

(2) CMCS ltr to CMC, 10126, 8Jan42, 1520-30.

(3) *IBID.*

(4) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10126, 8Jan42, 1520-30-120.

Demands for officers to lead the rapidly expanding Marine Corps were immediate, however. The procurement of new officers could not wait until the block system began to function in the summer of 1942. As a temporary expedient, the officer school schedule for the remainder of fiscal 1942 was speeded up. Graduation date for the regular Basic School class then in session at Philadelphia was set ahead two weeks, from 1 February to 15 January. The special Basic School class (12 weeks) for reserve officers ordered to active duty, originally scheduled to open on 1 March, began in Philadelphia on 15 January, immediately upon the graduation of the regular class. This was to be followed by another special reserve officers' class. With the graduation of this last class on 31 July, the Basic School was to be disbanded and its faculty transferred to the Marine Corps Schools to help run the Reserve Officers' Course under the block system. The fourth candidates' class, due to graduate on 1 March, was rushed through to completion on 1 February, four weeks ahead of schedule, to be followed by a ten week course, the fifth. Beginning on 10 April with the sixth class, the candidates' class was to be stabilized at 12 weeks. The sixth reserve officers' course, scheduled for a 15 February graduation, was accelerated to finish on 31 January. Subsequent classes were to be organized on the same schedule as the candidates' class.<sup>5</sup>

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(5) Dir P&P memos to CMC, 9250, 10Jun41, and 10196, 8Jan42. CMC ltr to CMCS, 26Dec41. All 1520-30-160.

As adoption of the block system would overburden the existing facilities at Marine Corps Schools, General Harrington advised the Commandant that he would need an additional barracks building to quarter the additional students and three new classroom buildings each with a seating capacity of 200. Of equal importance was the need for a greatly enlarged military reservation at Quantico for more realistic field training.

Shortages of trained instructors were also a serious problem. For the reserve officers' course, 34 additional instructors would be needed to continue the small training platoons of the prewar type, a system which gave each student numerous opportunities to act as platoon leader in field exercises and offered the platoon instructor a better opportunity to evaluate the leadership qualities of each student.<sup>6</sup>

The build-up of the Marine Corps Schools to meet the anticipated training burdens of the block system was still incomplete when General Holcomb on 20 March directed General Harrington to put a revised block system into effect on 6 April, three weeks ahead of schedule. Under the new school system, OCC and ROC classes would be conducted on a ten week schedule, with a new class entering every five weeks. Two classes would be in attendance at Quantico at all times.

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(6) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10196, 8Jan42, 1520-30-120. CMCS ltr to CMC, 8Jan42, 1520-30. CO ROC memo to CMCS, 1Jan42, 1520-30 MCS.

With the adoption of the new system for OCC and ROC on 6 April and the discontinuing of the Basic School three months later, the basic officer training program was stabilized at 20 weeks. A ten-week reduction from the prewar program inevitably led to a decrease in the quality of officer training. Reporting on the sixth class, the commanding officer of the OCC recommended that the two lost weeks be restored to the schedule as soon as possible. Additional landing exercises, firing problems with all infantry weapons, and field exercises could then be given.<sup>7</sup>

A similar problem existed in the ROC. General Harrington urged the Commandant to increase the course to 12 weeks. "It is believed," he wrote, "that the goal to be sought in the Reserve Officers' Course includes sufficient platoon exercises so that each student, at least once, commands a platoon in an exercise in which he must estimate, make a decision and plan, and then conduct the exercise. This cannot be accomplished in the present course of ten weeks."<sup>8</sup>

At Headquarters Marine Corps, the need for additional field exercises, particularly tactical exercises with live ammunition, was recognized, but more time could not be added to the basic officer training program in view of the urgent need for additional officers.

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(7) CO 6th OCC ltr to CMCS, 16Jun42, 1520-30-120.

(8) CMCS ltr to CMC, 22Jun42, 1520-30-120.

Lack of time was not the only obstacle to realistic field training. At Quantico, there was no area where tactical exercises with live ammunition could be conducted. A plan, developed in the Division of Plans and Policies at Headquarters Marine Corps, to transfer each OCC class to New River for intensive field training during the last half of the course was dropped in favor of the acquisition of additional land at Quantico. Negotiations were undertaken and resulted in the addition of the 50,000 acre Guadalcanal area in the fall of 1942.<sup>9</sup>

The recruiting of enough officer candidates to fill the ranks of the expanded school system was another serious problem for the Commandant and his staff. An ambitious program for signing up 9,000 college students during the spring of 1942 fell short of its goal by almost 60 per cent, so the standards were altered to permit qualified enlisted men to become officer candidates.

The admission into OCC of large numbers of enlisted men created a new training problem. There were now candidates from two sources. Those from the ranks had acquired varying amounts of military skill. They all had at least been through recruit training, and many of them were experienced NCO's with several years service in the FMF. Men picked from college campuses, on the other hand, arrived at Quantico with no previous military training.

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(9) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10639, 26May42, 1520-30-120.  
CMC ltr to CMCS, 30Jun42, 1520-30-160.

Attempts to arrange a course to accommodate both groups satisfied neither. The resulting course was too difficult for one group and too elementary for the other.<sup>10</sup>

As a solution, the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies proposed that all candidates from civil life go through the recruit training cycle before reporting to Quantico for OCC. An additional advantage was that the level of training at Quantico could be raised. By eliminating the necessity for teaching elementary subjects in OCC, more advanced instruction of the type then offered in ROC could be given. The ROC curriculum, in turn, could be broadened to include still more advanced subjects.

The disadvantages, however, outweighed the advantages. Candidates had already been recruited from college campuses and enlisted as privates first class in an inactive status pending assignment to OCC. To assign them to recruit depots might have an adverse effect on the morale of other recruits who were basic privates. More important, American manpower was becoming limited. To add a recruit cycle to their training would delay the graduation of urgently needed officers. The Commandant accordingly ruled against this proposal.

Another proposal originating in the Division of Plans and Policies was to combine the OCC and ROC in a single course. A saving in administrative overhead at

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(10) Ibid.

Quantico would result, but the Marine Corps was already committed to the college men enlisted in the existing program. They had enlisted on the understanding that they would be commissioned upon the completion of the OCC. Rather than take an action which might be interpreted as a breach of faith, the proposal to merge the two courses was dropped.<sup>11</sup>

This first over-all reappraisal of the basic officer training program produced no immediate results, although its major recommendations, a single course combining OCC and ROC, and recruit training for all officer candidates, were eventually accepted.

Before either of these changes was introduced, staff officers at Quantico and in Washington had to step up the output of new officers to meet urgent demands for troop leaders in the field. A Division of Plans and Policies estimate of 27 July placed the shortage at 400 by 1 January 1943, necessitating an increase of approximately 50 per cent in output of the candidates' program.<sup>12</sup> Two proposals were considered. The first of these was to continue the two block system already in effect with each class increased to 600 candidates. This plan would produce 4,784 second lieutenants a year. The other plan called for a

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(11) Ibid.

(12) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10817, 27Jul42, 1520-30-120.

five block system, with classes of 275 candidates entering every two weeks. This latter plan, which would turn out approximately 5,460 second lieutenants a year, was accepted. Considerations of space and faculty, as well as higher output, were in favor of the five block system.<sup>13</sup>

During the first hectic months of wartime mobilization, the demand for officers exceeded the ability of Marine Corps Schools to produce them. The slack was taken up by granting field promotions. The Marine Corps had traditionally offered commissions to a few highly qualified warrant officers and NCO's. After Pearl Harbor, the numbers selected from these groups were vastly expanded. So extensive was the practice that out of a total of 4,210 new general duty officers commissioned in 1942, 1,236 received field promotions.<sup>14</sup>

Recipients of field promotions were not required to attend formal schools. Post, station, and organization commanders could conduct schools for newly commissioned members of their commands, but they were not required to do so. Only one such school was organized in the continental United States. Located at Camp Elliott, it was begun by the 2d Marine Division when it was stationed there, and was continued by the Training Center after the departure of the division. Operated as an officers'

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(13) Francis, Op. Cit., 79.

(14) M-3 Op Diary, 7Dec41-31Dec44, HistBr, HQMC.

candidate class, men took the course before becoming officers, and only those who completed it successfully were commissioned.<sup>15</sup> As the course was of only four-weeks duration, its graduates suffered a severe handicap in competition with graduates of ROC. Colonel Lemuel C. Shepherd, commanding officer of the 9th Marines, and a former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools, reported on 11 September 1942:

From personal observation of the graduates of the Reserve Officers' Class, Marine Corps Schools as compared with the recently commissioned noncommissioned officer candidates who are serving with this regiment, I am of the opinion that the professional knowledge of the former is far superior to that of the latter. This is due to no lack of effort on the part of the candidates nor the instructing staff of the Second Marine Division Candidates' School....From experience gained in organization of the candidates class, Marine Corps Schools, and of supervising the instruction of the Reserve Officers' Class, it is believed that a course of not less than twelve weeks is required to teach the technical and tactical principles of combat to a junior officer.<sup>16</sup>

The OCC-ROC did not escape criticism during this same period. Reporting on a visit he made to Quantico in October to inspect the 10th OCC, Colonel Emmett W. Skinner repeated a criticism which had been made the previous spring. "Better officers would be obtained if all candidates were required to take...recruit training..."

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(15) Ltr of Instr 185, 17Aug42. 2dMarDivHist, 7Dec41-1Mar43, (MS, HistBr, HQMC). Col L. C. Shepherd ltr to CMC, 11Sep42, 1520-30-120.

(16) Col L. C. Shepherd ltr to CMC, 11Sep42, 1520-30-120.

he wrote. "All preliminary training at the Candidates' Class could then be done away with, and the two weeks now devoted to that could be spent to a great advantage in more advanced training in the field...."<sup>17</sup>

#### Lengthening the Program

These critical reactions led to a comprehensive review of the basic officer training program. Brigadier General Keller E. Rockey, the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies, set the review in motion by soliciting the recommendations of General Harrington and the staff of Marine Corps Schools regarding recruit training for officer candidates.

After consulting with his staff, General Harrington replied on 26 October 1942. "The most important consideration to the Schools," he wrote, "is that the course for the candidates and for the ROC be extended to 12 weeks." More firing problems, exercises at night, in wooded areas, and physical conditioning were highly desirable. More important, every student should be given a chance to conduct a troop leading exercise on his own without coaching. In the opinion of the Marine Corps staff, the completion of all these training tasks would require more time.<sup>18</sup>

General Harrington agreed with Colonel Skinner that a satisfactory solution would be to require all candidates to take recruit training. Some readjustment could then

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(17) Col E. W. Skinner memo to Col Cummings, 15Oct42, 1520-30-120.

(18) CMCS memo to BrigGen K. E. Rockey, 26Oct42, 1520-30-120.

be made, subtracting time from the OCC and adding it to ROC. The OCC should not be cut too drastically, however. "In order to continue work of properly rejecting candidates who are not considered capable leaders," wrote General Harrington, "...we advise that the candidates' class in Quantico be not reduced below eight weeks."<sup>19</sup>

Armed with General Harrington's favorable response, General Rockey directed the preparation of a suitable program of basic officer training to include recruit training. His primary concern was whether additional time could be devoted to training without upsetting the Marine Corps officer procurement schedule. A study from the Division of Reserve indicated that there would be a shortage of about 434 civilian candidates to put into effect a 26-week program made up of eight-weeks recruit training, eight-weeks OCC, and 12-weeks ROC.<sup>20</sup>

To make up the deficiency, two actions were taken. First, all field promotions to second lieutenant from units in the United States, except at Camp Elliott where there was an officer candidates' school, were abolished. Those men who were formerly eligible for field promotion were now assigned to the OCC at Quantico. Second, a

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(19) Ibid.

(20) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 28Oct42, 1520-30-120.

limited number of recruits were to be selected by special screening boards from among the men completing the recruit training at Parris Island and San Diego.<sup>21</sup>

The Commandant approved this program, and on 7 December 1942, the first group of candidates, those destined for the 21st OCC, started the recruit cycle at Parris Island. They continued their studies at Quantico on 26 January 1943 at the first eight week OCC.<sup>22</sup>

A further extension of the time allotted to basic officer training became possible during the summer of 1943. Owing to a slacking off of the demand for troop leaders, it was estimated that there would be an overproduction of officers by the beginning of 1944. Plans were accordingly set in motion to cut down the output of ROC to about 300 per month. As a first step, both OCC and ROC were to be expanded to 12 weeks. Based on a cycle of this length, Marine Corps Schools' staff prepared tentative schedules providing for new classes to form in each course at two, three, and four week intervals. The three-week interval plan, which would result in four classes being in session at any given time and would produce about 3,600 a year, was considered the most

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(21) Ibid.

(22) Rpt of Students, Marine Barracks, Quantico, for month of March 1943, 1Apr43, 1520-30 MCR.

satisfactory to the Marine Corps Schools staff.<sup>23</sup> The Commandant accepted this proposal, and it was put into effect on 17 November 1943.<sup>24</sup>

Officer candidates selected from the NCO ranks had an extra hurdle to leap beginning in April 1943. In that month, the officer candidate detachments were organized in the Training Centers, Camp Elliott and Camp Lejeune. The purpose of the detachment was threefold: to select the best qualified candidates for further training in OCC at Quantico; to train those selected in basic infantry subjects; and to refresh them in mathematics. During the eight-week course, candidates went through a review of basic training, including arm, hand, and whistle signals; interior guard duty; customs of the service; history and traditions of the Corps; the infantry pack; individual combat; inspection and drilling of troops; complete familiarization with all weapons employed by a Marine rifle company; amphibious operations; and physical conditioning. Under the head of technical training was included a short mathematics refresher course, debarkation drill down cargo nets, map reading, use of the phonetic alphabet, security training, mess management, Japanese weapons, chemical warfare, and current events. Tactical training,

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(23) S-3 MCS memo to Col Worton, 31Jul43, 1520-30 MCS.

(24) Col W. A. Worton memo to Col R. C. Kilmartin, HQMC, 31Jul43, 1520-30 MCS.

the final category of subjects, included scouting and patrolling, individual camouflage, field fortifications, military phraseology, organization and combat principles of the squad, platoon, company battalion, and regiment, and Japanese tactics. About 60 per cent of the training in these subjects was given in the classroom. The remaining 40 per cent was conducted on the range, parade ground, and in the field. The instructors kept close check on every candidate, and a weekly report was made on each. So rigorous was the course that less than 50 per cent graduated.<sup>25</sup>

During these same summer months, steps were taken to improve the quality of officers receiving direct commissions. From May 1942 to May 1943, 1,275 second lieutenants were commissioned by field appointment. As none of them received any training in an officers' class at Marine Corps Schools, it was the feeling at Headquarters that these officers commissioned in the field would be of greater value to the Marine Corps if they were afforded an opportunity to attend the ROC. A program was accordingly set up to assign from 20 to 30 of them to each ROC class. The first of these officers reported at Quantico for the 34th ROC, beginning on 11 August 1943.<sup>26</sup>

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(25) 2dLt Frederick R. Jones, "A Training Center Chronicle," Aug 1943 (MS, HistBr, HQMC).

(26) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 11665, 12Jul43. CMC memo to CMCS, 30Jul43, both 1520-30-120. Rpt of Students, ROC, 10Oct43, 1520-30 MCS.

For warrant officers seeking commissions as second lieutenants, a similar program was organized. In March 1943 warrant officers were permitted to apply for admission into the OCC. Only seven applications had been received by June. To administer so small a number of warrant officers in the OCC would obviously be impractical. An alternative was proposed. Warrant officers were to be assigned to the ROC and commissioned upon completion of the course. As most warrant officers had, in their many years of service, mastered the subjects taught at OCC, the ROC was considered the proper course for them to take.<sup>27</sup>

In some instances, officers commissioned in the field lacked the infantry background needed for admission into ROC. To make sure that they would profit to the maximum from the instruction given in ROC, all officers commissioned by field appointment were assigned to special eight week infantry courses in the Training Centers at either Lejeune or Pendleton, beginning in May 1944. Only those officers who demonstrated the "requisite physical, mental and moral qualifications during the course of instruction" were sent on to the ROC at Quantico. Officers not selected for ROC were assigned to duty stations without further training.<sup>28</sup>

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(27) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 2Jun43, 1520-30-120.

(28) CMC ltr to CG's TC's, Pendleton and Lejeune, 23May44, 1520-30-120.

## A New Crisis and New Organization

With the establishment of the candidates' detachments, basic officer training attained its greatest length and complexity. The potential officer received 40 weeks of training in four separate courses. The first eight weeks he spent in recruit training, to be followed in succession by eight weeks of pre-OCC, 12 weeks in OCC, and finally another 12 weeks in ROC.

The 40-week program was a short-lived one, however. Heavy casualties suffered during the Marianas campaign, and estimated losses in operations to come, forced a reappraisal of officer needs. To meet the increased demand, output of new officers from the schools had to be speeded up. This was done in two ways. First, by establishing a special OCC and ROC at Camp Lejeune; second, by shortening the training cycle in the regular OCC and ROC at Quantico.

On 15 July 1944, a special OCC was organized in the Training Command at Camp Lejeune. Its purpose was to train 430 candidates selected from the Candidates' Battalion. These were men waiting assignment to the regular OCC at Quantico for whom vacancies were not immediately available. They graduated on 30 September after 11-weeks training and were commissioned as second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve. The new officers then received an additional three weeks of training

in special ROC's at Lejeune or at Pendleton. Of three weeks duration, these courses were conducted for one class only.<sup>29</sup>

The reduction of the regular OCC and ROC cycles from 12 to 10 weeks was directed on 22 July 1944, to take effect at once. Courses in session were cut by reducing time devoted to each subject by one-sixth. Output of the Quantico schools rose from a monthly average of 262 for the first half of 1944 to 306 during the last six months.

As a further speed-up in officer production, the pre-OCC requirement for candidates selected from the ranks was modified. Qualifications were relaxed to eliminate the necessity for NCO rank, and to make eligible men with only one year of college, provided they had at least one year of overseas service. Enlisted men selected under the new qualifications would no longer take the eight week pre-OCC course in the Officer Candidates' Battalion at Lejeune. They were now to be sent directly to Quantico where a newly activated Pre-Officer Candidates' School would give them only as much training as necessary to absorb the instruction offered in OCC. By this method, experienced NCO's would not be forced to attend classes in subjects with which they were already thoroughly

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(29) CMC ltr to CG Lejeune, 15Jul44, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CG FMF in SDA, 30Aug44, 1520-30-120 MCS. M-5 Op Diary, 27Mar44-6May45, HistBr, HQMC.

familiar. Graduates of the V-12 program continued to go to Camp Lejeune for training in the Officer Candidates Detachment before being assigned to an OCC class.<sup>30</sup>

Steps were also taken during the summer and fall of 1944 to improve the quality of instruction at Marine Corps Schools. One of these was the establishment of the office of Chief Instructor, whose mission was to supervise all training and coordinate the efforts of all subordinate schools and courses in order to maintain the highest possible standard of instruction. Another was the Research Section, set up to scrutinize the latest information from the battle field so that the latest combat techniques could be incorporated into the curriculum. A final step was the establishment of the Instructors' Orientation Course, used to train instructors newly assigned to Marine Corps Schools.<sup>31</sup>

#### Platoon Commanders' Class

As 1945, the final year of the war, began, the basic officer training system at Quantico underwent a thoroughgoing revision both in doctrine and organization. The OCC and ROC were abolished, to be replaced by the Platoon Commanders' Class, a single course leading to a second lieutenant's commission. The old system had its origins in the partial mobilization of the "short-of-war" period

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(30) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 31Oct44, 1520-30-120. For V-12 see Chap 15 of this History.

(31) Col James E. Kerr ltr to CMC, 25Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

when potential officers recruited directly from civilian life needed a course of basic military instruction. The OCC was organized to fulfill this requirement. The ROC, another product of the "short-of-war" period, provided the tactical instruction required of an infantry platoon leader. The introduction of recruit training for officer candidates from civil life, the selection of a considerable number of candidates from the enlisted ranks of the Marine Corps, and pre-OCC training for both groups provided a thorough ground work in military fundamentals. To offer similar training in OCC at Quantico would be a wasteful duplication of training which the Marine Corps could ill-afford. Combining the two schools would also permit a reduction in administrative overhead.<sup>32</sup>

Another drawback of the OCC-ROC system was that commissions were granted to individuals before they had completed the training necessary to perform the duties of Marine officers. Failure to meet the requirements of ROC would necessitate revoking the commission. The monthly attrition rate, which exceeded five per cent only once during 1943 and the first six months of 1944, began to rise during the last half of the year. It reached nine per cent twice, 16 per cent on one occasion, and never fell below five per cent.<sup>33</sup>

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(32) Maj D. V. McWethy, Jr., "Platoon Commanders' School," MC Gazette, June 1945.

(33) Statistics compiled from monthly rpts of students, 1520-30 MCS. Figures for 1942 not available.

Deficiencies in qualities of leadership were the most common causes for failure to graduate from ROC. In the Eighth ROC, 75 per cent of those who did not make the grade were dropped for such reasons as:

lacks force and leadership;

devoid of the traits of military personality;

military bearing is poor;

has failed to adjust himself to life in the military service;

unsuited for a military career and dislikes military life.

Only 25 per cent were victims of academic failure.<sup>34</sup>

The urgent need for junior combat leaders was another reason for establishing the new basic officer course. Its title, the Platoon Commanders' School (PCS), was indicative of the character of instruction. Of only 16-weeks duration, the school was four weeks shorter than the OCC-ROC combination it replaced. The courses eliminated or cut down included close order drill, administration, and naval law - all subjects which were not considered essential to effective leadership of a rifle platoon in combat.<sup>35</sup>

The PCS was ordered to begin operations as a component of Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, on 17 January

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(34) CO ROC ltr to CMCS, 8Jun42, 1520-30-120.

(35) McWethy, Op. Cit. CMC ltr to CMCS, 28Dec44, 1520-30-120 MCS.

1945. On that date, the four OCC classes in session would be redesignated as the first through the fourth PCC classes. The OCC class scheduled to enter on 17 January would become the fifth PCS, and subsequent classes would enter at two-week intervals. The ROC class in session would continue under the existing schedule, graduating on 9 March. The ROC would then be abolished.<sup>36</sup>

The establishment of PCS led to a change in title for the Pre-OCC. Under its new name, the Candidates' Refresher Course, it continued to operate as in the past. As a preparation for PCS, this course proved highly successful. Only nine per cent of those completing the first class at the Candidates' Refresher School failed to graduate from PCC. By comparison, 13 per cent of their classmates in PCC who entered directly without benefit of Pre-Candidate School Instruction, failed to make the grade.<sup>37</sup>

By May 1945, demand for new officers had slackened enough to permit a cut-back in the PCC from a five to a four-block system, a new class entering every four weeks. The new program began on 21 June 1945 and continued in

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(36) CMC ltr to CMCS, 28Dec44, 1520-30-120 MCS. MCS GO 1-45, 4Jan45, 1520-30-50 MCS.

(37) Ltr of instr 954, 14Feb45, 1520-30-120. Maj E. W. Bryan memo to LtCol W. K. Enright, 3Apr45, 1520-30-45-10 MCS.

effect for the remainder of the war. A total of 15 classes, numbering 3,300 students, had graduated from the PCC by V-J Day.<sup>38</sup>

### Conclusion

A total of 16,084 officers completed the basic officer training program during the three years and eight months between the Pearl Harbor attack and V-J Day.

Although the need for some sort of officer candidate training system had been recognized in the war plans developed between the two World Wars, the training program, as it actually developed, was a collection of improvisations, each taken in response to a specific problem. During the short-of-war period, the ROC and OCC had been organized. They were expanded after Pearl Harbor, and to them were added the recruit training requirement and the pre-OCC. Thus, the basic officer training program, at its most complex, consisted of four separate courses. It was not until 1945 that the replacement of the OCC and ROC by the PCS introduced some measure of simplification.

Complexity in organization, however, did not lead to inadequacy in training. The system specialized in producing platoon commanders, and the officers who received their commissions at Quantico were well qualified to lead infantry platoons in combat.

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(38) Francis, Op. Cit., 97, 112.

CHAPTER 13

OFFICER SPECIALIST TRAINING

General

Of the 5,584 ROC graduates designated for ground duty during the calendar year 1943, 2,478, or 44 per cent were ordered directly to formal specialist schools for additional training before taking up their duty assignments.<sup>1</sup> This figure, however, represented only a part of the formal specialist school training program for officers. Many others attended one or more of the approximately 75 courses available to them after service in the field. Some of these officers returned for advanced instruction in the specialties in which they had been serving. Others were retrained for new duties after the progress of the war had indicated that their old skills were no longer required.

The table below lists the available courses.

OFFICER SPECIALIST COURSES <sup>2</sup>		
Course	Length, Weeks	Facility
Air and Surface Craft Recognition	8	Navy
Administration	8	MarCorps
Administration, Statistical	5 or 8	Army
Artillery, AA, Heavy	16	MarCorps

(1) Figures compiled from rpts, "Distribution of graduates," 15th through 40th ROC, 6Jan-21Dec43, 1520-30-120.

Course	Length, Weeks	Facility
Artillery, AA, Light	16	MarCorps
Artillery, AA, Advanced Gun	15	Army
Artillery, AA, Refresher	8	Army
Artillery, AA, Stereo Heightfinder	4	Army
Artillery, AA, Advanced Searchlight	12	Army
Artillery, AA, AutoWpns, Advanced	12	Army
Artillery, Field	15	MarCorps
Artillery, Field, Special	8	MarCorps
Artillery, Field, Btry Officer	12	Army
Artillery, Field, Field Officer	8	Army
Artillery, Field, Refresher	8	Army
Artillery, Field, Advanced	17	Army
Artillery Base Defense Weapons	10	MarCorps
Artillery Seacoast	16	MarCorps
Artillery Coast, Basic	17	Army
Artillery Coast, Advanced	8	Army
Bomb Disposal	8	Navy
Chemical Warfare, Unit Gas Officer	4	Army
Chemical Warfare, Navy Toxic Gas Handler	3	Army
Combat Dog	14	MarCorps
Communications	20	MarCorps
Communications Company Officers	8	Army

Course	Length, Weeks	Facility
Communications Radio	19	Army
Communications, Field Wire	19	Army
Communications, Long Lines, Outside Plant	19	Army
Communications, Tank	12	Army
Communications, Infantry	13	Army
Communications, Field Artillery	12	Army
Communications, Fundamentals of Electricity	9	Army
Communications, Practical, Joint	12	Navy
Communications, Radio Engineer	18	Navy
Communications.	4,8,&16	Navy
Communications, Pre-Radar	16	Navy
Communications, Radar	18	Navy
Engineer	9	MarCorps
Engineer, Utilities Refresher	6	MarCorps
Engineer, Camouflage	2	Army
Infantry, Troop Leader	8	MarCorps
Infantry, Refresher	8	Army
Intelligence, Combat	8	MarCorps
LVT, Platoon Leader	12	MarCorps
LVT(A), Gunnery	6	MarCorps
Law	3	Civilian

Course	Length, Weeks	Facility
Military Government	16	Army
Military Government		Navy
Mine Warfare	9	Navy
Motor Transport, Operations and Maintenance	4 & 8	Army
Ordnance	25	MarCorps
Ordnance, Small Arms	4	Army
Ordnance, Ammo Inspectors	6	Army
Oriental Languages		Navy
Personnel Administration	12	MarCorps
Physical Training	6	MarCorps
Quartermaster, Administration	7	MarCorps
Quartermaster, Signal Supply	6	MarCorps
Quartermaster, Ammo Supply	8	Army
Sea Duty	5	MarCorps
Special Services	2, 3, & 5	Army
Tank, Platoon Leader	14	MarCorps
Tank, Gunnery	7	Army
Tank, Maintenance	12	Army
Tank, Refresher	8	Army
Tank, Company Officer	8	Army
Tank Destroyer	12	Army

(2) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

The officers who went directly from ROC to a specialist school had a narrower list from which to choose. It included 10 of the 21 Marine Corps occupational fields. The table below lists the specialties and the numbers trained in each during calendar 1943.<sup>3</sup>

OFFICERS ASSIGNED DIRECTLY TO SPECIALIST SCHOOL FROM ROC		
Subject	Number of Students	Facility
Amphibian Tractor	82	MarCorps
Air and Surface Craft Recognition	6	Navy
Artillery, Field	494	MarCorps
Artillery, Base Defense	443	MarCorps
Bomb Disposal	10	Navy
Chemical Warfare	23	Army
Communications	399	Army&Navy
Engineer	148	MarCorps
Mess Management	15	MarCorps
Military Intelligence	15	MarCorps
Ordnance	71	MarCorps
Parachute	85	MarCorps

(3) CMCS rpts to CMC, "Distribution of graduates," 15th through 40th ROC, 6Jan-21Dec43, 1520-30-120. Occupational field designations are taken from U. S. Marine Corps Manual of Occupational Specialties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1945).

Subject	Number of Students	Facility
Physical Training	24	MarCorps
Quartermaster	116	MarCorps
Radar	406	Navy
Sea School	88	MarCorps
Tank	14	MarCorps

The principal occupational field not represented was infantry.<sup>4</sup> The basic officer training program, the OCC-ROC, was in itself a specialized infantry course, and its graduates were expected to be capable of performing the duties of infantry platoon leaders. As all Marine officers, except for the few commissioned in the field or recruited directly from civilian life as specialists, went through the basic program, those selected for a specialty other than infantry received a dual specialist training. They became infantrymen first, then they learned to be artillerymen, tankers, ordnancemen, communicators, or specialists in some other field.

As for facilities, the Marine Corps continued to use, as it had before Pearl Harbor, Army and Navy

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(4) The others were administrative, motor transport, photography, public information, security and guard, training aids, and miscellaneous.

institutions as well as its own schools. For the basic specialist training of officers newly graduated from ROC, primary reliance was placed on Marine schools. During calendar 1943, for instance, 12 of the 17 subjects were taught in Marine schools. Numberwise also, the bulk of the students, 2,483, were trained in Marine-operated schools.<sup>5</sup>

The Army and Navy schools were more extensively employed for the high-level training given to officers who had already served in the field. In field artillery, for instance, the basic course was conducted at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, while experienced artillery officers went to the Army Field Artillery School at Fort Sill for advanced training. Some of the Navy programs utilized the facilities of civilian universities - the radar and Oriental language programs, for instance - however, Navy administrative organizations existed on these campuses, and instructors were usually in uniform. Many of them, regular members of the faculty, were given reserve commissions.

In length, the specialist courses available for officers covered a wide range. As indicated in the table below, the shortest course lasted two weeks, the longest three years. The heaviest concentration of courses

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(5) CMCS rpt to CMC, "Distribution of ROC Grads." Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

timewise was eight weeks, closely followed by the 12-week and four-week periods.<sup>6</sup>

How long did it take to produce a specialist officer during World War II? No complete answer is possible. Length of training can be determined in those specialties where officers were taken directly from ROC and prepared for their specialist duties in formal schools. The table below shows how long it took to produce a second lieutenant for duty in the most important of these specialist fields.

LENGTH OF TRAINING: MAJOR OFFICER SPECIALTIES			
Field <sup>7</sup>	LENGTH IN WEEKS		
	Basic		Specialist <sup>8</sup>
	OCC	ROC	
Field Artillery	10	12	15
AA Artillery	10	12	16
Seacoast	10	12	16
Communications	10	12	20
Electronics	10	12	34
Engineer	10	12	9
Ordnance	10	12	25
Tanks	10	12	12
LVT	10	12	9

(6) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit. Palmer, Wiley and Keast, Op. Cit., 308-319.

(7) CMCS rpts to CMC "Distribution of Graduates," 15th-40th ROC, 6Jan-21Dec43, 1520-30-120.

(8) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

Two representative specialist training programs, communications and artillery, are detailed in the pages to follow. The former, for most of the war, utilized Army and Navy schools. The latter was both the oldest and largest officer specialist school in the Marine Corps. These two programs illustrate the problems encountered by the Marine Corps in operating its own school system and in utilizing the schools of the other services.

#### Communication Officer Training

On 7 December 1941, there were no formal communication schools for officers in the Marine Corps. Requirements for communication officers were met by the Army and Navy opening their schools to a limited number of Marine students. By far the greatest number graduated from the Communication Officers' Course at Army Signal Corps School at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. These were the officers who later directed communication activities in the field. In addition, one or two Marine officers a year studied radio engineering at the Naval Post Graduate School, Annapolis.<sup>9</sup>

The entry of the United States into the war did not bring about any immediate change in the existing policy for training communication officers. In a memorandum dated 9 December, the Director of the Division of Plans

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(9) See Chap 5 of this History.

and Policies recommended to the Commandant that "the present system of sending officers...to Army, Navy and specialist schools should continue...."<sup>10</sup> The existing quota of 17 officers for communication training in fiscal 1942 remained in school, but no addition to the quota was sought.

Under the pressures of wartime mobilization, it was soon apparent that training at the existing level number-wise was woefully inadequate. In expanding the output of communications officers, the Marine Corps continued to rely at first upon the other services for training facilities. The Army and Navy, confronted by expansion problems of their own, revamped their communications training programs by streamlining courses of instruction and by organizing additional courses.

The Army courses, which continued to turn out the great majority of Marine communications officers, included expanded Signal Corps courses and communication courses offered by the combat arms: Field Artillery, Infantry, Cavalry, Armored Force, and Tank Destroyer. The Signal Corps courses, offered at Fort Monmouth, General Electric Company, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, covered maintenance and operation of field radio equipment, code practice, radio procedure, and message center operation. Length of these courses was generally nine weeks.<sup>11</sup> The communications

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(10) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10039, 9Dec41, 1520-10.

(11) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

instruction at the schools of the combat arms was more elementary and more specialized. Among the subjects taught were code, radio fundamentals and procedures, signal communications, message handling, and training methods. In each school the instruction was slanted towards the particular needs of the combat arm of which it was a part, and the Marine Corps utilized this specialized approach to fill its own needs for communications officers for infantry, artillery, and tank units.

The training of communications officers for field artillery illustrates this practice. Field artillery regiments, battalions, and batteries all had extensive communications nets, and while it was possible to assign communications officers to regiments and battalions, at battery level, the reconnaissance officer, an artilleryman, had additional duty as communications officer. The only communications instruction these officers received was in the Artillery Course, Marine Corps Schools. As this later proved inadequate for effective service in the field, the Marine Corps arranged quotas for about four graduates from each class of the Artillery Course in Quantico to attend the Communications Course, Army Field Artillery School, Fort Sill. However, shortages of communications officers in the field prevented the assignment of Fort Sill graduates below battalion level.<sup>12</sup>

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(12) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 11618, 23Jun43, 1520-10-15. AdjGen, USA ltr to CMC, 19Nov43, 1520-10-100. Col F. P. Henderson ltr to CMC, 19Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

Until nearly the end of the first year of war, the training of Marine communications officers was concentrated generally in Army schools. For a service specializing in amphibious operations, a knowledge of naval communications was also essential. Accordingly, arrangements were made in the fall of 1942 for Marine officers to attend Navy Communications schools.<sup>13</sup>

Advanced communications training was also continued during the war. Marine officers continued to attend the Navy Post Graduate School to study radio engineering. In addition, senior captains and majors with amphibious combat experience were sent to the Naval Practical Joint Communications Course at Harvard University. This course covered visual and sound systems, types of messages, reports, publications, correspondence, message handling, codes and ciphers, security, radio equipment, plans, orders, and organization of amphibious operations. Length was 12 weeks.<sup>14</sup>

Radar, one of the most significant technological innovations of World War II, created a training problem for the Marine Corps which had not existed before the war. Fortunately for the Marine Corps, there was no need to organize a radar training program for officers. The Navy

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(13) Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit.

(14) Ibid.

generously offered to include Marines in the courses in electronics which it had contracted with civilian colleges and universities to provide. This Navy program was set up in two stages. The pre-radar stage, 16 weeks long, was offered at Bowdoin College, Harvard, and Princeton Universities. It covered vacuum tubes, power supplies, circuits, test instruments, ultra high frequency, wave propagation, antennas, modulation and detection theory, receivers, and transmitters. Radar engineering, the second phase of the program, was taught at M. I. T. in a four and one-half month course covering principles of electronics, and operation and maintenance of electronics equipment.<sup>15</sup>

The communications officers in the Marine divisions which fought at Guadalcanal, the Central Solomons, Bougainville, Camp Gloucester, Tarawa, and the Marshalls were products of these Army and Navy schools. In the operations of the Central Pacific, their training proved seriously inadequate. "The lack of amphibiously trained communication officers is so keenly felt in the Central Pacific," wrote Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, Commanding General of the V Amphibious Corps, "that the Navy has been forced to take over some of the functions which formerly pertained to Marine Landing Forces."<sup>16</sup>

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(15) Ibid.

(16) 3d End, CG V Phib Corps, 27Mar44, on CO 25th Mars ltr to CMC, 1520-30-60 MCS.

The difficulty lay, according to General Smith, in the fact that there was no training course in amphibious communications. "New communication officers come schooled in Army methods which are applicable largely to land warfare," he wrote. "They know very little about the Navy or amphibious requirements....Some of our new officers are Navy trained; however, such training, though extremely valuable, does not fit them for amphibious operations.... The Marine Corps communication officer must know both (Army and Navy systems) in order to coordinate the two."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the inadequately trained graduates of Army and Navy communications schools, there were a large number of former enlisted communicators who had been appointed to commissioned rank in the field. "In general, these were outstanding individuals who had distinguished themselves as wire men, radio operators, or in some similar field," commented Colonel Clyde R. Nelson, a veteran Marine communications officer. "However, it is a long jump from being a good wire sergeant to planning and executing the complex communications required in an amphibious operation."<sup>18</sup>

The Marine Corps Communications Officers School was organized on 1 June 1944 to rectify these conditions. A

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(17) Ibid.

(18) Col Clyde R. Nelson ltr to CMC, n.d., HistBr, HQMC

component of Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, the Communications Officers' School offered a course of 20-weeks duration to company grade and warrant officers. The curriculum, which was specifically tailored to Marine Corps needs, emphasized communications in the amphibious operation, and, within that sphere, it concentrated on the practical aspects of communications at battalion and regimental levels. Theory and engineering aspects were not stressed in the Communications Officers' School. They were taken up in the Navy Post Graduate School course in radio engineering.

The basic tools of the communications officer were thoroughly covered. They included international Morse code, radiotelegraphy and radiotelephone procedures, message center administration, signal supply and maintenance, and security. These subjects gave the students a practical basic knowledge of the equipment, procedures, and techniques of Marine field communications.

Students then took up the application of communications equipment, procedures and techniques in Marine Corps tactical units. During this phase of their instruction, the students learned the role of communications organizations in various tactical situations, with particular emphasis on such amphibious warfare problems as ship-to-shore movement, close air support, naval gunfire support, and shore party operations.<sup>19</sup>

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(19) Ibid.

The school operated on a block system. Originally, a new class entered every four weeks, but beginning with the sixth class on 16 November 1944, the interval was extended to eight. A total of 10 classes graduating 235 officers was conducted.<sup>20</sup>

The stepped-up amphibious operations of 1944 and 1945 brought home to Marine communications officers the need for a thorough understanding of the Navy communications system. Marine organizations in the field were just as dependent on them as any unit of the fleet. As the communications problems peculiar to the Navy and the procedures employed to overcome them could best be understood if key Marine communications officers had a chance to study them at first hand at the highest level, selected field grade officers were given two weeks of training in the Navy Department, Washington, D. C., prior to their departure for overseas assignments.<sup>21</sup>

The communications training program, which, at the beginning of the war, was based entirely on Army and Navy schools, illustrated the greatest shortcoming of such a system. Lacking control of the schools, the Marine Corps was unable to fit curricula to its own

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(20) Francis, Op. Cit., 94. CMC ltr to CMCS, 12Apr44, 1520-30-60 MCS. Tuttle and Turner, Op. Cit. CMC ltr to CMCS, 31Aug44, 1520-30-120.

(21) Col Harold B. Meek ltr to CMC, 7Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

peculiar needs. It found itself in the role of the poor relation, requesting favors with hat in hand of its more affluent cousins. So serious were the deficiencies that the system of dependence on the other services had to be largely abandoned in favor of a Marine officers' communication school.

### Artillery

When war broke out, the Base Defense Weapons Class, a component of Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, was the primary source for Marine artillery officers. Originally a composite course in which student officers learned field, antiaircraft, and seacoast artillery tactics and techniques, it had, under the pressures of the short-of-war period, been split into Field Artillery and Base Defense Sections (antiaircraft and seacoast artillery). This was the beginning of a process of specialization which was to characterize the Marine artillery officer training program during World War II.

The secondary source for artillery training was the Army Field Artillery School at Fort Sill. It was used for advanced training, and the officers sent there had usually already had some service with Marine artillery units. Close liaison was maintained between Fort Sill and Quantico by frequent exchanges of visits.

Like the basic officer courses, the Base Defense Weapons Class was accelerated in response to the pressures of wartime mobilization. The first step in acceleration,

taken on 1 February 1942 with the Third Class, was to reduce the course from 12 to ten weeks in length. At the end of February, some of the students were ordered overseas and the course was further reduced to eight weeks. The ten-week schedule was resumed with the next class, which convened early in April.<sup>22</sup>

This reduction in the length of artillery training was reluctantly accepted by the staff of the Base Defense Weapons Class. Lieutenant Colonel James D. Waller, commanding officer of the Base Defense Weapons School, pointed out that the abbreviated schedule had "only one advantage, that is, rapid supply...of officers."<sup>23</sup>

As a second step in acceleration, the block system was introduced, beginning with the Seventh Class.<sup>24</sup> This was a two-block system, with a new class entering every five weeks. In December, a further acceleration was put into effect when the schedule was put on a five-block basis. To avoid having 10 classes in session simultaneously, new classes alternated between the Field and Base Sections. The entire Eleventh Artillery Class was assigned to study base defense weapons, while the

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(22) CMC ltr to CMCS, 16Jan42, 1520-30-120. MajGen H. R. Paige ltr to Col C. W. Harrison, 1Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

(23) Dir BDWC memo to LtCol C. W. LeGette, 13Mar42, 1520-30-120.

(24) Base Defense Weapons Class was redesignated the Artillery Course on 20Apr42.

Twelfth Class was exclusively field artillery. This system worked well but was later modified to permit an officer with particular aptitude for a specific type of artillery to be held over until a class in his specialty convened.<sup>25</sup>

During the first year of the war, artillery instruction suffered under many handicaps. The 10-week course was admittedly too short for thorough indoctrination, a difficulty compounded by the shortage of experienced instructors and the necessity of transferring students to Parris Island for firing.<sup>26</sup>

Steps had been initiated to alleviate the instructor shortage as early as February 1942. In anticipation of the additional teaching load expected under the block system, the Commandant informed the Commandant of Marine Corps Schools that some of the extra instructors would have to be selected from recent graduates of the Base Defense Weapons School. But as the opportunities for field maneuver and firing exercises were extremely limited in this school, it was decided to send the instructor designees for further training in the Battery Officers' Course, Army Field Artillery School, Fort Sill. Quotas were accordingly

(25) CMC ltr to CMCS, 23Mar42, 1520-30-120. Dir Arty Course ltr to CMC, 30Jul42, 1520-30-120. CMCS ltr to CMC, 24Feb43, 1520-30-120.

(26) Dir BDWC memo to LtCol C. W. LeGette, 13Mar42, 1520-30-120. "Field Artillery Training Battalion" (unsigned, undated MS, HistBr, HQMC).

arranged for two officers in each course beginning on 20 April.<sup>27</sup>

Demand for artillery officers in the FMF was so great, however, that none of these officers returned from Fort Sill to Quantico as planned. It was the middle of 1943 before any Fort Sill graduates were sent to Quantico to instruct, and they were generally artillery officers from the FMF, sent to Fort Sill for school, and thence to Quantico.<sup>28</sup>

Action was taken during December 1942 and January 1943 to correct the deficiencies in field training. In November the Field Artillery Training Battery was organized at Quantico. Equipped with 105mm howitzers and 75mm guns mounted on half-tracks, this battery permitted observed firing by student officers to be phased into the course on a "study in the classroom then fire in the field" basis. The acquisition of the 50,000 acre Guadalcanal area provided the necessary range area for these student firings.<sup>29</sup>

The Base Defense instruction was similarly improved by transferring it to Camp Lejeune. In November 1942 a

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(27) CMC ltrs to CMCS, 25Feb42 and 9Mar42; and CMC ltr to CG Repl and Sch Comd, AGF, 9Dec42, all 1520-10-15.

(28) CMC ltrs to CMCS, 25Feb42 and 9Mar42; and CMC ltr to CG Repl and Sch Comd, AGF, 9Dec42, all 1520-10-15. MajGen H. R. Paige ltr to Col C. W. Harrison, 1Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

(29) MajGen H. R. Paige ltr to Col C. W. Harrison, 1Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

class had moved from Quantico to Lejeune for firing. Then in January 1943 the Base Defense Section was transferred there from Quantico. Redesignated the Officers' Base Defense School, it was part of the Base Artillery Battalion, which, in turn, was a component of the Training Center, Camp Lejeune. The new setup was a great improvement over the previous one at Quantico because the availability of firing areas enabled students to "shoot as they learned" instead of concentrating all firing at the end of the course.<sup>30</sup>

During this same period, both the Field Artillery Course and the Officers' Base Defense Weapons School courses were expanded to 12 weeks. This was made possible by the increased output resulting from the block system. Artillery officer requirements could now be met in spite of the longer period of instruction. For the Field Artillery Course, the change went into effect on 11 February 1943. The Officers' Base Defense Weapons School followed suit on 25 March.<sup>31</sup>

The additional two weeks were most welcome, for the need for additional instruction for artillery officers was even more urgent in the winter of 1943 than it had

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(30) Ibid.; and CMC ltr to CG Lejeune, 22Dec42, 1520-30-120.

(31) Dir P&P memo to CMC 11197, 11Dec42; and CO ArtyBn TC Lejeune ltr to CMC, 22Mar43, both 1520-30-120.

been a year before when the length of instruction had been reduced to 10 weeks. Since that time, new weapons had been introduced in both the field and base defense artillery. In the former, the 105mm howitzer was being introduced, and, in the latter, 20mm and 40mm antiaircraft guns had been added to the already diverse list of weapons employed in Marine defense battalions. An additional problem for base defense students arose from the employment of base defense artillery in support of ground troops, a development which had not been anticipated when these Marine units were first committed to action in the South Pacific. To meet this new requirement, additional instruction in forward observer methods of fire control had to be given.<sup>32</sup>

Students attending the Officers' Base Defense School spent a busy 12 weeks. Into the 564 scheduled hours of instruction were crowded an orientation course in artillery mathematics and base line surveying, a course in seacoast artillery, and another in antiaircraft artillery. Included in the seacoast course were computation of firing data, position finding, materiel, spotting and adjustment of fire, and firing tactics of 155mm guns and their associated range finding equipment. The antiaircraft course covered similar material pertaining to 90mm, 40mm, and 20mm guns. Graduates were competent to serve as range

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(32) Ibid.

or battery officers in seacoast, heavy antiaircraft, or light antiaircraft batteries.<sup>33</sup>

In the latter part of November 1943, a further expansion in artillery training was made when the Commandant directed the Commandant of Marine Corps Schools to organize an Artillery Observers' Course. From each class graduating from the Artillery Course, six officers were to be selected for training as aerial observers. Their instruction was to include tactical instruction in aerial artillery spotting and technical instruction in photography.<sup>34</sup>

The beginning of 1944 saw another round in the trend towards specialization of artillery officers. The Director of the Officers' Base Defense School, writing to the Commandant, stressed the inadequacy of the existing curriculum. He pointed out that the "present course was designed as an expedient to meet the requirements of an expanded program of organization during which time the partially-trained officers graduated from the Officers' Base Defense School were to be assigned to new units, thereby continuing their education under the guidance of older, experienced officers during that period of organization." This is no longer true, he continued. "Many of the recent graduates have reported to units and have been

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(33) CO ArtyBn TC Lejeune ltr to CMC, 24Sep43, 1520-30.

(34) CMC ltr to CMCS, 10Nov43, 1520-30-120.

assigned duties and responsibilities of a battery officer and have found themselves in combat almost immediately."<sup>35</sup>

Further to complicate the artillery training problem was the employment of 155mm guns as field artillery. Originally designated for a coast defense role, these weapons had been employed very successfully in the Pacific war theaters in ground support missions. Field and coast artillery techniques differed, however, particularly with regard to fire control. The successful execution of the dual role for 155mm batteries required officers to be trained in both field and coast artillery methods.

The solution of these problems called for a reorganization of the artillery training program. In the time available under the existing schedule, not even an adequate coverage of the antiaircraft and coast defense artillery functions of defense battalions could be given. To attempt any field artillery instruction, in addition, was out of the question. Accordingly, a special 155mm gun course was organized. Of 16 weeks duration, it was divided between the Field Artillery Course at Quantico and the Officers' Base Defense School at Camp Lejeune.

During the first eight weeks, students would concentrate on field artillery at Quantico. Their course

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(35) Dir Officers' Base Defense Sch ltr to CMC, 24Jan44, 1520-30-12.

would include artillery mathematics, field artillery surveying, preparation of firing data, maps and aerial photographs, field artillery tactics and techniques, field artillery communications, operation of a fire direction center, and field artillery firing. Firing was done with 75mm or 105mm batteries, but the methods for adjusting and conducting fire were the same for these weapons as for the larger pieces.

The final eight weeks were spent at Camp Lejeune in the study of seacoast artillery. Seacoast artillery surveying, fire control and position finding, radar, communications, 155mm materiel and ammunition, Kelly mounts, antiaircraft machine guns, aircraft recognition and seacoast tactics were among the subjects covered. At the end of the course, there was a one week field maneuver in which a 155mm battery was emplaced in a seacoast position and fired, then displaced and a field artillery problem fired.<sup>36</sup>

The antiaircraft instruction in the Officers' Base Defense School was also reorganized. Two separate courses were set up, one designated the Antiaircraft Course to teach 90mm guns, and the other named the Special Weapons

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(36) Senior Instructor, Seacoast Section, Officers' Base Defense Sch ltr to CMC, 28Jan<sup>44</sup>; and Dir P&P memo to CMC 12083, 11Feb<sup>44</sup>, both 1520-30-12.

Course to teach 20mm and 40mm guns and .50 caliber machine guns. Starting dates for these courses were 27 March and 8 May 1944 respectively.<sup>37</sup>

The completion of the 1944 reforms created a much-expanded artillery officer training program. Previously, there had been two courses, one in field artillery, and the other in base defense artillery. Now there were four courses. Henceforth, an officer selected for training in artillery would be assigned to one of these courses. His knowledge of that particular type of artillery would be greater than under the old system, but it would be definitely limited to that subject. In the field, this had serious drawbacks as it prevented flexibility in assignment of personnel.

The school organization resulting from these reforms undertaken in the early part of 1944 represented the high water mark for base defense artillery training. Beginning in June, the emphasis began to shift towards field artillery. This change reflected the progress of the Pacific War and the decline of the Japanese naval and air threat. According to the original concept, the mission of the Defense Battalion was to defend an advance fleet base from attacks by sea or air. During the campaigns on Guadalcanal and the other Solomons the defense of an island was of vital concern. As the offensives in

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(37) Div P&P memo for the Director, 22Feb44, 1520-30-12.

the South and Central Pacific went into high gear late in 1943, with the resulting heavy blows to Japanese sea and air power, the need for base defense artillery began to decline, while the strongly fortified Japanese-held islands in the Gilberts, Marshalls, Marianas, and Palaus demanded more and heavier field artillery.

The first indication of this shift in emphasis came in June 1944 with a reorganization of 155mm gun training. "The graduates of this course will no doubt serve in the 155mm gun battalions of Corps Artillery," wrote Lieutenant Colonel Robert B. Luckey, Director of the Field Artillery School, to the Commandant, "and while it is realized that these units have a dual mission, it is also believed that their primary employment will be as field artillery. In view of this, it is felt that the eight weeks devoted to field artillery instruction are insufficient....It is... recommended that two weeks be cut from the course at New River, and...allotted to the field artillery instruction given at this School."<sup>38</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Luckey's proposal met with favor at Headquarters Marine Corps. The 155mm gun instruction was accordingly reorganized to provide 10 weeks in field artillery technique at Quantico and six weeks in seacoast technique at Camp Lejeune. The new schedule, approved on

(38) Dir FA Sch ltr to CMC, 8Jun44, 1520-30-5.

15 June, was put into effect for the current class, which had been in session at Quantico since 25 May.<sup>39</sup>

The joint Quantico-Lejeune course on the 155mm gun was a short-lived one. It was abolished on 5 October 1944 on the ground that better training in the field artillery aspects of this weapon could be given by adding appropriate instruction to the regular field artillery course. Seacoast artillery officers were obtained after 5 October by sending artillery school graduates through the six-week seacoast course at Camp Lejeune.<sup>40</sup>

The final blow to seacoast artillery training for officers fell on 13 December 1944. The change in mission of 155mm gun battalions from seacoast to field artillery eliminated the need for training officers in the former capacity. The seacoast course in the Officers' Base Defense School was accordingly discontinued.<sup>41</sup>

The increased demand for field artillery officers also had its effects on the antiaircraft specialty. On 16 November 1944 a special course convened in the Field Artillery School at Quantico to retrain 20 antiaircraft officers for field artillery. The successful completion of this class on 29 December led to the continuation of

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(39) CMC ltr to CMCS, 15Jun44, 1520-30-5.

(40) Dir FA Sch ltr to CMC, 25Aug44. CMC ltr to Dir FA Sch, 5Sep44, both 1520-30-12.

(41) CMC ltr to CG TC Lejeune, 13Dec44, 1520-30-12.

the program. To retrain an additional 150 antiaircraft officers, three special eight-week courses of 50 students each were organized. The first class began on 17 January 1945. On 1 July the third class had graduated, and the program was completed.<sup>42</sup>

Upon completion of this retraining job, the Special Artillery Class was not disbanded. It was redesignated the Advanced Artillery Course with the mission of preparing officers for the performance of staff and command duties in a field artillery battalion. Students were accordingly selected from among officers with previous field artillery experience. Originally scheduled as an eight-week course, the Advanced Artillery Course was extended by one week to permit an adequate coverage of field artillery intelligence before the first class convened on 12 July 1945.<sup>43</sup>

The artillery training program of officers was solidly based on Marine Corps schools from the outset. Although changing conditions dictated modifications in the training system as the war progressed, the Marine Corps, because it controlled the schools, possessed the capability of adapting them to meet changing requirements. Schools of the Army were used successfully to supplement Marine schools, providing special and advanced types of training to a limited number

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(42) CMC ltr to CMCS, 10Jan45, 1520-30-12.

(43) CMC ltr to CMCS, 12Jun45, 1520-30-12. CMC ltr to CG FMFPac, 12Jun45, 1520-30-12.

where it was not feasible for the Marine Corps to provide the facilities for itself. The Army schools were strictly supplementary, however. The Marine Artillery School and Officers' Base Defense School were the primary sources of Marine artillery officers during World War II.

## CHAPTER 14

### COMMAND AND STAFF TRAINING

An early casualty of the World War II mobilization had been the Junior and Senior courses at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico. These courses, organized to teach command and staff functions with emphasis on amphibious operations, had been dropped before Pearl Harbor because of a serious shortage of field grade officers for the expanding FMF. The closing down of these courses was in keeping with Marine Corps tradition. During the Spanish-American War, the School of Application, the officer school of those days, closed for the duration. The Marine Officers' School of two decades later suffered a similar fate during World War I. Although it was not officially closed, its activities were cut to the bone. In both these wars, advanced training in command and staff duties was considered an expendable luxury. All hands closed up shop and went off to war. Hostilities concluded, they returned and devoted the peacetime years to leisurely study of the advanced principles and practices of the military art.

Within seven months of the American entry into World War II, officers on the staff of Marine Corps Schools began to have misgivings about the lack of command and staff training. Writing to the Commandant on 9 June 1942, General Harrington "recommended that a Command and Staff

School...be established at the Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, to prepare...officers for command and staff duties within the regiment."<sup>1</sup>

At Headquarters Marine Corps, the Commandant and his staff looked with favor on the idea of a Command and Staff School. But the shortage of officers prevented an early implementation of General Harrington's proposal. The demand for officers to staff the Third Division delayed any action until early 1943.<sup>2</sup>

In the interim, evidence began to filter back from the Pacific theater of a shortage of qualified staff officers. "Among the difficulties progressively developing as a result of the rapid expansion of the Marine Corps," wrote Major General Charles F. Price, Commanding General, Defense Force Samoan Area, "perhaps the most perplexing to senior commanders in the field is the growing shortage of officers with experience...to perform efficiently the duties of the four principal staff functions for Brigades or higher units."<sup>3</sup>

General Price proposed the immediate organization of a school in the United States to teach staff functions. Such a course should include an intensive study of basic

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(1) CMCS ltr to CMC, 9Jun42, 1520-30-120.

(2) CMC ltr to CG TC MB Quantico, 9Sep42, 1520-30-120.

(3) CG HG Def For Samoan Area ltr to CMC, 14Oct42, 1520-30-120.

theory, followed by map exercises of the problem type and practice in the preparation of estimates of the situation and orders. Upon completion of the course, graduates should be sent to the field as assistant staff officers to understudy for at least three months the officers performing staff duties.<sup>4</sup>

General Holcomb replied that he appreciated "the urgent necessity for training staff officers....Plans have been ready for several months for the establishment of a Staff School at Quantico," he continued, "(but) great difficulty has been experienced in securing any suitable officers...because of the immediate demands for qualified officers for active units." He hoped that "sufficient surplus officers of appropriate grade will be made available...early in 1943 by transfers from field units to the United States." The success of such a program would depend upon "the cooperation of field commanders...in releasing suitable officers."<sup>5</sup>

True to his word, General Holcomb issued the order for the organization of the Command and Staff School on 15 February 1943. A component of Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, the new course was to "equip officers to perform efficiently the duties of the four executive staff sections

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(4) Ibid.

(5) CMC ltr to CG Def For Samoan Area, 26Dec42, 1520-30-120.

in the Marine battalions, regiments, and divisions."<sup>6</sup>  
The first class convened on 24 March 1943. The 12-week course, which was an abbreviated version of the old Senior Course, employed much of the instructional material prepared in Marine Corps Schools before the War. The Attack on Guam (1938) was used in the first class, and the Attack on Saipan (1939) in the second. A great deal of attention was devoted to the "problem of decision" as well as to practical exercises in the conduct of amphibious operations. Tactical problems were made as comprehensive as possible. They included not only basic tactical principles but also air support, logistics, communications, naval gunfire support, artillery, terrain appreciation, and similar subjects. Much more time was devoted to offensive than to defensive operations.<sup>7</sup>

Conferences and classroom exercises were the principal means of instruction. There were a few field exercises in terrain appreciation, and there was a CP near the end of the course. By order of Colonel Merrill B. Twining, the executive officer of Marine Corps Schools, all conferences and problems had to be revised for each class, a requirement which led to much burning of the midnight oil by the instructors. The purpose of this constant

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(6) CMC ltr to CMCS, 15Feb43, 1520-30-120-15.

(7) Asst CMCS ltr to BriGen K. E. Rockey, 1Mar43, 1520-30-120-15. BriGen W. F. Coleman ltr to CMC, 5Jun56, HistBr, HQMC. MajGen W. A. Worton ltr to CMC, 14Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

revision was to keep instruction up to date by incorporating the latest ideas. After an instructor had completed a new problem, the Director of the Command and Staff School and the other instructors sat as a murder board to go over it point by point. In this manner, weak points were eliminated.<sup>8</sup>

A few Army and Navy officers were admitted to the course, an action taken initially because of a shortage of Marine students. "It appeared almost up to the date of starting the course," remarked Major General William A. Worton, recalling his experiences as Assistant Commandant, Marine Corps Schools, "[that] sufficient Marine Corps students would not be available and the opening would have to be delayed; telephone calls to friends in other services indicated a desire on the part of many Army and Navy officers to attend a Marine course designed to teach amphibious warfare command and staff doctrine...."<sup>9</sup>

Navy students encountered some academic difficulty. Assigned to the Command and Staff School were medical and dental officers, civil engineers serving with construction battalions, and reserve line officers, all with extremely limited military backgrounds. They were particularly untrained in map and aerial photograph reading and terrain

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(8) BriGen W. F. Coleman ltr to CMC, 5Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

(9) MajGen W. A. Worton ltr to CMC, 14Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

appreciation. The medical officers, in addition, were often not familiar with the basic principles of military organization. A preliminary course for line officers was organized at the Naval War College to overcome these deficiencies, but medical and dental officers were left to their own devices. No special preliminary instruction was provided for them. They were furnished copies of the Marine Corps Schools' pamphlets, "Map and Aerial Photograph Reading" and "Terrain Appreciation" to study before reporting to Quantico.<sup>10</sup>

Officers of Allied forces were invited to attend the Command and Staff School beginning with the second class. Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the Netherlands, and France accepted the invitation. "The opportunity afforded to our two attached officers to study Marine Corps Staff methods...has proved so valuable that we are most anxious...to continue the arrangement,"<sup>11</sup> wrote Commodore H. W. U. McCall of the British Admiralty delegation in Washington, to the Commandant. Lieutenant General V. A. H. Sturdee of the Australian Military Mission was equally enthusiastic. He wrote to General Rockey: "The attendance of an Australian officer at the school will be of the greatest value to us, especially

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(10) Chief Naval Section C&S Sch ltr to Chief, Naval Personnel, 1Feb44, 1520-30-60.

(11) Como H. W. U. McCall ltr to CMC, 21Jul43, 1520-80-120-15.

if Marine and Australian units are engaged in the same area in offensive operations against Japan...."<sup>12</sup>

At the end of the first year of operations, staff officers at Headquarters Marine Corps and Marine Corps Schools were able to appraise the performance of the Command and Staff School. The curriculum measured up very well. Only one criticism was made, and it concerned a deficiency in a subject not the responsibility of the Command and Staff School. In an effort to overcome the deficiency in communications training,<sup>13</sup> Brigadier General Clifton B. Cates, who had succeeded General Harrington as Commandant of Marine Corps Schools on 1 April 1943, was directed to add enough instruction on amphibious communications "to insure that graduates of the course can intelligently utilize available signal communications during such operations."<sup>14</sup> For the class in session, the hours devoted to communications were increased from 13 to 17 hours, and subsequent classes received 26 hours of instruction.<sup>15</sup>

The provisions for staffing the Command and Staff School, however, did not fare so well. For the first

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(12) LtGen V. A. H. Sturdee ltr to BriGen K. E. Rockey, 10Aug43, 1520-30-120-15.

(13) See Chap 5 of this History.

(14) CMC ltr to CMCS, 12Apr44, 1520-30-60 MCS.

(15) CMCS ltr to CMC, 4May44, 1520-30-120 MCS.

four classes there was no regularly established faculty. Officers assigned to the executive staff sections of Marine Corps Schools, and to the staffs of the Correspondence Course, the ROC, the Artillery School, the Ordnance School, and the Reproduction Office handled all instruction in addition to their other duties.<sup>16</sup>

With the start of the fifth class in June 1944, the Command and Staff School was established under its own director, and all instructors who could be spared from other courses, a total of 19, were assigned to it. In the view of General Cates, this was an inadequate faculty to "maintain the high caliber of instruction that should characterize the senior school of the Marine Corps."<sup>17</sup> Instructors had to teach both general and amphibious subjects, and present both attack and defense problems. In addition, they had to prepare some new problems for each class. Although all these tasks were being carried out, a great improvement in teaching would result by permitting instructors to specialize in particular subjects. In response to General Cates' request, five officers were added to the staff.<sup>18</sup>

A reappraisal of the Command and Staff School took place during September 1944. Three changes were proposed

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(16) MajGen W. A. Worton ltr to CMC, 14Jun56, HistBr, HQMC.

(17) CMCS ltr to CMC, 3Jun44, 1520-30-60 MCS.

(18) Ibid.

by Headquarters Marine Corps. They were that the course continue at 12 weeks in length; that the student body be reduced from 110 to 55; and that there be a two week interval between classes. Asked for comment, Colonel H. E. Rosecrans, Director, Command and Staff School, made the following suggestions. He concurred in the reduction of the class to 55 students. He agreed that the school could be operated with only two weeks between classes, but he recommended at least four weeks, so that faculty members could visit Army and Navy schools in search of the latest teaching methods. Army, Navy, and foreign officers should be limited to 10 in each class, and they should report at least three days early for indoctrination in weapons and Marine Corps T/O's. In addition, he recommended that the class be limited to field officers and that they be more carefully selected. Finally, he urged that the faculty be increased by three instructors.<sup>19</sup>

Major General William C. Clement, since 21 June 1944 the Commandant of Marine Corps Schools, forwarded only two of Colonel Rosecrans' recommendations to Washington. These were to limit the class to 55 students and to have Army, Navy, and foreign students to report early. No mention was made of the recommendations concerning

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(19) Col H. E. Rosecrans memo to CMCS, 9Sep44, 1520-30-60 MCS.

additional faculty or better student selection. Both of General Clement's recommendations were approved and were incorporated, along with the original proposals of Headquarters Marine Corps, for the seventh class.<sup>20</sup>

With these minor changes the Command and Staff School continued to operate until the closing months of the war. Then on 20 June 1945, with the opening of the ninth class, the schedule was lengthened to 13 weeks. This was the first and last change in course length made during World War II.

The ninth class, which graduated on 19 September 1945, was the last one conducted at the Command and Staff School. During its 30 month life, the school graduated a total of 523 officers. Of these, 417 were Marines, 44 were Navy, 25 were Army, and 37 represented the armed forces of Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, and the Netherlands.<sup>21</sup>

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(20) CMCS ltr to CMC, 11Sep44, and CMC ltr to CMCS, 18Sep44, both 1520-30-60 MCS.

(21) Francis, Op. Cit., 89.

## CHAPTER 15

### COLLEGE TRAINING PROGRAM

The Marine Corps has traditionally drawn the largest proportion of its officers from among college educated men. Possessing no military academy distinctly its own, it has relied generally on civilian colleges and universities to provide the formal academic education for its officers' corps, except for the limited number commissioned from the Naval Academy or selected from the ranks. Officer training in the Marine Corps has concentrated upon military instruction.

To assure a supply of officer candidates, the Corps had established in 1940 the Class III (d) reserve program under which college and high school students were enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve for eventual assignment to officer training at Quantico.

In late 1942, the lowering of the draft age to 18 threatened not only the continuance of the Class III (d) program but also the very existence of many colleges, especially the smaller ones.

The Navy V-12 program became then the answer to this double-barreled problem. It enabled Marine III (d) reservists still to enter or to continue in colleges which were themselves aided by the program.

President Roosevelt looked upon the V-12 as partly "a grand chance to save some little colleges." Yet to the colleges it came to mean much more: a way to serve,

as well as to be saved. They lent their facilities, besides their young men, to the service of the nation. The interest of the high schools, as the program took shape, was indicated by a flood of 1,600 applications. But only 131 contracts could be awarded.<sup>1</sup>

#### Selecting the Trainees

In setting up the V-12, the Navy provided spaces for 11,500 Marines. It was soon discovered, however, when the task of filling this quota was undertaken in May 1943, that the number of billets was inadequate for the Marine college training program already in existence. There were at that time 11,516 college and high school students in Class III (d) who were definitely eligible. An additional 300 were still being processed by the Division of Reserve. And 333 enlisted men, the first of a 1,000 who were to be given an opportunity for college education, were also being selected.

The total of these three groups was 12,149. Assuming a two per cent attrition in the period before college classes started, there would still be an excess of 419 over the quota allotted by the Navy.

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(1) BuPers, "The College Training Program" (Part IV of "U. S. Naval Administration in World War II, unpublished MS in BuPers Library, Washington, 1946, 28, 46, hereinafter cited as BuPers, College Training).

Plans for making the necessary cuts were aimed entirely at the Class III (d) contingent. The first proposal for effecting this reduction was to drop those men who had scored lowest in the screening test conducted on 20 April. This test, suggested by the Navy Advisory Educational Council, had been given to college freshmen and sophomores and to graduating high school seniors. It was not administered to applicants from the ranks. In those cases, a recommendation by the CO was considered sufficient, provided the man was a high school graduate, was between the ages of 17 and 23, and had a GCT score of not less than 110.<sup>2</sup>

As results of the screening test were analyzed there was found to be surprisingly little correlation between them and the actual school records of the applicants. The idea of merely dropping the lower 10 per cent had to be abandoned in favor of a more logical plan:<sup>3</sup>

Group I - Applicants with scores\* under 10

- (1) Applicants whose transcripts were available. These individuals were screened out unless their scholastic records and the recommendations of the college authorities warranted keeping them.

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(2) Col Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr., memo to Dir P&P, 10May43. 1520-30-60. BuPers, College Training, 24. CMC ltr to all CO's, 24Mar43, Enclosure (A): Plan for Operation of the Navy College Training Program as pertains to U. S. Marine Corps, 1520-30-60. Hereinafter cited as Plan for MC in CTP.

(3) USMC College Training Program Screening Committee ltr to CMC, 12May43, 1520-30-60.

- (2) Applicants whose transcripts were not available. Freshmen with scores under 05 were screened out. Sophomores with scores under 07 were screened out. In Group I approximately 40 per cent of the total were screened out.

Group II - Applicants with scores over 10

- (1) These applicants were considered eligible for the College Training Program unless they had both bad scholastic records and unfavorable recommendations from their college authorities.
- (2) Included in Group II were also a few individuals who for one reason or another were no longer in college. These, by their own act, were no longer eligible for the College Training Program.

\* Scores were based on maximum of 100.

Those Class III (d) applicants who were screened out were transferred to Class III (c) where they could, if they preferred, request discharge. Such transfer was in accordance with the usual Division of Reserve policy whenever a student fell below the Class III (d) scholastic standards.

By July 1943, when the first term of the V-12 program commenced, Marine undergraduate enrollment stood at 11,460. Approximately 800 colleges and 300 secondary schools were represented. A student was normally retained at the same institution he had been attending, if it was participating in the V-12 program. Otherwise, he was transferred to a comparable school.

If a reservist could fulfill all requirements for graduation by 15 September 1943 he would be allowed, subject to needs of the service, to remain on inactive status in the college he had been attending. But all who could not graduate by that date were called to active duty on 1 July 1943 and assigned to a V-12 unit, provided they were so qualified. Those reservists who were graduated from college before 1 July were called to active duty in their present rank, Private First Class, assigned to recruit training, and then to Officer Candidates' School, Quantico.

#### Administration

A reservist entering the V-12 was appointed a Private in the Marine Corps and assigned to the Marine Detachment on his campus.<sup>4</sup> These Marine Detachments operated as independent organizations within the Naval Unit. Medical service was provided by the Navy. Likewise, the Navy took care of the over-all housing and messing arrangements as part of the Navy's contract with the institution. Marine NCO's handled indoctrination, drill, physical training, and general administration for the Marine trainees.<sup>5</sup>

(4) In regard to enlisted personnel selected for college training, the Marine Corps followed the Navy policy of reduction in rank. Candidates were placed on the same footing as the other Marine trainees on the campus: viz, they were reduced to the rank of Private upon reporting at the college.

(5) Col Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr., memo to Dir P&P, 10May43, 1520-30-60. BuPers, College Training, Appendix D. Joel D. Thacker, "Administrative History of the Marine Corps," 28Jan48 (MS, HistBr, H&MC). Capt John V. A. Fine, USMCR, "The College Training Program," MC Gazette, Sept 1943, 27-29. LtCol John R. Moe, Officer Procurement Div, H&MC, ltr to Mr. A. N. Jorgensen, President, University of Connecticut, 27May43, 1520-30-60. Plan for MC in CTP. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 22May44, 1520-30-60.

Included in Marine Corps' preparations for putting this program into effect had been the job of training suitable supervisory and administrative personnel. It had been expected at Headquarters that Marine detachments would be stationed at no fewer than 33 colleges (the eventual number was 40) - a plan which would require about 40 officers and 210 enlisted men for administrative and training purposes. On 9 March 1943, the Director of the Division of Plans and Policies recommended to the CMC that a course of approximately two weeks, starting around 22 May, be conducted at Quantico to indoctrinate this personnel. It was recommended that the officers chosen have a college background and preferably be graduates. The plan was approved.<sup>6</sup>

The fact that many of the officers assigned to this duty were seasoned combat officers, 'invalided' home, proved a source of inspiration in the program. They quickly won the respect and confidence of the trainees - and of the college officials, as well.<sup>7</sup>

Through August and September 1943 the Marine Corps joined with the Navy in offering an Orientation Course for College Administrators, which was given partly at Columbia University and partly at Quantico. The informative phase scheduled by the Marine Corps at Quantico

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(6) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 9Mar43, 1520-30-60. See end of chapter for list of colleges having Marine Detachments.

(7) BriGen Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr., ltr to CMC, 14Jul56, HistBr, HQMC.

was commended by the civilian educators as "well planned, expertly organized, and superbly presented," providing, as one college administrator expressed it, "a new perspective of the mission, aims, and objectives of the Marine Corps."<sup>8</sup>

### Study Schedules

The academic year for V-12 was divided into three semesters, each of 16 weeks' length. Starting dates would be 1 July, 1 November, and 1 March.

A four semester schedule was designated for applicants due to become line officers. Students who were prospective engineering, ordnance, or communication officers would receive further academic training.

Tentative assignment of students to courses was made through the screening process. An applicant considered qualified for special training was scheduled for eight semesters, or as many as were needed to complete four years of college. However, any other student who showed sufficient aptitude during the first two semesters could be assigned to additional technical training.

The needs of the Corps indicated that an approximate one-fifth of all selected students should be channeled into this extended training. However, because of the lack of sufficient applicants in the technical field, it

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(8) RAdm L. E. Denfeld, Assistant Chief, Bureau of Naval Personnel ltr to MajGen Keller E. Rockey, USMC, 4Nov43, 1520-30-60. Admiral Denfeld quoted a number of unsolicited comments received from educators, expressing praise of Marine training at Quantico.

was decided to consider for such studies any student whose record suggested aptitude for mathematics or science.<sup>9</sup>

The first year program was patterned and shared alike by the Marine Corps and the Navy. It consisted of the following subjects:

English I, II

Historic Backgrounds of World War II - I and II

Naval Organization I, II<sup>10</sup>

Mathematics, I, II or III, IV

Physics I, II

Engineering Drawing and Descriptive Geometry

Physical Training and Hygiene

Schedules for the second year were arranged through counseling and leaned heavily on the advice of the individual college. HQMC prepared a list of suggested subjects which included English and public speaking, foreign languages, history and geography (especially of the current or potential war areas), political science, psychology, parasitology, sanitation (especially elementary tropical sanitation), chemistry (especially chemical warfare), pre-engineering (all types), mapping

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(9) Plan for MC in CTP. Fine, Op. Cit., 28.

(10) Starting 1 July 1945, upon recommendation by the Commandant, Marine Corps Organization, I and II, was substituted for Naval Organization, I and II. The new course was to be taught by the OIC of the Marine Detachment. Dir of Personnel memo to CMC, 16May45, 1520-30-60.

and map reading, surveying, mathematics, sociology, forestry, biology, botany, physics, statistics, radio, photography and photogrammetry, economics, etc.

Students earmarked to be specialist officers (ordnance, communications, and engineering) received training leading toward degrees in the following fields:

Ordnance . . . . .	Electrical Engineering
Communications . . . . .	Electrical Engineering and Electronics
Engineering . . . . .	Civil Engineering
	Electrical Engineering
	Mechanical Engineering
	Mining Engineering.

The best traditions of a liberal education - to find and encourage leadership - coincided with established ideals of Marine training. To make certain now that the concentrated courses would not neglect leadership development, especially for the prospective platoon leader, professional Marine officers drew upon the advice of Reserve officers experienced in the educational field. The resulting programs of study were uniquely designed to meet practical objectives. College officials praised the curricula and undertook the challenge of carrying them out.<sup>11</sup>

The contracts made by the Navy imposed upon the college a certain obligation to accept all the men who were allocated to it (a definite minimum number was

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(11) BriGen Robert C. Kilmartin, Jr., ltr to CMC, 14Jul56, HistBr, HQMC.

promised). However, the college was entitled to recommend transfer to other duty of any student who failed to meet the standards of the school.<sup>12</sup>

### Attrition

It had been estimated at Headquarters Marine Corps that academic attrition of V-12 trainees would climb to 10 per cent "or higher" during the first term. This estimate was borne out by the actual attrition of at least one Marine Detachment. At Oberlin College academic failures rose to "only ten per cent" in the first term.<sup>13</sup>

After the first term, attrition throughout the program leveled off to an over-all eight per cent for both Marine and Navy trainees. This figure, said the Navy, approximated the "normal rate" in American schools of higher learning.<sup>14</sup>

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(12) Plan for MC in CTP.

(13) No percentages of academic attrition are available for other Marine Detachments.

(14) Div P&P memo to CMC, 28Sep43, 1520-30-60. CMC ltr to Senator Homer Ferguson (no date on carbon copy but was reply to ltr dtd 29Oct43), 1520-30-60. BuPers, College Training, 121.

The Navy cited the following factors as contributing to academic attrition in the total V-12 program between 1 July 1943 and 1 November 1943:<sup>15</sup>

Inadequate preparation . . . . .	13.82%
Low mentality . . . . .	42.40%
Lack of application . . . . .	32.72%
Lack of Officer-like qualifications . . . . .	9.78%
Emotional instability . . . . .	0.66%
Physical illness . . . . .	1.52%

Subjects which caused the highest attrition were:

Mathematics . . . . .	28.57%
Physics . . . . .	24.89%

Causes of the high academic attrition during the first term were thus many and varied - and some of them could doubtless not be broadly classified. A distaste for college life or a restlessness to get into action may have produced a certain "lack of application." And certainly, for all concerned, both the trainees and the colleges, the first term of the V-12 program was a period of adjustment, which was not always successfully bridged, although the colleges were generally credited as being "willing to make all reasonable and necessary adjustments."<sup>16</sup>

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(15) BuPers, College Training, 122.

(16) Ibid., 76-77.

One cause of academic deficiency - and the remedy applied - was indicated in the reply made by the Commandant to a letter of 29 October 1943 received from Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan. Referring to the Marine trainees at Oberlin College, the CMC remarked that the men came "from many different colleges and, as has been generally the case, a number of them had difficulty with the academic program. With the help of intensive instruction and voluntary classes, however, the number sent to recruit training because of academic failure aggregated at the end of the first semester only 10 per cent of the total unit of about three hundred and fifty men. This attrition is not at all out of line either with figures available from other institutions or with what our estimates were when the men entered college."<sup>17</sup>

In its new and experimental stage, the V-12 program survived by adaptation to facts, as practice uncovered them. The original plan for trainees prescribed that a student take certain courses in English, mathematics, physics, engineering drawing, and descriptive geometry, unless he had completed them prior to 1 July 1943. College authorities indicated, however, that this requirement was impracticable for some trainees because of inadequate preparation in the school previously attended. Therefore, lest such a ruling produce "large

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(17) CMC ltr to Senator Homer Ferguson, Op. Cit.

and unfair attrition, involving in many cases excellent officer material," college administrators were permitted to make exceptions to the requirement "in appropriate cases" - but to keep such exceptions "to the minimum necessary."<sup>18</sup>

output.

As the program began to function, it was soon producing officer material beyond the existing needs of the Marine Corps. Headquarters had planned that, beginning in January 1944, the officer output from OCC should be approximately 300 a month. About 250 of these would be products of the College Training Program. However, by the middle of the first V-12 semester, it was estimated that about 2,400 men would complete their allotted college training on 1 November 1943. Out of this group was to come officer material "for the succeeding four months until additional numbers complete their college training."

Now plagued by the excess - since attrition could hardly reduce 2,400 to 1,000 - Headquarters proposed to draw not more than 1,600 men from college on 1 November and leave the remaining 800 in school for another semester of 16 weeks. The plan was approved by the Navy.

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(18) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10Aug43, 1520-30-60.

The men chosen to remain on the campus would be preferably those who had completed seven semesters by 1 November, and it was recommended that, in general, younger trainees be kept in college.<sup>19</sup>

By 1 March 1944 approximately 3,425 men would "according to plan" complete their college training, but attrition of six per cent - academic and otherwise - was expected to downgrade the number to about 3,200.

Taking into account the planned capacity at Quantico, it was considered that certainly not more than 1,600 men should be sent to Parris Island on 1 March. Any above that number would not have "a reasonable chance of eventual commission." In January 1944, the Chief of Naval Personnel, therefore, again approved a holding over of certain Marine trainees for an additional term, and he now accepted a figure of 1,620, twice as many students as had previously been retained.

While approving the new number, however, he suggested that inasmuch as there was an urgent need for reserve midshipman candidates, any of these excess Marine trainees who met the requirements should be permitted to volunteer for transfer to the Navy officer candidate program. He agreed, in return, that if ever the supply

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(19) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 28Sep43, 1520-30-60. Op Diary, Div of Reserve, 7Dec41-1Jul47, HistBr, HQMC. M-5 Op Diary, 27Mar44-6May45, HistBr, HQMC. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 17Jan44, 1520-30-60.

of officer candidates for the Marine Corps Reserve fell below existing needs, Navy V-12 students would be permitted to volunteer for Marine Corps training, "as contemplated in the original plan for the V-12 Program."

As a result of the Navy suggestion, the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Personnel announced jointly on 9 February 1944 that Marine trainees to be retained at college for an additional semester beginning 1 March would be discharged from the Marine Corps "on their voluntary application if accepted for enlistment as Apprentice Seaman, USNR, for further assignment to Reserve Midshipmen's Schools."

The upshot of the agreement was that 613 Marine trainees were separated to enter the Navy. Where a man failed to make the grade in midshipman training he would be retained in the Navy in an enlisted status. He could, however, apply for reenlistment in the Marine Corps and, if acceptable, would be discharged from the Navy.

The entire arrangement illustrated a special significance of the V-12 program. It was believed by both the Commandant and the Chief of Naval Personnel that the "close association" of Marine and Navy trainees was making them appreciative of "the ever increasing liaison between component branches of the Navy which has been effected by the conditions of modern warfare."

(20) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 17Jan44, 1520-30-60. Chief of Naval Personnel ltr to CMC, 31Jan44, 1520-30-60. CMC and Chief of Naval Personnel ltr to CMC, 10Feb44, 1520-30-60. CMC and Chief of Naval Personnel ltr to CMC, 10Feb44, 1520-30-60. CMC and Chief of Naval Personnel ltr to CMC, 10Feb44, 1520-30-60.

In making up the quota of 1,600 men to be transferred to Parris Island for recruit training, the policy was to take all trainees who had already been at college for an additional semester, plus all technical students who had completed eight semesters, and all basic students who had finished seven semesters. If it were necessary to take any trainees who had concluded not more than six terms, only the oldest men would be selected.<sup>21</sup>

#### Reduction of the Program

From the outset, the College Training Program had been self-liquidating - and designedly so. As men came to the end of their allotted time on the campus there were no replacements, except for the small quota drawn regularly from the ranks and a scattered few individuals. Therefore, as Marine V-12 enrollment would drop to an estimated 6,490 by 1 March 1944, it was decided at HQMC in January of that year to discontinue on 1 March the Marine Detachments at the six colleges listed below:

Emory University, Emory University, Georgia

Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota

North Texas Agricultural College, Arlington, Texas

Arizona State Teachers College, Flagstaff, Arizona.

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(21) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 17Jan44, 1520-30-60.

The numbers enrolled at each college was the decisive factor in determining which detachment should be deactivated. In transferring the remaining trainees from the six colleges listed above, the main consideration was geographic. The men were moved to schools nearer Parris Island, where they would later receive their recruit training.

A further curtailment of the Marine College Training Program was contemplated in January for 1 July 1944, but certain factors weighed against any further reduction of Marine college units. It was realized, first, that the changeful war picture might generate requirements for additional officer personnel; second, that retention of at least the smaller colleges accorded with one inherent objective of the V-12 program, i.e., to save the little institutions; and, third, that dropping of additional schools would create "unfavorable public relations for the Marine Corps."<sup>22</sup>

Yet the sheer fact of a dwindling enrollment made a second reduction the only practical course. After a Headquarters estimate in April 1944 that there would be only about 1,933 men left in Marine Detachments at colleges after 1 November, the Commandant approved a decrease of units from 34 to 14.

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(22) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 7Jan44, 1520-30-60. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 18Jan44, 1520-30-60.

Assignment of enlisted selectees to the campus would, however, continue just as before. In the same month that he approved the reduction of college units, the Commandant authorized a new quota of 1,000 enlisted personnel in three approximately equal increments to enter the College Training Program - on 1 July 1944, 1 November 1944, and 1 March 1945.

It had been concluded at Headquarters that future V-12 trainees could well originate among enlisted men of the Marine Corps, inasmuch as students graduating from high school before the age of 18 could now enlist in the Corps, and many of them possessed creditable high school records. It had been observed, moreover, that the caliber of men selected by the CO's for this training was steadily improving.<sup>23</sup>

The enlisted quota for 1 July was set at 244 men, exclusive of those chosen by HQMC from at large, but no man who was receiving training in any advanced specialist school could be assigned.

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(23) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10Apr44, 1520-30-60. CMC ltr to CG Camp Lejeune, enclosing Ltr of Instr 753 (advance copy), 24Jun44, 1520-30-120. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 18Jan44, 1520-30-60. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 21Jan44, 1520-30-60.

(24) Ltr of Instr 650, 2Feb44, 1520-30-60.

## Looking Beyond the War

Speculation on postwar needs figured in the plans for men who entered V-12 training on and after 1 March 1944. Considering that the college study would be followed by four months at Platoon Commanders' School and presumably two months of "leave and in transit," an enlisted trainee starting at a college on 1 March 1944 would not normally be available for duty in the field until late 1946 or early 1947. Since it was then anticipated that the war would end before 1947, a new view was taken of those applicants who would enter V-12 on 1 March or after. The Commandant ordered that entrance be limited now to those men who would likely qualify for commission in the regular Marine Corps after the war.

It was hoped to extend the college program so that these trainees could go on to receive degrees, thus becoming the principal source of regular Marine officers for up to four years after the war. Such a plan, it was expected, would yield a maximum of 500 prospects, from which an estimated annual requirement of 400 (less those filled by Naval Academy graduates and from the ranks) could be selected.<sup>25</sup>

### New Demands on the V-12

By the summer of 1944 the decisive Marine assaults in the Marianas revitalized the contracting pattern of

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(25) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 22Feb44, 1520-30-60.

the V-12. The stepped-up tempo of the thrust across the Pacific - and the casualties involved - brought imperative demands for more junior officers. Three hundred additional Marine trainees were taken from the colleges on 1 July, an increment of 1,900 instead of 1,600 as planned. And for 1 November, the intake was upped to 2,125, dropping the previous figure of 1,800. Moreover, the Commandant now approved that the number of enlisted men to be sent to colleges on 1 November 1944 and 1 March 1945 should be expanded from the original figure of 333 to as many as 500 men.

It was re-emphasized - and as being of "extreme importance" - that all men who were selected for the College Training Program "shall possess outstanding potential officer-like qualities." Stress was also laid upon evaluating academic promise, <sup>25</sup> to minimize the waste by campus attrition.

There continued to be many applicants from the ranks. This fact was related to authorization for fiscal 1946 of three increments up to 600 each - for 1 July 1945, 1 November 1945, and 1 March 1946.

To spare a trainee from loss of grade if, "for any reason," he were dropped from the program "prior to

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(26) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 27Jul44, 1520-30-60. Ltr of Instr 805, 22Jul44, 1520-30-60.

commissioning," the Commandant ordered that the man be restored to the grade held before entering training. This ruling also applied to men transferred to a Naval Hospital for prolonged treatment necessitating separation from the College Training Program.

To reduce further separations because of academic difficulties, the Commandant directed in June 1945 that all applicants must have had no less than two years of algebra, geometry, or trigonometry, besides being a high school graduate with a creditable rating.<sup>27</sup> This requirement was also in line with the new objective of drawing postwar officer material from the College Training Program.

Even as late as the summer of 1945 the Marine Corps continued to interview prospects for V-12 training among "scholastically qualified" students, as well as among enlisted men. But because the Navy no longer looked to the schools as sources of officer material the impression became current that the Marine Corps was following suit. This misunderstanding existed even in some Navy Procurement Offices where Marine Corps requests to obtain certain qualified individuals for the Marine College Training Program were declined.

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(27) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 1Jan45, 1520-30-60. CMC ltr to CG PI; CG Camp Lejeune; CMCS; and OIC Marine Dets, Navy V-12 Units, 4May45, 1975-65 MCS. Ltr of Instr 1035, 2Jun45, 1520-30-60.

To clarify the matter, the Commandant wrote to the Joint Army-Navy Personnel Board, recommending a letter to Navy Procurement, correcting the erroneous impression, "in order that future requests for qualified candidates for Marine Corps V-12 will be honored."

The CMC stated that "the Marine Corps continues to obtain its officer material from qualified junior educational institutions, as well as from its services at large."<sup>28</sup>

In a draft of postwar plans, at the end of August 1945, Headquarters regarded that a regular officer should be less than 27 years old when commissioned. Such a view had been indicated in June when the Commandant ordered that applicants for the College Training Program should be less than 23 years old on the day of submitting the application.<sup>29</sup>

#### Closing the Program

The sudden end of the war in August 1945 did not have a shattering effect upon the College Training Program. It had long been tapering in size, and output plans were already slanted to postwar policy. Increments after the original intake on 1 July 1943 had been comparatively small. Both the number of Marine Detachments

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(28) OIC Procurement Div, Personnel, memo to Assistant Dir of Personnel, 20Jul45, 1520-30-60. CMC ltr to Joint Army-Navy Personnel Board, 31Jul45, 1520-30-60.

(29) Ltr of Instr 1035, 2Jun45, 1520-30-60. BrigGen G. C. Thomas memo to CMC, 20Aug45, 1520-30-60.

and the number of students had dropped off - from 40 colleges to 13 and from 11,460 men to the fraction of 1,902 in August 1945.

The entire V-12 program was, from the beginning, a temporary project, to be cancelled not later than the duration plus six months. Although the Marine Corps faced the problem of disposition of 4,000 men - considered, by V-J Day, as officer candidates - it was still considered desirable that the 1,902 men then in college should complete their academic assignments, preferably finishing up eight semesters. It was supposed that the immediate postwar period would produce few other college graduates.

Plans were now being made by the Navy to transfer its own V-12 trainees to the Naval ROTC program beginning 1 November 1945. Moreover, a Naval ROTC student would stay in college until he completed the normal eight semesters required for a degree.

In the Marine Corps, logic pointed to continued association with the Navy's college program. On 23 August 1945, the Commandant requested transfer of the Marine V-12 program, "as now organized," into the NROTC effective 1 March 1946. This was approved by the Secretary of the Navy, except that he moved the date forward to 1 July 1946.

It was hoped that any qualified Marine trainee who wished to do so could become part of a Marine unit of the NROTC and remain at college until he completed his

eight semesters, but no further Marine personnel would be assigned to either the V-12 or the NROTC. Marine participation in the NROTC was originally contemplated, therefore, as only temporary, and Marine units would continue as separate entities on the campuses.

As for those trainees of August 1945 who did not wish to stay at college, a return to normal enlisted status would be effected before the next semester which was scheduled to start on 1 November 1945.

The process of transfer of Marine students into the NROTC set-up would become simplified by the fact that there were already NROTC units at all but three of the colleges where Marine V-12 units were located.<sup>30</sup>

As events turned out, however, a Marine V-12 merger into the NROTC never occurred, for, as we shall see, the entire V-12, including the Marine Corps section, ceased to exist on 1 July 1946. Still, it was planned that a Marine trainee individually could transfer to an NROTC unit, where he would have to complete the required NROTC curriculum before graduation from college, including the usual courses in Naval Science and Tactics.<sup>31</sup>

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(30) BriGen G. C. Thomas memo to CMC, 20Aug45, 1520-30-60. CMC memo to SecNav, 23Aug45, 1520-30-60. BuPers, College Training, 26.

(31) Dir of Personnel memo to CMC, 6Feb45, 1520-30-60.

In September 1945 the Commandant advised all Officers-in-Charge of Marine V-12 units that there would be no further increments of enlisted Marines entering the College Training Program - thus diverting the group which had been slated to begin on 1 November. No Marine trainee would be transferred from college to officer training at the end of the semester then in progress. Any trainee could request withdrawal from college and transfer to general duty in the Marine Corps. Actually, only one Marine trainee was due to complete eight semesters of college work by 1 November, but future classes were expected to yield "a considerable number" of candidates for commission.

The Commandant indicated in his memorandum that without further legislation and appropriations the College Training Program could not be continued beyond 1 March 1946, and he saw the NROTC as a solution to the problem of extending training after the closing date. As indicated above, the Secretary of the Navy was, in fact, agreeable to such a solution.<sup>32</sup>

For the present, plans had to be made for disposition of Marine trainees at the end of the V-12 program. In December 1945 the Commandant directed that eight-semester graduates on 1 March 1946 who were interested

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(32) CMC memo to OIC's Marine Dets, Navy V-12 Units, 5Sep45, 1520-30-60. Dir of Personnel memo to CMC, 6Dec45, 1520-30-60.

in a regular commission and could qualify would be commissioned in the Marine Corps Reserve and assigned to the 2d Class, Basic School. Those not interested in a regular commission could elect to receive a reserve commission and go to inactive status, or to active duty if they agreed to remain for at least six months. Those not interested in a regular or a reserve commission would be returned to general duty as enlisted men.

Undergraduates eligible for the NROTC were to be discharged from the Marine Corps Reserve for enlistment in the Naval Reserve. Those undergraduates not eligible for the NROTC would be returned to general duty unless eligible for discharge under current directives.

Although it had been expected that the V-12 program would have to fold up about 1 March 1946, Congress gave it a new, if brief, lease on life - voting to keep the program, as it stood, until 1 July 1946.

And May 1946 saw a modifying of Marine Corps policy regarding disposition of trainees at the now definite closing date. Under the revised policy, graduates would be discharged or appointed to commissioned rank in the Marine Corps Reserve and assigned to active duty or inactive status, whichever they preferred. Undergraduates qualified for enrollment in the NROTC would be discharged or transferred to general duty, as they wished. Trainees not qualified to enroll in the NROTC would be returned

to general duty, unless eligible for discharge under the general discharge policy.<sup>33</sup>

The final wind-up of the College Training Program was presaged on 12 April 1946 when the Commandant addressed a letter to the Officers-in-Charge of all Marine V-12 units. It ordered disbanding of all the remaining Marine Detachments at the conclusion of the "semester, term, or quarter current on 15 May 1946."<sup>34</sup>

So ended what had been a new experience in Marine Corps history. Yet it was perhaps, more correctly, a new expression of a Marine Corps viewpoint - that, in the main, leadership flowers best when "firmed up" by knowledge.

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(33) Dir of Personnel memo to CMC, 6Feb46, 1520-30-60. Op Diary, Div of Reserve, 7Dec41-1Jul47, HistBr, HQMC.

(34) CMC ltr to OIC's Marine Dets, Navy V-12 Units, 12Apr46, 1520-30-60.

INSTITUTIONS IN COLLEGE TRAINING PROGRAM WHERE  
MARINE DETACHMENTS WERE STATIONED<sup>35</sup>

Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire  
Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey  
Villanova College, Villanova, Pennsylvania  
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York  
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut  
Colgate University, Hamilton, New York  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina  
Georgia School of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia  
Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana  
Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas  
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California  
Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Until 1 March 1944:

Emory University, Emory University, Georgia  
Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi  
Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois  
Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota  
North Texas Agricultural College, Arlington, Texas  
Arizona State Teachers College, Flagstaff, Arizona

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(35) List compiled from Op Diary, Div of Reserve,  
7Dec41-1Jul47, HistBr, HQMC.

Until 1 November 1944:

Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania  
University of Rochester, Rochester, New York  
Pennsylvania State College (now Pennsylvania State University), State College, Pennsylvania  
Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Duke University, Durham, North Carolina  
University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana  
Miami University, Oxford, Ohio  
Western Michigan College of Education, Kalamazoo, Michigan  
Denison University, Granville, Ohio  
Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio  
Arkansas Agricultural and Mechanical College, Monticello, Arkansas  
Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Lafayette, Louisiana  
Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, Ruston, Louisiana  
University of Redlands, Redlands, California  
Occidental College, Los Angeles, California  
University of Washington, Seattle, Washington  
University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado  
College of the Pacific, Stockton, California  
Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania

## CHAPTER 16

### OFFICER INDOCTRINATION

Adjustment is a part of life, especially of the soldier's life. The demands of warfare produce inventiveness - "firsts" in medicine, mechanics, and in almost all fields of human thought and action.

Among these "firsts" within the Marine Corps during World War II was a program of officer indoctrination, designed chiefly for specialists commissioned or re-commissioned from civil life.

The reception and training of a large number of these men constituted a certain modification of Marine Corps philosophy. In a war which would demand far more and varied personnel and implements than ever before, the Corps could no longer afford the luxury of its historic concept: that a line command was the final objective of all officer training. War was now requiring more and more civilian specialists, whether at home or in uniform.

Yet the new officer indoctrination never lost the theme of "combat readiness" - a primary purpose of the Corps. At least one of the officer-students still felt that the curriculum was built upon "the old assumption of the Marine Corps that every officer in the Marine Corps is a line officer and competent to handle troops."<sup>1</sup>

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(1) Capt Philips D. Carleton memo to LtCol J. R. Moe, 24May43, 1520-30-120.

Certainly the term "non-combatant," long unfamiliar, never became a part of the Marine lexicon.

#### Specialist in Uniform

The need to emphasize officer indoctrination became plain in 1942, with the rapid influx of men commissioned directly from civil life. Apart from the officer candidate program, there was an imperative immediate need for officers. As a result, the Marine Corps "resorted to a vastly increased granting of direct commissions. Included among the recipients were...former officers of all services recalled to fill administrative posts, and civilian specialists commissioned for technical duties. So extensive was the practice that, out of a total of 5,618 officers entering in 1942... specialists accounted for 1,408."<sup>2</sup>

Class V, Specialist Volunteer Marine Corps Reserve, was created in March 1942. The purpose was "to provide for the appointment or enlistment in the Marine Corps Reserve of officers and men who possess special qualifications which may be utilized in the Marine Corps in time of war or national emergency, but who, due to physical defects, age, or lack of training, are not qualified for general service." They were to be "commissioned or appointed for specialist duties only."<sup>3</sup> Procurement of

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(2) Kenneth W. Condit, "Marine Corps Administration in World War II," (MS, HistBr, HQMC), 39-40.

(3) Marine Corps Manual, 1940, reprinted 1944, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1944).

officers for specialist service was then authorized by Circular Letter 573 in April 1942.<sup>4</sup>

Besides permitting acceptance of specialists who possessed no prior military service into Class V, this authority also provided for commissioning for general duty of former officers of the military services, including the reserves, and ROTC graduates into Class III, the unorganized Marine Corps Reserve.

These Class III officers were not specialists, such as those of Class V. Instead, they were commissioned to perform garrison duty at posts mainly in the United States, relieving younger trained men for service in the field. There was no express prohibition of service overseas for either Class V or Class III, and a number of officers of both groups served in combat areas.

It was to be expected that most of the Class III officers, as well as the Class V specialists, would need indoctrination or, at least, a familiarization with the Marine Corps.

No limiting quotas were fixed in the Spring of 1942 on the commissioning of these men, but in September the Commandant authorized procurement of not to exceed 1,000 specialists, Class V officers, exclusive of Aviation.<sup>5</sup>

"Boot camps for specialist officers" became the generally accepted title for the schools of indoctrination

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(4) Op Diary, Div of Reserve, 7Dec41-1Jul47, HistBr, HQMC.

(5) Ibid.

for these individuals commissioned directly from civil life. These trainees, however, were definitely not the youngsters of the usual boot camp. On the contrary, they were mature "lawyers, engineers, bankers, editors, mechanics, business men - even morticians."<sup>6</sup>

Their military backgrounds were hardly less varied than their civil experiences.<sup>7</sup> "The ink is not yet dry on the commissions of some of them," reported the Marine Corps Gazette. "Others have been on active duty for six months or more. Still others are 'retreads' from World War I." Practically all they now shared in common was the fact that they were Marine officers - "ranging in rank from gunner to captain, with an occasional major."<sup>8</sup> But they all stood ready to learn or relearn, to get conditioning or reconditioning. Their needs were individual and quite varied - a fact bound to complicate instruction.

#### Early Indoctrination at Quantico

As Class V officers began to arrive at Quantico, in considerable numbers, during the spring of 1942, the

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(6) Capt A. L. Wimer and Lt C. P. Morehouse, "Specialist Officers Learn to be Marines First." MC Gazette, August 1943, 25-27.

(7) At an indoctrination course at Lejeune in the spring of 1943 only 20 to 30 per cent of the officers possessed previous military experience. Capt Philips D. Carleton memo to LtCol J. R. Moe, Op. Cit.

(8) Wimer and Morehouse, Op. Cit.

Marine Corps was curiously confronted with officers variously devoid of military knowledge.

"Aviation ground specialists were the first to report for active duty. A few of these officers were enrolled in the regular ROC course. Because of their age and lack of basic military training, they made very poor records; so a special 10-week indoctrination course was organized in May 1942 using the barracks and class rooms of the ROC. The curriculum consisted of selected lectures and exercises of the ROC plus new courses emphasizing staff work and aviation subjects."<sup>9</sup>

Besides the Class V newcomers, there were a number of Class III officers appearing at Quantico in 1942. Many of the latter, commissioned for general duty, were former regular or reserve officers recommissioned, but there was also a considerable proportion of ROTC graduates - a fact due partly to Army policy of refusing to re-commission any reserve officer who had previously resigned. This practice redounded to the benefit of the Marine Corps, which received some excellent material from the ROTC.<sup>10</sup>

For these new men, arriving daily at Quantico, there was as yet no indoctrination schedule specifically designed

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(9) Condit, Op. Cit., 61.

(10) Interview LtCol Frank O. Hough, 1May56.

and adapted to their needs. Meanwhile, the need for a suitable and inclusive program of indoctrination was becoming constantly more plain. In late August 1942, some 60 officers were present in the Officers Pool at the Training Center. A few had reported only two days before, while others had been around as long as six weeks.

On 28 August the CO of the Training Center reported that "since the transfer of the three Training Center schools, there are insufficient officer-instructors available to carry on a satisfactory course" of indoctrination.<sup>11</sup>

Indoctrination attempts at Quantico were considerably hamstrung by the fact, as the CO explained, that "officers report and depart continuously as individual casuals." He "urgently requested and strongly recommended as an immediate Corps policy that appointed reserve officers scheduled for indoctrination at the Training Center...be activated in time to report as a group only, at two-week intervals on Mondays at 0800 of the reporting week."

There was a note of exasperation, as well as urgency, in the CO's message.

One result of the chaotic situation had been an undue bewilderment among the new men. "Under the casual method," the CO stated, "serious conditions among the indoctrinee officers have existed."<sup>12</sup> He did not elaborate.

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(11) CO TC MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 28Aug42, 1520-30-120.

(12) CO TC\*MB Quantico ltr to CMC, 21Sep42, 1520-30-120.

That the state of indoctrination left much to be desired is confirmed by recollections of an officer who reported at Quantico in September 1942. He found the situation "extremely haphazard" and recalls that "about the only consistent feature of the program was a half hour or so of close order drill (without arms) every morning. The main object seemed to be to instill a rudimentary grasp of military traditions, customs and courtesy so that the new officers would not appear too ill at ease in their uniforms. As I recall, the course lasted only a couple of weeks....That the men under instruction learned anything useful is doubtful."<sup>13</sup>

Still, despite the brevity and inadequacy of indoctrination at that date, a certain new pride and affection came into the hearts of some of the men - a sense of belonging and "a feeling of real warmth toward the Marine Corps," as this officer remembers.<sup>14</sup>

Here, surely, was the highest gain that indoctrination could hope for. Yet it would not help the men to aim a rifle straighter nor supply that practical knowledge irreplaceable to a soldier's confidence.

But good news rides often at the heels of doubt, and even while the CO at Quantico was writing of the indoctrination predicament a turn for the better was

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(13) Interview LtCol Frank O. Hough, 1May56.

(14) Ibid.

under way. At Headquarters Marine Corps plans were being drafted to establish two new Indoctrination Schools, adequately designed and supported: one on each Coast - at Lejeune and at Elliott - to begin about 1 November. Demands from the combat areas made efficient staffing a problem from beginning to end, but the original hopes for a really good indoctrination program were high.

Transfer of most of the Training Center activity from Quantico to New River in the Fall of 1942 made Lejeune most suitable for the East Coast indoctrination. "Some instruction" along that line was already being offered there.

In the West there had been an "informal school" of indoctrination at the Marine Corps Base, San Diego - mainly a series of lectures - but interruption from personnel changes led to dropping of the course, and correspondence lessons were substituted.<sup>15</sup>

Indoctrination: Lejeune and Elliott

Now newly commissioned and recommissioned officers would be sent for indoctrination to either Lejeune or Elliott, "as appropriate," but Aviation Specialists would be assigned to the Reserve Officers' Class, and Recruiting Specialists would continue to be sent, "as practicable,"

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(15) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 28Sep42, 1520-30-120. CO Sch Bn FMF TC MB New River ltr to CMC, 21Nov42, 1520-30-120. CG, USMC Hq, Dept of Pac, San Francisco, ltr to CMC, 14Sep42, 1520-30-120.

to the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico. Officers scheduled to receive indoctrination at Lejeune or Elliott included specialists in Quartermaster, Communications, Engineer, Motor Transport, and Public Relations work, plus General Duty. By the Commandant's letters of 15 October 1942 the new and (it was hoped) better indoctrination program was set in motion - to begin 1 November.<sup>16</sup>

At Lejeune a delay was occasioned in starting the new course because of the dearth of qualified instructors. A second handicap stemmed from the lack of certain prescribed textual material until more could be printed. But most "urgently needed" was the authorized staff. It was even necessary to make an instructor out of one officer who was himself being indoctrinated.<sup>17</sup>

The shortages of staff and equipment for the Indoctrination Courses could not immediately be corrected, and proper staffing would, in fact, remain a permanent problem. In January 1943 the CO of the School Battalion at New River informed the Commandant that "experience with the 2nd Officers' Indoctrination Course, which will end 15 January 43 and which started with 88 students, indicates that a class of 60 students is the absolute maximum that can be handled effectively with the present

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(16) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 28Sep42, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CG TC FMP SD, 15Oct42, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CG TC New River, 15Oct42, 1520-30-120.

(17) CO Sch Bn, FMP TC MB New River ltr to CMC, Op. Cit.

staff and equipment. For a larger number of students per month, a block system with increased facilities and additional instructors should be instituted. Student officers awaiting formation of the Third Indoctrination Course now number 64, and, by the time the course can be started with the limited teaching staff, may well exceed 70."

But at HQMC it was seen as "not practicable at this time to increase the staff or facilities at either New River or San Diego." It was suggested that classes be limited to 60 each and not over 75, and that the classes at New River and San Diego be equalized "as far as practicable." Headquarters indicated that priority of assignment should be given to Communications, Procurement, Ordnance, and Japanese Language officers.<sup>18</sup>

As the schedules were evolved, the course at Camp Lejeune was of five weeks length, while that at Camp Elliott was set at a month. The programs were not identical, although many of the same subjects were of course covered at both. See following table.

Early in October 1943, all officer indoctrination was concentrated at Camp Lejeune. On 26 July, the CMC ordered discontinuation of the Indoctrination School at Elliott upon completion of the class graduating about 1 October. At the same time he ordered extension of the

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(18) CO Sch Bn TC MB Camp Lejeune ltr to CMC, 9Jan43, 1520-30-120. Dir P&P memo to Dir, Div of Reserve, 29Jan43, 1520-30-120.

Indoctrination Course at Lejeune from five to eight weeks. He stated that "the current limitation on procurement of Class V (a) Specialist Officers makes it unnecessary to conduct two Indoctrination Schools."<sup>19</sup>

A maximum procurement of specialist officers from 1 July to 31 December had been fixed at only 210 men. They were to be apportioned as follows:

Adjutant	2
General (A&I)	5
Mess Management	4
Personnel Technician	10
Security - Guard	3
Aviation	3
Radar - Technical	70
Radio Engineer	5
Telephone Engineer	1
Engineer	15
Combat Intelligence	5
Linguist (Japanese)	10
Educator	2
Dog Trainer	1
Motor Transport Officer	20
Ordnance	15
Post Exchange Officer	3

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(19) CMC memo to CG Camp Lejeune, and CG TC Camp Elliott, 2Jun43, 1520-30-120. CMC memo to CG FMF SDA, 26Jul43, 1520-30-120. CMC memo to CG Camp Lejeune, 26Jul43, 1520-30-120.

Postal Officer	3
Strategic Service	15
Commissary Officer	3
Stevedoring - Warehousing	6
Technical (QM)	6
Physical Director	3
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TOTAL	210

With extension of the Lejeune course to eight weeks, approximately 40 officers could be handled in each class - with a desired maximum of 50.<sup>20</sup>

A formal description of the course indicated its nature. "The course is designed, as the name suggests, to indoctrinate newly commissioned officers with a sense of absolute duty and loyalty to the Marine Corps and to its purposes; to teach them discipline and courtesy; to familiarize them with the history of the Corps; to instruct them in the requirements of, and their obligation to, the service and in the performance of their general duties therein. It cannot be expected that they shall, upon completion of the course, be finished unit commanders; but our aim is that they shall be so imbued with basic principles as to be more readily adaptable to a stricter and more detailed instruction."<sup>21</sup>

(20) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 10Jul43, 1520-30-120. Dir P&P memo to CMC, 15Jul43, 1520-30-120. CO Infantry Bn TC Camp Lejeune ltr to CMC, 24Aug43, 1520-30-120.

(21) CO Infantry Bn TC Camp Lejeune, ltr to CMC, 27Oct43, 1520-30-120.

The new eight-weeks course at Lejeune was physically more strenuous than the previous shorter courses - but subjectwise covered about the same material only in greater detail.

TABLE OF SUBJECTS			
BASICS OF MILITARY LIFE	Camp Elliott (1 month)	Camp Lejeune (5 weeks)	Extended 8 wks course at Lejeune
Inspections	4 hours	5 hours	7 hours
Close Order Drill	20	16	38½
Extended Order Drill	5	3	4 (included also Combat Signals)
Interior Guard	2	10	6
Custons and Courtesies	4	2	2
First Aid and Field Sanitation	2	7½	8½
Blanket Rolling and Bunk Making			1
Military Principles	2	2	1
Duty Officer Watches			1
Command Presence			2
Service Afloat			1
Methods of Training	3		1 (Method of Instruction)
Total	42	45½	73

INTRODUCTION TO COMBAT	Camp Elliott (1 month)	Camp Lejeune (5 weeks)	Extended 8 wks course at Lejeune
Scouting and Patrolling	4	6½	4½
Topography			18
Chemical Warfare	2	3	3
Weapons:	8	12	41
Pistol .45			(listed
Reising Gun			as
M-1 Rifle			Weapons)
Grenades	2	2	2
Marksmanship and Technique of Fire	16	18	48½
Defense against Aircraft			2
Combat Principles of Small Infantry Units			4
Tactics and Combat Orders			3
Landing Operations	3	6	6
Night Operations	8	3	6
Small Wars			11
Problems			11½
Logistics			3
Camouflage and Demolitions	5		2
Hikes and Tactical Walks	12	24	
Marching and Bivouacs			35

INTRODUCTION TO COMBAT (Continued)	Camp Elliott (1 month)	Camp Lejeune (5 weeks)	Extended 8 wks course at Lejeune
Map Reading and Military Sketching	16		
Bayonet and Individual Combat	4		
81mm and 60mm Mortars	6	6	
Tanks	4		
Total	90	80	200½
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
Lecture Administration and Command Administration			26
Command and Administration	16	23	
Naval Law	14	12½	14½
Table of Organization			2
Military Organization	3		
Rules of Land Warfare	1	2	
Total	34	37½	42½
<b>FAMILIARIZATION WITH THE MARINE CORPS</b>			
<b>Navy Regulations:</b>			
Marine Corps Relation to the Navy	1	2	2
Marine Corps Organization			1

FAMILIARIZATION WITH THE MARINE CORPS (Continued)	Camp Elliott (1 month)	Camp Lejeune (5 weeks)	Extended 8 wks course at Lejeune
Marine Corps Aviation			2
Montford Point (Training Camp for Negro Marines)			1
Women's Reserve			1
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps			2
Devil Dog School			3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>TRAINING FILMS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37½</b>
<b>PHYSICAL TRAINING</b>			
Physical Drill Under Arms ( <u>only</u> listed physical training)	6	12	
Physical Training			56½
<b>GRAND TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>201½</b>	<b>422</b>

Besides the above subjects, time was set aside for study periods, troop and inspection, and administrative detail, i.e., drawing equipment, inoculations, classification, etc.<sup>22</sup>

(22) CMC memo to CG Camp Lejeune, and CG TC Camp Elliott, 2Jun43, 1520-30-120. CO Infantry Bn TC Camp Lejeune ltr to CMC, 27Oct43, 1520-30-120.

A comparison of the eight-week course with the two previous courses reveals, above all, that the percentage of time devoted to physical training was more than doubled in the longer course. Other fields of instruction remained much the same in relative time, although administration was accorded less emphasis in the eight-week course. Practically half of the work continued to dwell on knowledge useful in a combat area: chiefly proficiency in weapons.

While parallel courses existed at Elliott and Lejeune, the somewhat longer one at Lejeune made possible certain areas of instruction not given at Elliott, including attention to such weapons as the Thompson SMGun, the BAR, the carbine, and the BMG.<sup>23</sup>

Learning at Lejeune "culminated in a maneuver that included a hike of six miles or so, an overnight bivouac, and a simulated assault landing from a mock-up the next day."<sup>24</sup>

#### Problems of Instruction

If there was any phase on which indoctrination missed fire, it was the one on which hinges the success of all teaching: the ability of the teacher himself. As expressed by one of the student-officers, "no course can be better than the instructor."<sup>25</sup> With the Marine

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(23) See foregoing memo of 2Jun43.

(24) Interview LtCol Frank O. Hough, 1May56.

(25) Ibid.

Corps then "woefully short" of trained officers, outstanding ones could seldom be assigned - or kept - at teaching indoctrinees.

One inevitable result was that NCO's had to be called in as instructors, and, while some were good, others were handicapped by insufficient formal education, inexperience, or stage fright. A sergeant-major, though versed in Administration from long service, "was so awed at addressing a class made up entirely of officers that the lectures frequently became incoherent."<sup>26</sup>

A student-officer at Lejeune found the Administration course "slipshod," when he took it. He reported at the time that "there appears to be no regular instructor for the course, but NCO's are assigned to give lectures as extra duties. This naturally does not appeal to them, and there was no feeling at any time that the instructor had any desire to impart to the class the information of which he was possessed."<sup>27</sup>

Replying further to the Commandant's query as to student opinion of the new program, this officer stated that he had found Interior Guard "difficult to absorb without visual and practical instruction." The training films impressed him as "not of sufficient immediate

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(26) Ibid.

(27) Capt W. G. Wendell memo to Col J. D. Muncie, 18Nov43, 1520-30-120.

interest," and he recalled that "a dozen or more textbooks in the form of pamphlets were issued to us, but in most instances were not consulted." He advocated "that it should be possible to give out, well in advance, certain assigned reading on points not covered in lectures or serve to supplement what is said," and he thought that "more short tests" should be a practice."<sup>28</sup>

Some of the students, however, praised the course unreservedly. When men from the Officer Procurement Office at Philadelphia returned from the indoctrination course at Lejeune in mid-1943, the Officer-in-Charge reported that they were "materially benefitted," that "the instructors are to be commended upon the skill with which they present their subjects," and that "the whole course gives every evidence of having been carefully planned and is ably administered."<sup>29</sup>

Inconsistency of effect became, therefore, a mark of the instruction. On behalf of the teachers, it should be said that, whether good or poor, they all confronted a most heterogenous assemblage. Their charges were of mixed ages and widely varied backgrounds - both military and civil. Thus, added to the unfixed standard of teaching was the paradox that the same lesson could be both too elementary and too advanced.

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(28) Ibid.

(29) OIC, MC Officer Procurement Office, Philadelphia, ltr to CMC, 19Jun43, 1520-30-120.

A case in point was the Weapons course at Lejeune. One student felt that insufficient time was allotted "to enable untrained men to grasp the subject thoroughly."<sup>30</sup> Yet, to another man, under a different teacher, it became "the only really good course. We learned - really learned - to field strip every infantry weapon up to and including the BAR and the BMG....We also had an opportunity to fire on the range with rifle, carbine, .45 pistol, and Tommy gun." But he did suspect that "this excellent instructor had evidently been assigned by accident, as he was transferred elsewhere at the end of the class."<sup>31</sup> Such were the ups and downs of instruction.

"How much" physical training?

Physical training became a particular problem. The arduous nature of it, during the eight-week course, drew a few sighs from previously desk-bound middle-agers. One reason for extending the course, however, had been "to build up to standard the physical fitness of these officers, most of whom have led sedentary lives, and many of whom are about 40 years of age."<sup>32</sup>

One of the students expressed what was probably felt in their bones by a number of the older men: "The course is based on physical training for men of thirty-five, as

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(30) Capt W. G. Wendell memo to Col J. D. Muncie, Op. Cit.

(31) Interview LtCol Frank O. Hough, 1May56.

(32) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 15Jul43, 1520-30-120.

a consequence of which I had a rather hard time in keeping up. However, the officers of the school took cognizance of my advanced age and permitted me to forego some of the more strenuous exercise."<sup>33</sup>

The "indoctrinates" at Lejeune, as reported in June 1943, averaged around 36 years of age. Because of this, it was a belief of the Officer-in-Charge of the course that any physical exerting "beyond the point of exhaustion" for these men would "jeopardize" their health. Noting that, "as a whole," they have not "pursued arduous occupations," he wrote that "a vigorous campaign of physical conditioning would...destroy the principle for which they were commissioned, namely, specialist work."<sup>34</sup>

The question of "how much" physical training for these older officers could never be patly answered. It became a problem complicated by the age range of the men, their previous habits of exercise, and, most significantly, by a never-settled view among the regulars as to just what these new officers were supposed to be: merely specialists, in a new order, or essentially line officers, in the Marine Corps tradition.

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(33) Capt W. G. Wendell memo to Col J. D. Muncie, Op. Cit.

(34) CMC memo to CG Camp Lejeune and CG Camp Elliott, 1Jun43, forwarding memo from Capt Philips D. Carleton to LtCol J. R. Moe, 24May43. 1stEnd OIC, Officers' Indoctrination Course, Camp Lejeune, to CMC, 10Jun43, 1520-30-120.

The upshot was that physical training became inconsistent - either too lax or too strenuous, producing a clash of opinion. A conditioning hike or field problem would sometimes become no more than a march "a discreet distance" /from camp/ "then sitting around shooting the breeze for the rest of the afternoon."<sup>35</sup> To the NCO leader the break may have seemed a compassionate gesture toward these middle-aged fellows - these new specialists, whose physical training even the Officer-in-Charge was willing to modify and temper.

With all the uncertainty attached to the indoctrination program - and with all the flaws - it was still the finding at Headquarters Marine Corps that "graduates of Indoctrination Schools are better prepared for Marine Corps service than non-graduates." It was not the topmost compliment, but it was something. And in light of this opinion, the Commandant ordered that, unless excepted by himself, "all specialist officers entering the service who are non-graduates of an Indoctrination School be assigned to this course" at Lejeune.<sup>36</sup>

The class which was to commence on 13 December 1943 became the last one. The unfolding of developments made advisable that "individual specialist officers thereafter

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(35) Interview LtCol Frank O. Hough, 1May56.

(36) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 15Jul43, 1520-30-120.

obtained be assigned to the Reserve Officers' Course or AVS Indoctrination, "as appropriate."

On 21 December the CMC ordered that the Officers' Indoctrination School at Camp Lejeune be discontinued "upon completion of the course by the current class, about 15 February 1944." He remarked that "indoctrination training has now been afforded the bulk of specialist officers commissioned in the Marine Corps." It was considered at Headquarters that "there should be little need of specialists in a leveling-off program."<sup>37</sup>

Appointment of specialists did continue, but applications now far outnumbered - more than ever before - the total of designations. In 1944 there were 3,623 applications and 784 appointments: only half of the 1,408 appointments in 1942, and well under the 911 of 1943.<sup>38</sup>

With the decrease, then, of specialist recruiting, the wartime indoctrination ended. The program had, in its time, included lessons for the Marine Corps as well as for the students. It had pointed up some of the problems involved when adapting a primarily combat type of training to the preparation of civilian specialists with little or no military background to meet the demands of warfare grown ever more scientific and complicated.

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(37) Dir P&P memo to CMC, 3Dec43, 1520-30-120. CMC ltr to CG Camp Lejeune, 21Dec43, 1520-30-120.

(38) Op Diary, Div of Reserve, 7Dec41-1Jul47, HistBr, HQMC.

CHAPTER 17  
CONCLUSIONS

Mobilization for total war imposes heavy training burdens upon military organizations. A great variety of military skills must be taught quickly to a great number of people. Speed and quantity are both essential, but they must not be achieved at the expense of quality. In World War II the Marine Corps was confronted with these problems, and, through experience, developed certain training techniques and procedures. In the process several lessons were learned. They are summarized in the conclusions listed below.

1. Eight weeks proved to be the minimum length to which recruit training could be cut without sacrificing quality.

2. There was an ever increasing emphasis on training in weapons, physical conditioning, and other combat subjects at the recruit depots, with a corresponding decrease in training in close order drill, military courtesy, interior guard duty, parades and ceremonies, and similar garrison type subjects.

3. Special drill instructor courses were necessary to assure the required numbers of qualified drill instructors for the recruit depots.

4. The numbers of recruits received from Selective Service with educational and psychiatric deficiencies

necessitated careful screening and the establishment of special courses for illiterates and slow learners.

5. Formal command and staff schooling proved to be essential for the training of adequate numbers of staff officers and higher commanders for the greatly expanded wartime Marine Corps.

6. The Platoon Commanders' School, in which students had to master all the necessary subjects before receiving their commissions, proved the most satisfactory system for producing platoon commanders. It replaced the two part OCC-ROC method by which candidates received their commissions midway through their training.

7. Formal training in combat principles was found to be desirable for all new officers, including those commissioned in the field.

8. The regular recruit training cycle proved to be a valuable prerequisite to officer candidate instruction. This permitted Marine Corps Schools to concentrate on the teaching of the tactical and technical subjects needed by a junior officer.

9. The Marine Corps, which in the pre-war years had relied heavily on the schools of the other services and of civilian institutions, was obliged to provide most of its own formal school facilities before hostilities ended.

10. For the proper selection of students for formal specialist training, it was necessary to adopt objective tests of ability and aptitude.

11. College education proved to be a valuable preparation for the rigorous training given to officer candidates. When falling enrollments threatened to close many colleges, thereby cutting off the supply of college trained candidates, the Marine Corps joined with the Navy in the V-12 program which was designed to keep the colleges open.

This study is based primarily on the records of Headquarters Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico. They include letters, memoranda, dispatches, staff studies, and operational diaries. Conspicuously missing from the documentation are analytical reports by officers responsible for the conduct of training. They are missing because they were never prepared. The student of the history of Marine Corps training will find nothing comparable to the special action reports required of combat organizations. An additional handicap is the lack of records of training activities other than Marine Corps Schools, Quantico.

The official records listed below are arranged by military service, by organization within each service, by records depository within each organization, and by record group within each depository. Inasmuch as references to primary source materials in the text have been of a bibliographical nature, giving all information necessary for the identification of each document cited, it is not deemed necessary to repeat this detailed information here. The listing of primary sources, therefore, will be confined to the general record groups consulted.

To supplement these written sources, preliminary drafts of this study were distributed to individuals who occupied key positions in the training organizations, soliciting comments, corrections, and elaborations. Much valuable information was gathered from the replies received and has been incorporated in the text. These letters have been made a part of the record and are available for consultation.

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1520-10-25	Chemical Warfare
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1520	Education-College-School
1520-10-40	Engineer
1520-30-70	Engineer School, Quantico
1520-25	Foreign School
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1975-80	Maneuvers
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