

DOG TRAINING BRANCH
USAREUR QM SCHOOL
APO 108

Col. Traeger

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The following is extracted from a letter dated 24 February 1953 from M/Sgt James W. Johnston, platoon sergeant of the 26th Infantry Scout Dog Platoon, Korea, to Captain R. B. Coates, Chief, Dog Training Branch, USAREUR Quartermaster School:

"I am sure you will be interested in our work here and what is thought of us by organizations with which we work. You see, we are assigned to Eighth Army and attached to any Division on the line that wants our services. I can assure you that they keep us plenty busy. At the present time, as you can see by the address we are now with the 3rd Infantry Division. We have our kennels and tents at Division forward and requests for dogs and handlers are put in by Company Commanders to their Bn S-2, he in turn requests from Regt. S-2 who requests from Div. G-2. Div. G-2 phones us and asks us if we can be of help to them on this patrol, if we think a dog will aid the patrol we send a handler and dog to Regt, where he is briefed and sent to company to his patrol leader. As you know we have to screen our patrols pretty close to be sure we are serving the ones that need dogs the most because it is impossible for us to send dogs out with all that are requested.

In order to tell you how our dog team operates with the patrols, I will have to explain to you the type of patrols that are being run at the present time. Between the Red Main Line of Resistance and our Main Line of Resistance there is roughly five miles of no man's land. Here we run two types of patrols, recon and Ambush. We recon the area regularly to be sure that the Chinks are not setting up defenses of any kind there. The Chinks too recon the area so here is where the cat and mouse game comes in. We ambush each other. The dogs have proved that with or without the wind in your favor that they will never walk you into an ambush. They have never done so in the Platoons patrols here, they will always sound alert. I am sorry that I never told you to start with that all these patrols are night affairs. So in other words we have been employing dogs regardless of wind on the most important patrols. The wind shifts so much here that it is impossible to say where it will be from in ten minutes time any way.

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Our men go on patrol every three days, the two in between are to train and rest his dog. We have been training our own replacements here. This due to the type of men we got from Carson the last time, in September they sent ten men and dogs here, the dogs were excellent, but the men were culls. The way I am running the training is: I have a Training Sgt. who is good so when we get replacements they are assigned to the platoon two months before the men they are replacing are due to rotate. My training Sgt gives them one month of basic dog and scout training with reject dogs. Then the men they are replacing are pulled off patrols and train one month with their old dog and the man who is their replacement. It is working wonderful but with our authorized strength we are able to keep only sixteen men patrolling at a time,

As platoon Sgt. I have a clerk so I devote all of my time to supervising training and going on patrols to see how the men and dogs are working under combat conditions. "