Ranger History

The history of the American Ranger is a long and colorful one and is a saga of courage, daring, and outstanding leadership. It is a story of men whose skills in the art of fighting have seldom been surpassed...

THE EARLY RANGERS

The history of the U.S. Ranger did not begin with Robert Rogers in the 1750s. Units specifically designated as Rangers and using Ranger tactics were employed on the American frontier as early as 1670. The Rangers of Captain Benjamin Church brought the Indian Conflict known as "King Phillip's War" to a successful conclusion in 1675.

Rangers were organized in 1756 by Major Robert Rogers, a native of New Hampshire, who recruited nine companies of American colonists to fight for the British during the French and Indian War. Ranger techniques and methods of operation were an inherent characteristic of the American frontiersmen; however, Major Rogers was the first to capitalize on them and incorporate them into the fighting doctrine of a permanently organized fighting force.

In the French and Indian War (1754-1763), the famous Robert Rogers developed the Ranger concept to an extent never known before. A soldier from boyhood, Rogers had a magnetic personality. Operating in the days when commanders personally recruited their men, he was articulate and persuasive, and knew his trade. He published a list of 28 common sense rules, and a set of standing orders stressing operational readiness, security, and tactics.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR

On June 14, 1775, with war on the horizon, the Continental Congress resolved that "six companies of expert riflemen be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia." In 1777, this force of hardy frontiersmen provided the leadership and experiences necessary to form, under Dan Morgan, the organization George Washington called "The Corps of Rangers." According to British General John Burgoyne, Morgan's men were "...the most famous corps of the Continental Army, all of them crack shots."

Also active during the Revolutionary War were Thomas Knowlton's Connecticut Rangers. This force of less than 150 hand-picked men was used primarily for reconnaissance. Knowlton was killed leading his men in action at Harlem Heights.

CIVIL WAR

The best known Rangers of the Civil War period were commanded by the Confederate Colonel John S. Mosby. Mosby's Rangers operated behind Union lines south of the Potomac. From a three-man scout unit in 1862, Mosby's force grew to an operation of eight companies of Rangers by 1865. He believed that by the use of aggressive action and surprise assaults, he would compel the Union forces to guard a hundred points at one time. Then, by skillful reconnaissance, he could locate one of the weakest points and attack it, assured of victory. On his raids, Mosby employed small members, usually 20 to 50 men. With nine men, he once attacked and routed an entire Union regiment in its bivouac.

Equally skillful were the Rangers under the command of Colonel Turner Ashby, a Virginian widely known for his daring. The Rangers of Ashby and Mosby did great service for the Confederacy. Specialists in scouting, harassing, and raiding, they were a constant threat and kept large numbers of Union troops occupied.

Rangers who fought for the United States during the Civil War should also be mentioned. Although often overlooked in historical accounts, Mean's Rangers captured Confederate General Longstreet's ammunition train, and even succeeded in engaging and capturing a portion of Colonel Mosby's force.

WORLD WAR TWO RANGER BATTALIONS

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

With America's entry into the Second World War, Rangers came forth to add to the pages of history. Major General Lucian K. Truscott, U.S. Army Liaison with the British General Staff, submitted proposals to
General George Marshal that "we undertake immediately an American unit along the lines of the British Commandos" on May 26, 1942. A cable from the War Department quickly followed to Truscott and Major General Russell P. Hartle, commanding all Army Forces in Northern Ireland, authorizing the activation of the First U.S. Army Ranger Battalion. The name RANGER was selected by General Truscott "because the name Commandos rightfully belonged to the British, and we sought a name more typically American. It was therefore fit that the organization that was destined to be the first of the American Ground Forces to battle Germans on the European continent should be called Rangers in compliment to those in American history who exemplified the high standards of courage, initiative, determination and ruggedness, fighting ability and achievement."

After much deliberation, General Hartle decided that his own aid-de-camp Captain William Orlando Darby, a graduate of West Point with amphibious training was the ideal choice. This decision was highly approved by General Truscott who rated Darby as "outstanding in appearance, possessed of a most attractive personality....and filled with enthusiasm."

Promoted to Major, Darby performed a near miracle in organizing the unit within a few weeks after receiving his challenging assignment. Thousands of applicants from the 1st Armored Division and the 34th Infantry Division and other units in Northern Ireland were interviewed by his hand-picked officers, and after a strenuous weeding-out program at Carrickfergus, the First Ranger Battalion was officially activated there on June 19, 1942.

But more rugged and realistic training with live ammunition was in store for the Rangers at the famed Commando Training Center at Achnacarry, Scotland. Coached, prodded and challenged by the battle-seasoned Commando instructors, commanded by Colonel Charles Vaughan, the Rangers learned the rudiments of Commando warfare. Five hundred of the six hundred volunteers that Darby brought with him to Achnacarry survived the Commando training with flying colors, although one Ranger was killed and several wounded by live fire.

Meanwhile 44 enlisted men and five officers took part in the Dieppe Raid sprinkled among the Canadians and the British Commandos—the first American ground soldiers to see action against the Germans in occupied Europe. Three Rangers were killed, several captured and all won the commendation and esteem of the Commandos. Under the inspired leadership of Darby, promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, the 1st Ranger Battalion spearheaded the North African Invasion at the Port of Arzew, Algeria by a silent night landing, silenced two gun batteries and opened the way for the First Infantry Division to capture Oran. Later in Tunisia the 1st Battalion executed the first Ranger behind-the-lines night raid at Sened, killing a large number of defenders and taking 10 prisoners with only one Ranger killed and 10 wounded. On March 31, 1943 the 1st Ranger Battalion led General Patton's drive to capture the heights of El Guettar with a 12-mile night march across mountainous terrain, surprising the enemy positions from the rear. By dawn the Rangers swooped down on the surprised Italians, cleared the El Guettar Pass and captured two hundred prisoners. For this action the Battalion won its first Presidential Citation and Darby won his first DSC.

After Tunisia, the 3rd and 4th Ranger Battalions with the 1st Battalion as cadre were activated and trained by Darby for the invasion of Sicily at Nemos, Algeria in April 1943. Major Herman Dammer assumed command of the 3rd, Major Roy Murray the 4th, and Darby remained CO of the 1st but in effect was in command of what became known as the Darby Rangers force. The three Ranger units spearheaded the Seventh Army landing at Gela and Licata and played a key role in the Sicilian campaign that culminated in the capture of Messina.

The three Battalions were the first Fifth Army troops to land during the Italian Invasion near Salerno. They quickly seized the strategic heights on both sides of Chinuizi Pass and fought off eight German counterattacks, winning two Distinguished Unit Citations. It was here that Colonel Darby commanded a force of over 10,000 troops, elements of the 36th Division, several companies of the 82nd Airborne Division and artillery elements, and it was here that the Fifth Army advance against Naples was launched with the British 10th Corps.

All three Ranger units later fought in the bitter winter mountain fighting near San Pietro, Venafro and Cassino. Then after a short period of rest, reorganizing and recruiting new volunteers, the three Ranger Battalions, reinforced with the 509 Parachute Battalion, the 83rd Chemical Warfare, 4.2 Mortar Battalion and 36th Combat Engineers, were designated as the 6615 Ranger Force under the command of Darby.
who was finally promoted to Colonel. This Force spearheaded the surprise night landings at the Port of Anzio, captured two gun batteries, seized the city and struck out to enlarge the beachhead before dawn—a classic Ranger operation.

On the night of January 30, 1944, the 1st and 3rd Battalions infiltrated five miles behind the German Lines while the 4th Battalion fought to clear the road toward Cisterna, a key 5th Army objective. But preparing for a massive counterattack, the Germans had reinforced their lines the night before, and both the 1st and 3rd were surrounded and greatly outnumbered. The beleaguered Rangers fought bravely, inflicting many casualties but ammunition and time ran out, and all along the beachhead front supporting troops could not break through the strong German positions. Among the killed in action was the 3rd Battalion CO, Major Alvah Miller, and the 1st Battalion CO, Major John Dobson, was wounded. The tragic loss of the 1st and 3rd Battalions combined with the heavy casualties the 4th Battalion sustained, however, was not entirely in vain, for later intelligence revealed that the Ranger-led attack on Cisterna had helped spike the planned German counterattack and thwarted Hitler's order to "Push the Allies into the sea."

But other Ranger units proudly carried on and enhanced the Ranger standards and traditions in the European Theater Operations. The 2nd Ranger Battalion, activated on April 1, 1943, at Camp Forrest, Tennessee trained and led by Lieutenant Colonel James Earl Rudder, carried out the most desperate and dangerous mission of the entire Omaha Beach landings - in Normandy, June 6, 1944. General Bradley said of Colonel Rudder, "Never has any commander been given a more desperate mission."

Three companies, D, E, and F assaulted the perpendicular cliffs of Point Du Hoc under intense machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire and destroyed a large gun battery that would have wreaked havoc on the Allied fleets offshore. For two days and nights they fought without relief until the 5th Ranger Battalion linked up with them. Later with the 5th Battalion, the 2nd played a key role in the attacks against the German fortifications around Brest in the La Coquet Peninsular. This unit fought through the bitter Central Europe campaign and won commendations for its heroic actions in the battle of Hill 400. The 2nd Ranger Battalion earned the Distinguished Unit Citation and the Croix de Guerre and was inactivated at Camp Patrick Henry October 23, 1945.

The Fifth Ranger Battalion activated September 1, 1943 at Camp Forrest, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Max Schneider, former executive officer of the 4th Ranger Battalion, was part of the provisional Ranger Assault Force commanded by Colonel Rudder. It landed on Omaha Beach with three companies of the 2nd Battalion, A, B and C, where elements of the 116th Regiment of the 29th Inf. Division were pinned down by murderous cross fire and mortars from the heights above. It was there that the situation was so critical that General Omar Bradley was seriously considering redirecting reinforcements to other areas of the beachhead. And it was then and there that General Norman D. Cota, Assistant Division Commander of the 29th Division, gave the now famous order that has become the Motto of the 75th Ranger Regiment: "Rangers, Lead The Way!"

The Fifth Battalion Rangers broke across the sea wall and barbed wire entanglements, and up the pillbox-rimmed heights under intense enemy machine-gun and mortar fire and with A and B Companies of the 2nd Battalion and some elements of the 116th Infantry Regiment, advanced four miles to the key town of Vierville, thus opening the breach for supporting troops to follow-up and expand the beachhead. Meanwhile C Company of the 2nd Battalion, due to rough seas, landed west of the Vierville draw and suffered 50 percent casualties during the landing, but still scaled a 90-foot cliff using ropes and bayonets to knock out a formidable enemy position that was sweeping the beach with deadly fire.

The Fifth Battalion with elements of the 116th Regiment finally linked up with the beleaguered 2nd Battalion on D+3, although Lieutenant Charles Parker of A Company, 5th Battalion, had penetrated deep behind enemy lines on D Day and reached the 2nd Battalion with 20 prisoners. Later, with the 2nd Battalion the unit distinguished itself in the hard-fought battle of Brest. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Richard Sullivan the Fifth Ranger Battalion took part in the Battle of the Bulge, Huertgen Forest and other tough battles throughout central Europe, winning two Distinguished Unit Citations and the French Croix de Guerre. The outfit was deactivated October 2 at Camp Miles Standish, Mass.

The Sixth Ranger Battalion, commanded by Colonel Henry (Hank) Mucci, was the first American force to return to the Philippines with the mission of destroying coastal defense guns, radio and radar stations on the islands of Dinegat, Suluan offshore Leyte. This was the first mission for the 6th Battalion that was activated at Port Moresby, New Guinea in September 1944. Landing three days in advance of the main
Sixth Army Invasion Force on October 17 and 18, 1944, they swiftly killed and captured some of the Japanese defenders and destroyed all enemy communications.

The unit took part in the landings of U.S. forces in Luzon, and several behind the lines patrols, penetrations and small unit raids, that served to prime the Rangers for what to become universally known as the greatest and most daring raid in American military history. On January 30, 1944, C Company, supported by a platoon from F Company, struck 30 miles behind enemy lines and rescued five hundred emaciated and sickly POWs, survivors of the Bataan Death March. Carrying many of the prisoners on their backs, the Rangers, aided by Filipino guerrillas, killed over two hundred of the garrison, evaded two Japanese regiments, and reached the safety of American lines the following day. Intelligence reports had indicated the Japanese were planning to kill the prisoners as they withdrew toward Manila. Good recon work by the Alamo Scouts also contributed to the success of the Cabanatuan Raid led by Colonel Mucci.

The unit later commanded by Colonel Robert Garrett played an important role in the capture of Manila and Appari, and was preparing to spearhead the invasion of Japan when news flashed the war with that nation was ended. It received the Presidential Unit Citation and the Philippine Presidential Citation. It was inactivated on December 30, 1945 in the Philippines.

MERRILL’S MARAUDERS

5307 COMPOSITE UNIT CBI THEATER WW II

Merrill's Marauders, a Ranger type outfit, came into existence as a result of the Quebec Conference of August 1943. During this conference, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of England, and other allied leaders conceived the idea of having an American ground unit spearhead the Chinese Army with a Long Range Penetration Mission behind enemy lines in Burma. Its goal would be the destruction of Japanese communications and supply lines and generally to play havoc with enemy forces while an attempt was made to reopen the Burma Road.

A Presidential call for volunteers for "A Dangerous and Hazardous Mission" was issued, and approximately 2,900 American soldiers responded to the call. Officially designated as the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) code name "GALAHAD" the unit later became popularly known as MERRILL'S MARAUDERS, named after its leader, Brigadier General Frank Merrill. Organized into combat teams, two to each battalion, the Marauder volunteers came from a variety of theaters of operation. Some came from stateside cadres; some from the jungles of Panama and Trinidad; and the remainder were battle-scarred veterans of Guadalcanal, New Georgia, and New Guinea campaigns. In India some Signal Corps and Air Corps personnel were added, as well as pack troops with mules.

After preliminary training operations undertaken in great secrecy in the jungles of India, about 600 men were detached as a rear echelon headquarters to remain in India to handle the soon-to-be vital air-drop link between the six Marauder combat teams (400 to a team) and the Air Transport Command. Color-coded Red, White, Blue, Green, Orange and Khaki, the remaining 2,400 Marauders began their March up the Ledo Road and over the outlying ranges of the Himalayan Mountains into Burma. The Marauders, with no tanks or heavy artillery to support them, walked over 1,000 miles throughout extremely dense and almost impenetrable jungles and came out with glory. In five major and 30 minor engagements, they defeated the veteran soldiers of the Japanese 18th Division (conquerors of Singapore and Malaya) who vastly outnumbered them. Always moving to the rear of the main forces of the Japanese, they completely disrupted enemy supply and communication lines, and climaxed their behind-the-lines operations with the capture of Myitkina Airfield, the only all-weather airfield in Burma.

For their accomplishments in Burma, the Marauders were awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation in July 1944. However, in November 1966, this was redesignated as the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION which is awarded by the President in the name of Congress.

The unit was consolidated with the 475th Infantry on August 10, 1944. On June 21, 1954, the 475th was redesignated the 75th Infantry. It is from the redesignation of Merrill’s Marauders into the 75th Infantry Regiment that the modern-day 75th Ranger Regiment traces its current unit designation.
The outbreak of hostilities in Korea in June of 1950 again signaled the need for Rangers. Colonel John Gibson Van Houten was selected by the Army Chief of Staff to head the Ranger training program at Fort Benning, Ga.

On September 15, 1950, Colonel Van Houten reported to the Chief of Staff, Office of the Chief of Army Field Forces, Fort Monroe, Va. He was informed that training of Ranger-type units was to begin at Fort Benning at the earliest possible date. The target date was October 1, 1950 with a tentative training period of six weeks.

The implementing orders called for formation of a headquarters detachment and four Ranger infantry companies (airborne). Requests went out for volunteers who were willing to accept "extremely hazardous" duty in the combat zone in the Far East.

In the 82nd Airborne Division, the results of the call for volunteers was astounding. Some estimates were as high as 5,000 men (experienced regular Army paratroopers). The ruthless sorting out process began. Where possible, selection of the men was accomplished by the officers who would command the companies, similar to colonial days when Robert Rogers was recruiting.

Orders were issued and those selected shipped to Fort Benning, Ga. The First group arrived on September 20, 1950. Training began on Monday, October 9, 1950, with three companies of airborne qualified personnel. On October 9, 1950 another company began training. These were former members of the 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment and the 80th Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division. Initially designated the 4th Ranger Company, they would soon be redesigned the 2nd Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne), the only Department of the Army authorized, all-black Ranger unit in the history of the United States.

All volunteers were professional soldiers with many skills who often taught each other. Some of the men had fought with the original Ranger Battalions, the First Special Service Force, or the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. Many of the instructors were drawn from this same group. The faces of this select group may have appeared youthful, but these men were highly trained and experienced in Ranger operations during World War II.

The training was extremely rigorous. Training consisted of amphibious and airborne (including low-level night jumps) operations, demolitions, sabotage, close combat, and the use of foreign maps. All American small arms, as well as those used by the enemy, were mastered. Communications, as well as the control of artillery, naval, and aerial fires, were stressed. Much of the training was at night.

The 1st Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne) departed from Fort Benning, Ga. on November 15, 1950, and arrived in Korea on December 17, 1950, where it was attached to the 2nd Infantry Division. It was soon followed by the 2nd and 4th Ranger Companies, who arrived on December 29, 1950. The 2nd Ranger Company was attached to the 7th Infantry Division. The 4th Ranger Company served both Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army, and the 1st Cavalry Division.

Throughout the winter of 1950 and the spring of 1951, the Rangers went into battle. They were nomadic warriors, attached first to one regiment and then another. They performed "out-front" work: scouting, patrolling, raids, ambushes, spearheading assaults, and as counterattack forces to regain lost positions.

Attached on the basis of one 112-man company per 18,000 man infantry division, the Rangers compiled an incredible record. Nowhere in American military history is the volunteer spirit better expressed. They were volunteers for the Army, for airborne training, for the Rangers and for combat.

The Rangers went into battle by air, land and water. The 1st Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne) opened with an extraordinary example of land navigation, then executed a daring night raid nine miles behind enemy lines destroying an enemy complex. The enemy installation was later identified by a prisoner as the Headquarters of the 12th North Korean Division. Caught by surprise and unaware of the size of the American force, two North Korean Regiments hastily withdrew from the area. The 1st Company as in the middle of the major battle of Chipyong-Ni and the "May Massacre." It was awarded two Distinguished Unit Citations. The 2nd and 4th Ranger Companies made a combat jump at Munsan-Ni where Life Magazine reported patrols operating North of the 38th parallel. The 2nd Ranger Company plugged a critical gap left by a retreating allied force. The 4th Ranger Company executed a daring over-water raid at the Hwachon Dam. The 3rd Ranger Company (attached to the 3rd Infantry Division) had the motto "Die Bastard, Die!" The 5th Ranger Company, fighting as an attachment to the 25th Infantry Division, performed brilliantly
during the Chinese "5th Phase Offensive." Gathering up every soldier he could find, the Ranger company commander held the line with Ranger Sergeants commanding line infantry units. In the Eastern sector, the Rangers were the first unit to cross the 38th parallel on the second drive North.

The 8th Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne) was attached to the 24th Infantry Division. They were known as the "Devils." A 33-man platoon from the 8th Ranger Company fought a between-the-lines battle with two Chinese reconnaissance companies. Seventy Chinese were killed. The Rangers suffered two dead and three wounded, all of whom were brought back to friendly lines.

**VIETNAM WAR RANGERS**

The 75th Ranger Regiment is linked directly and historically to the 13 Infantry Companies of the 75th that were active in Vietnam from February 1, 1969 until August 15, 1972. The longest sustained combat history for an American Ranger unit in more than three hundred years of U.S. Army Ranger History. The 75th Infantry Regiment was activated in Okinawa during 1954 and traced its lineage to the 475th Infantry Regiment, thence to the 5307th Composite Provisional Unit, popularly known as Merrill's Marauders. Historically, company I (Ranger) 75th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division and Company G, (Ranger) 75th Infantry, 23rd Infantry Division (Americal) produced the first two U.S. Army Rangers to be awarded the Medal of Honor as a member of and while serving in a combat Ranger company. Specialist Four Robert D. Law was awarded the first Medal of Honor with I75 while on long range patrol in Tinh Phoc Province RVN. He was from Texas. Staff Sergeant Robert J. Pruden was awarded the second Medal of Honor with G75 while on reconnaissance mission in Quang Ní Province RVN. He was from Minnesota. In addition to the two Medal of Honor recipients above, Staff Sergeant Lazlo Rabel was awarded the Medal of Honor while serving with the 74th Infantry Detachment (LRP), a predecessor to Company N, (Ranger) 75th Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade while on a long range patrol Binh Dinh Province, RVN. He was from Pennsylvania.

Conversion of the Long Range Patrol Companies of the 20th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 58th, 71st, 78th, and 79th Infantry Detachment and Company D, 151st Infantry Long Range Patrol of the Indiana National Guard, to Ranger Companies of the 75th Infantry began on February 1, 1969. Only Company D, 151st retained their unit identity and did not become a 75th Ranger Company, however, they did become a Ranger Company and continued the mission in Vietnam. Companies C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O and P (Ranger) 75th Infantry conducted Ranger missions for three years and seven months every day of the year while in Vietnam. Like the original unit from whence their lineage as Neo Marauders was drawn, 75th Rangers came from Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, Signal, Medical, Military Police, Food Service, Parachute Riggers and other Army units. They were joined by former adversaries, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army soldiers who became "Kit Carson Scouts", and fought alongside the Rangers against their former units and comrades. Unlike Rangers of other eras in the 20th century who trained in the United States or in friendly nations overseas, LRP and Rangers in Vietnam were activated, trained and fought in the same geographical areas in Vietnam.

Training was a combat mission for volunteers. Volunteers were assigned, not accepted in the various Ranger Companies, until, after a series of patrols, the volunteer had passed the acid test of a Ranger, Combat, and was accepted by his peers. Following the peer acceptance, the volunteer was allowed to wear the black beret and wear the Red, White and Black scroll shoulder sleeve insignia bearing his Ranger Company identity. All Long Range Patrol Companies and 75th Ranger Companies were authorized Parachute pay. Modus Operandi for patrol insertion varied, however, the helicopter was the primary means for insertion and exfiltration of enemy rear areas. Other methods included foot, wheeled, tracked vehicle, airboats, Navy Swift Boats, and stay behind missions where the Rangers remained in place as a larger tactical unit withdrawn. False insertions by helicopter was a means of security from ever present enemy trail watchers. General missions consisted of locating the enemy bases and lines of communication. Special missions included wiretap, prisoner snatch, Platoon and Company size Raid Missions and Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA) following B-52 Arc-Light missions. Staffed initially by graduates of the US Army Ranger School (at the outset of the war, later by volunteers, some of whom were graduates of the in-country Ranger School, the Recondo School and, line company cadres), Paratroopers, and Special Forces trained men, the bulk of the Ranger volunteers came from the soldiers who had no chance to attend the schools, but carried the fight to the enemy. These Rangers remained with their units through some of the most difficult patrolling action(s) in Army history, and frequently fought much larger enemy forces when compromised on their reconnaissance missions.
Army Chief of Staff Creighton Abrams, who observed the 75th Ranger operations in Vietnam as Commander of all U.S. Forces there, selected the 75th Rangers as the role model for the first U.S. Army Ranger units formed during peacetime in the history of the U.S. Army.

**ABRAM'S OWN**

The outbreak of the 1973 Middle East War prompted the Department of the Army to be concerned about the need for a light mobile force that could be moved quickly to any trouble spot in the world. In the fall of 1973, General Creighton Abrams, Army Chief of Staff formulated the idea of the reformation of the first battalion-sized Ranger units since World War II. In January 1974, he sent a message to the field directing formation of a Ranger Battalion. He selected its missions and picked the first officers. He felt a tough, disciplined and elite Ranger unit would set a standard for the rest of the U.S. Army and that, as Rangers "graduated " from Ranger units to Regular Army units, their influence would improve the entire Army. See Abram’s Charter.

On January 25, 1974, Headquarters, United States Army Forces Command, published General Orders 127, directing the activation of the 1st Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), with an effective date of January 31, 1974. In February, the worldwide selection was begun and personnel assembled at Fort Benning, Ga., to undergo the cadre training from March through June 1974. On July 1, 1974, the 1st Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), parachuted into Fort Stewart, Ga.

**DESERT ONE**

The modern Ranger Battalions were first called upon in 1980 as elements of 1st Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger) to participate in the Iranian hostage rescue attempts. The ground work of our Special Operations capability of today was laid during training and preparation for this operation. Rangers and other Special Operations Forces from throughout the Department of Defense developed tactics, techniques, and equipment from scratch, as no doctrine existed anywhere in the world.

The 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger) soon followed with activation on October 1, 1974. These elite units eventually established headquarters at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., and Fort Lewis, Wash., respectively.

**GRENADA**

The farsightedness of General Abrams' decision, as well as the combat effectiveness of the Ranger battalions, was proven during the United States' deployment on October 25, 1983, to Grenada. The mission of the Rangers was to protect the lives of American citizens and restore democracy to the island. During this operation, code-named "UGENT FURY," the 1st and 2d Ranger Battalions conducted a daring low-level parachute assault (500 feet), seized the airfield at Point Salinas, rescued American citizens at the True Blue Medical Campus, and conducted air assault operations to eliminate pockets of resistance.

As a result of the demonstrated effectiveness of the Ranger Battalions, the Department of the Army announced in 1984, that it was increasing the size of the active duty Ranger force to its highest level in 40 years, by activating another Ranger Battalion and a Ranger Regimental Headquarters. These new units, the Id Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 75th Infantry (Ranger), received their colors on October 3, 1984, at Fort Benning, Ga. The activation ceremonies were a step into the future for the Ranger Regiment, and a link to the past, as they were held concurrently with the first reunion of the Korean War-era Rangers. Distinguished visitors and proud Rangers, both active duty and retired, joined to hail the historic activation of the Headquarters, 75th Ranger Regiment. On February 3, 1986, World War II Battalions and Korean War Lineage and Honors were consolidated and assigned by tradition to the 75th Ranger Regiment. This marked the first time that an organization of that size had been officially recognized as the parent headquarters of the Ranger Battalions.

Not since World War II and Colonel Darby's Ranger Force Headquarters, had the U.S. Army had such a large Ranger force, with over 2,000 soldiers being assigned to Ranger units.

**PANAMA**

The entire Ranger Regiment participated in OPERATION JUST CAUSE, in which U.S. forces restored democracy to Panama. Rangers spearheaded the action by conducting two important operations. The 1st Battalion, reinforced by Company C, 3rd Battalion, and a Regimental Command and Control Team, conducted an early morning parachute assault onto Omar Torrijos International Airport and Tocumen
Military Airfield, to neutralize the Panamanian Defense Forces PDF 2nd Rifle Company, and secure airfields for the arrival of the 82nd Airborne Division. The 2nd and 3rd Ranger Battalions and a Regimental Command and Control Team, conducted a parachute assault onto the airfield at Rio Hato, to neutralize the PDF 6th and 10th Rifle Companies and seize General Manuel Noriega's beach house. Following the successful completion of these assaults, Rangers conducted follow-on operations in support of Joint Task Force (JTF) South. The Rangers captured 1,014 Enemy Prisoners of War (EPW), and over 18,000 arms of various types. The Rangers sustained five killed and 42 wounded.

DESERT STORM

Elements of Company B and 1st Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment deployed to Saudi Arabia from February 12, 1991 to April 15, 1991, in support of OPERATION DESERT STORM. The Rangers conducted raids and provided a quick reaction force in cooperation with Allied forces; there were no Ranger casualties. The performance of these Rangers significantly contributed to the overall success of the operation, and upheld the proud Ranger traditions of the past.

SOMALIA

From early 1993, to October 21, 1993, Company B and a Command and Control Element of 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment Deployed to Somalia to assist United Nations forces in bringing order to a desperately chaotic and starving nation. Their mission was to capture key leaders in order to end clan fighting in and around the City of Mogadishu. On October 3, 1993, the Rangers conducted a daring daylight raid in which several special operations helicopters were shot down. For nearly 18 hours, the Rangers delivered devastating firepower, killing an estimated 300 Somali's in what many have called the fiercest ground combat since Vietnam. Six Rangers paid the supreme sacrifice in accomplishing their mission. Their courage and selfless service epitomized the values espoused in the Ranger Creed, and are indicative of the Ranger spirit of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.