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بِراون سايد آوت

Brown Side Out

... serving the I Marine Expeditionary Force during OPERATION DESERT STORM



Sgt. Earnie Grafton

LCpl. Bershon Walker, originally from Marine Barracks 8th and I, poses for photos inside his fighting hole near the Kuwait border.

BY SGT. EARNIE GRAFTON
2ND MARINE DIVISION

SAUDI ARABIA — A company of Marines from the famed Marine Barracks, 8th and I, Washington, D.C., has deployed for the first time in more than 80

'8th and I'

From the parade field to the battle field, Barracks Marines pick up their weapons and join their brothers on the frontline

years to serve with the 2nd Marine Division, here.

Company A, Marine Barracks, 8th and I, arrived in Southwest Asia on New Year's Day.

The company, one of two "letter" companies at "the oldest post in Corps," ordinarily participates in the legendary "sunset parades," in addition to providing Marine guards for the barracks and the presidential retreat at Camp David, and carrying out numerous other ceremonial duties.

"The commandant told us at our Marine Corps birthday that we might deploy to Saudi," 1stLt. Daniel P. Monahan, a Company A platoon commander, said. "The barracks hadn't deployed since 1906, for an action in Cuba. But we were

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— 1stLt. Daniel P. Monahan

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"I was surprised we were deploying," said LCpl. Bershon Walker, a veteran of two parade seasons at Washington. "But we were pretty motivated. After all, we are grunts."

The deployed company prepared for its duties in Saudi Arabia, which includes providing security for the 2nd Marine Division command element, prior to the unit's departure from the United States, Monahan said.

"We have regularly conducted training at either Quantico, or one of the nearby Army installations in Virginia," he said. "It's not uncommon for our Marines to get back from a field exercise, change into their blues and put on a parade."

"The Marines here are not all pomp and circumstance," the platoon commander said, from his horseshoe-shaped pit in the Saudi desert. "When I came here from 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, I was expecting ceremonial Marine first, and grunts second. But I found just the opposite."

The company, sans dress blues, found life here different, Walker said. "This deployment puts new meaning into the phrase 'night and day.' Before, it was spit and polish. Now, it's sand and dust. But, in a way, it's a nice break from the barracks routine."

Marine of the elite company, whose sunsets are not spent on the parade deck, but in fighting holes on the perimeter, also conduct observation and listening post operations, security patrols, and training during the day to help prepare them for future missions.



Sgt. John Dodd

Sgt. Ron Bukovac, Marine Corps Bandmember, mans his .50-caliber machine gun at a security post outside the 1st Marine Division combat operation's center in the Saudi desert. Normally Bukovac plays a saxophone with the 1st Marine Division Band, but he now provides rear area security for the division. In wartime, most band Marines put down their instruments and pick up rifles.