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Michael P. Grantham

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

13Z5M, 1SG, B-Btry, 1-194th Field Artillery, Iowa ARNG

Student #250, M02

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Abstract

Transformation of the Armed forces is going to continue as long as the mission changes. The Armed forces are learning that we have to communicate jointly in order to fight as a team. There have been many changes before my time in the Army and what I know about them is what I study. I have listed most of all the changes that I recall during my career and how the changes have affected my career in the Army Reserve and The Iowa National Guard.

Career under the Transformation of the Army

I enlisted in the United States Army Reserve 23 February 1985. The unit that I joined was 3rd of the 14th FA, 205th Brigade in Garner, Iowa. During the first battle assembly, I was trained on the M102A1 Howitzer that is air mobile, lightweight, towed system. In May after my junior year in school, I shipped out for basic training. I left on a plane to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Basic training was my first real taste of Army life, what an experience.

I learned values that I continue to use today: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. After the training, I returned to my hometown, Clarksville, Iowa to complete the last year of school. During that last year, I went to monthly battle assemblies to continue to learn more on the howitzers.

In 1985, the Army was transforming to meet the needs of the Army's mission. The transformation had direct effects on our units. This change greatly affected personnel, equipment, and training. Transformation also affects the type and amount of positions that a unit, battalion, brigade, or a Division has. These positions can be lost or gained. From 1985-1994, The Army organized Light Round out Brigades. These Brigades are attachments to a Division, and train to the standards of the Division. When it is time to go to war the Round out Brigades mission is to augment the Division. In 1986, the 205th Brigade became the Round Out Brigade for the 6th Infantry Division (ID) in Wainright, Alaska.

May 1986, I shipped to Fort Sill for the second part of the split option training, Advance Individual Training (AIT) I learned the task necessary to become a Cannon Crewmember. The training was a refresher, since I have been learning the tasks for the last year at the unit. After the 5 weeks of training, I returned to the unit in Iowa with the skills and knowledge to perform

my job to the maximum. I informed the leaders of the new tasks that I learned in the training. The leaders could implement the tasks if they thought that it would better the unit.

On June 1986, I was promoted to Private (PVT) E-2, during training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Shortly after returning to the unit, I was promoted to Private First Class (PFC) in Aug 1986 during annual training. Things were looking good for my career in the Army. I am well educated as a cannon crewmember and I am moving up in the ranks. The unit is stable at this time and now we can start to get quality training done without interference from outside sources.

On 01 July 1987, I was promoted to Specialist (SPC) E-4. I was proud to be promoted, what a motivator this was for me. Over the last few years, I was with a section that was acknowledged as the "Top Gun" in the battalion. To become the section that receives the award for this achievement, they have to work as a team, be quality soldiers, and be highly skilled in their field.

From 7 October 1989 – 7 January 1990, I had the opportunity to go to my first Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) course. Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) at that time was a two-phase course. The first phase of the course was a four-month course, one weekend per month at a reserve center. The course was a reserve-operated course that was in a Reserve Center in Dubuque, Iowa. To finish PLDC, I had to complete Phase 2, this phase was for two weeks in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin from 13 May 1991-20 May 1991. I learned leadership skills and common task skills like Land Navigation.

On 11 August 1991, another annual training event took place at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. During this training, General Gordon Sullivan, Chief of Staff of the Army visited with our unit. General Sullivan took time to eat with us and talked to a number of soldiers and I was one of

them. That was a great honor to have an individual of his caliber to be interested in what soldiers had to say. The reason for the visit was to see how the Round Out Brigade trains. He was also there to see if it was worth keeping the round out brigades or change the Army Structure. After the visit, changes started in the unit. First, the cooks left, then the mechanics, then we gained new equipment. The restructure was under way.

In late 1993, I began more leadership training. I went to Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course Phase I (BNCOC). This phase was on weekends, I went two days a month for four months. During this year, Soldiers of the unit were told that they needed to find a new home. That meant that the unit was closing the doors. Another transformation was taking place, "The Down Sizing of the Forces". The deactivation of the 3rd of the 14th FA, along with many other units in the Army and other services.

I joined the Iowa Army National Guard April 1994. I found a home with the 34th Infantry Division 1-194th FA C-Battery Estherville, Iowa. I was going to travel an additional two hours to get to battle assemblies. The mileage was going to create problems, so I was told to train with B-Battery in Algona, Iowa until a position was available. This made the trip only two hours from my home and some of the soldiers from the old Reserve unit made Algona their new home too. I settled in fast and began to work well with the other members of the unit.

Upon promotion to Staff Sergeant (SSG) in October 1996 I and received a howitzer section and crewmembers. The promotion came with many responsibilities, not only personal but the cost of the equipment was overwhelming. Being a Section chief was a very tough position to have. The crew I had was the best, I led them to the highest standards. The section came together as a team, trained hard, and became the "Top Gun" of the Battalion. After receiving "Top Gun" at annual training, the crewmembers put me in for an award and I did the

same for all of them. The crew presented the award to me and they told me that they want to be leaders. They all put a packet together to become Officers. That was a good feeling that I made a difference in Soldier's lives and career path.

01 April 2000 -13 April 2000, I was sent to Camp Ashland, Nebraska for Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) Phase I. In the course, we did learn about leadership, Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER), and Drill and Ceremony. This was the first time that I could go to school without taking time away from my crew during the month. The unit benefits greatly by not having a key leader gone for four months straight.

22 May 2000, I was visited by the Battalion Command Sergeants Major (CSM), to see if I would accept the Gunnery Sergeants position in C-Btry. I took the position with the promotion to Sergeant First Class (SFC). It was about four years that I was in my last position. If I would not take the opportunity, it could be awhile for the offer to come around again. I still remember the first day I opened the door to the Armory. Specialist Lemkule met me at the door; and stated to me, "Hey man, you have some big shoes to fill." I replied with, "You will address me as SFC Grantham. Yes I may have big shoes to fill, but any questions you have for me, we will find the answers in the proper manuals." To this day, he still reminds me of what he said and how I replied. From that day forward, I have his respect and he has mine.

After taking the Gunnery Sergeant position, I set goals for the unit and myself. The goals I set were to bring the unit up to the top of the battalion. For two straight years C-Battery was top of the battalion during annual training, we also held the prestige of "Top Gun" for those two years. During my time at C-Battery, the Iowa Army National Guard was planning on building and renovating armories. C-Battery was on the top of the list to get a new armory. The armory became the state of the art facility. The community would share the facility with the National

Guard and the Community College. The Community Wellness Center would be in part of the building along with the community college.

22 July 2002 -4 August 2002, I went to ANCOC Phase II in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. It was over two years since I have done ANCOC Phase, from here on out my career became very busy.

03 September 2002, 1-194th FA received orders to for Operation Enduring Freedom. It had been exactly Fifty years since the 1-194th FA activated for a federal mission. We would be performing Homeland Security. This activation happened very fast, with little time to prepare. The battalion did the Soldier Readiness Program (SRP) functions at Camp Dodge, Iowa. After the SRP we loaded buses to make the trip to Fort Knox, Kentucky. There we did our training to perform our mission. After the training, we divided into three groups for three different areas in the United States. At the beginning on the deployment, I was transferred to Headquarters 1-194th FA. I now had a new job to perform and that was the Assistant Operations NCO and an added duty as the Master Gunner of the battalion. This was my job during the one-year deployment. By being in this position I seen the big picture of how the Army operates during war. I was tasked to a team that worked in the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) at the Tank, Automotive, Command (TACOM). After the one-year tour, I returned to Iowa and shortly after the return, I was transferred back to C-Battery.

On 01 January 2004, I was promoted to First Sergeant (1SG) in C-Battery. I had work to do, moving in the new armory and post deployment issues that I was not aware of. I also had to take time to go to the First Sergeant Course in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. I was thinking that this was the last course to take of my career. I enjoyed every minute of the course, it was good to have left the course with a network of friends. I learned more about regulations and operations,

which I would use in my position as a 1SG. After graduating from the course, I was transferred to B-Battery in Algona, Iowa. Now I am back where I started with the National Guard. I have been the 1SG of B-Battery for two years now and I have a lot of work to do at this unit. I have gone thru a change of command and a Transformation to a Brigade Combat Team. B-Battery was the least effected with the transformation. Since I have been in the National Guard, we have experienced some of the same changes that I had in the Army Reserve. First the cooks left the units, then the communication section, now the maintenance section. 01 Jan 2005, the unit's Maintenance section transferred to the HHC 1-194th FA.

The Brigade Combat Team (BCT) is a good move for the Army, which leaves the Brigade to be self-sufficient with all the support units. The effect that this had on the unit, is that our personnel and equipment requirements has increased. The unit gained more upper level positions, which in turn made the unit top heavy with NCOs and Officers. Recruiting is a big issue, so now everyone is a recruiter assistant to try to gain more personnel. With everyone moving up, NCOES has been a challenge but I have pushed this hard and it has been paying off. I sit with the most Soldiers sent to school and the highest completion rate of 100%. Still my work is never done, I will work very hard to maintain the high standards that are put on the unit.

In March 2006, I was selected for enrollment in the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA). On 03 August 2006, I moved to El Paso, Texas to attend the nine-month course. I never dreamed of attending such a course. I am honored to be here with all these outstanding Soldiers. I have seen many changes throughout my career and it seems that history is repeating itself. The Army is changing its structure to meet the demands of the mission. The changes that I see are using some of the experience of the past and mixing them all together to make the strongest structure the Army has ever had. History plays a big part it what we do and

how we operate. Studying History will open your eye on what tactics to use and not to use. As Senior NCOs, we have to study history and share our findings with our subordinated.