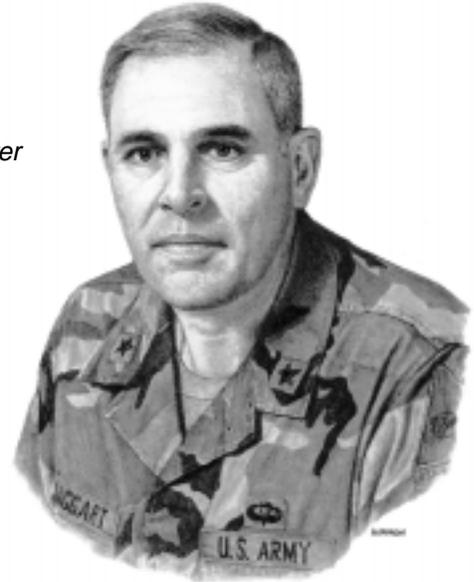


# COMMANDER'S HATCH

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*BG Lon E. Maggart  
Commanding General  
U.S. Army Armor Center*



## Warfighting Spirit

The mounted force has been the focal point for change in the Army over the past three years, and for good reason. Historically, the mounted force was the one place in the Army where soldiers were trained to close with and destroy the enemy and to use high technology equipment. By design and mission, mounted soldiers were — and remain — masters in achieving decisive results using state-of-the-art equipment on rapidly changing and often ambiguous battlefields.

The modern battlefield demands mounted warfighters capable of thinking decisively, moving rapidly, and improvising quickly. The ability to respond rapidly and correctly to multiple, often conflicting, situations while moving over unfamiliar terrain joins audacity, courage, innovation, and tenacity as mandatory characteristics of the mounted warfighter.

Since the days of Adna Chaffee, mounted soldiers have experimented with ideas of how to better use their equipment to destroy the enemy faster and more efficiently. Mounted soldiers have no trouble discarding conventional, accepted practices in favor of innovative ones that work better on the battlefield. Change has been the norm for mounted soldiers. Here, it is not by accident that mounted warfighters are leading the way in building Force XXI.

This fact is no more evident than at the home of mounted warfare, Fort

Knox, Kentucky. Buildings and classrooms here are filled with simulators that have harnessed the power of technology to train the force. The Virtual Training Program uses these tools to teach reserve and active units how to boldly execute the fight. The emerging Force XXI Training Program will soon give brigade and lower commanders the ability to train the entire combined arms team in ways not now possible.

The Mounted Battlespace Battle Lab is using digitally equipped simulations and current and future operational software in Advanced Warfighting Experiment (AWE) Focused Dispatch to determine the organization, tactics, techniques, and procedures for TF XXI, the digital brigade. The Director of Combat Developments is pushing the technological envelope on the requirements for the future tanks and scout vehicles that will be needed in the twenty-first century.

At the same time, Fort Knox is the Army's pioneer for distance learning techniques and simulation-based training programs for the commander and his staff. Classroom XXI, an innovative education and training program using distance learning, is up and running in the Armor School. The Advanced Warfighting Working Group is busy exploring dynamic ideas and concepts for fighting on the digital battlefield of the next century. The 1st Armor Training Brigade uses computer-driven simula-

tors to teach initial entry soldiers how to drive a tank with increased proficiency and at lower cost. Our professional civilian work force provides the technical expertise and continuity necessary to sustain these programs over the long haul. Like the mounted force at large, The Center for Mounted Warfare is **about** change.

But in the midst of all this change, there remains one constant: **the soldier**. Make no mistake about it, technological advances, new equipment, virtual reality simulations, and training programs are essential tools for the mounted soldier. They define mounted warfare. But never forget that the Republican Guards were defeated by the imagination, daring, skill and the indomitable spirit of the mounted warfighter, not by computers.

In the final analysis, the mounted force is about dedicated and trained soldiers who are willing to sacrifice for their Country. The challenge for the mounted force, from now into the next century, will be to use new technology, doctrine, weapons, equipment, and training programs to produce warfighters who are technically qualified; warfighters, filled with the legendary spirit of the mounted soldier; warfighters who know and love the smell of battle and who have the courage and technical competence to move to the sound of the guns. This is our challenge, pure and simple. **ON THE WAY!**