

***THE FUTURE OF HISTORY***

***In The***

***U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute***



***A Strategy for 1999 and Beyond***



***Military History Office***

***U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute***

***Fort Jackson, South Carolina***

# Report Documentation Page

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**From the USASSI Commander:**



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Today, as the rapid pace of change threatens to overwhelm our preparations for the next battlefield, the ability to place the present in the context of history and the Army's past becomes like a compass, providing direction in those moments when we seem not to have any. *The real challenge, as most of us know, is to change the right way without changing the core, the fundamental values of the Army.*

The historically-minded soldier is committed to change, but committed to changing the right way, in a way that preserves the essence of military professionalism -- the fundamental values upon which all successful mission performance depends. Our sense of the past and what's most meaningful, good, and prudent about our profession provides wise counsel as we move onto the uncertain terrain of the 21st Century.

The Commander, TRADOC has tasked Command Historians to chart the future of military history in the Training and Doctrine Command by establishing near, mid, and long-range objectives that will serve to shape the Army of the 21st Century. *"The Future of History in the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute: A Strategy for 1999 and Beyond"* represents the future of the USASSI military history program. Please read and review it carefully. It establishes guideposts for our professional historian and serves as a thoughtful statement of the SSI history mission and how it will support you and the Army in the years to come.

I challenge you to make good use of our history program. It's our connection to the past and the roles our branches have played in both forming and preserving the core values that remain vital to the existence of our Army and its continuing pledge to defend the American nation from those who would seek to do it harm.

EARL M. SIMMS

Brigadier General, United States Army  
Commanding



## ***INTRODUCTION***

The SSI Military History Office was established in September 1982 as the U.S. Army Soldier Support Center (SSC) History Office. Along with those at the Combined Arms Center (CAC) and the Logistics Center (LOGCEN), the SSC program became one of the flagship field programs for the Training and Doctrine Command. In subsequent months, under a recommendation of the TRADOC Commander's Advisory Board on Military History Education, professional historians were hired to staff history programs in each of the TRADOC branch and service schools.

Through 1986, the U.S. Army Soldier Support Center, unique in its structure and organization, employed one historian to support the command's integrating mission, the staff, faculty, and students of eight Army schools (two with Army-wide branch proponent missions), and the Fort Benjamin Harrison installation staff.

Hired initially to serve in a staff capacity, the SSC historian eventually was assigned responsibilities for the implementation of TRADOC's Military History Education Program (MHEP) in the Adjutant General and Finance Schools; first as proponent for the Officer Advanced Course Staff Ride, and, second, as coordinator for the Institute's overall MHEP.

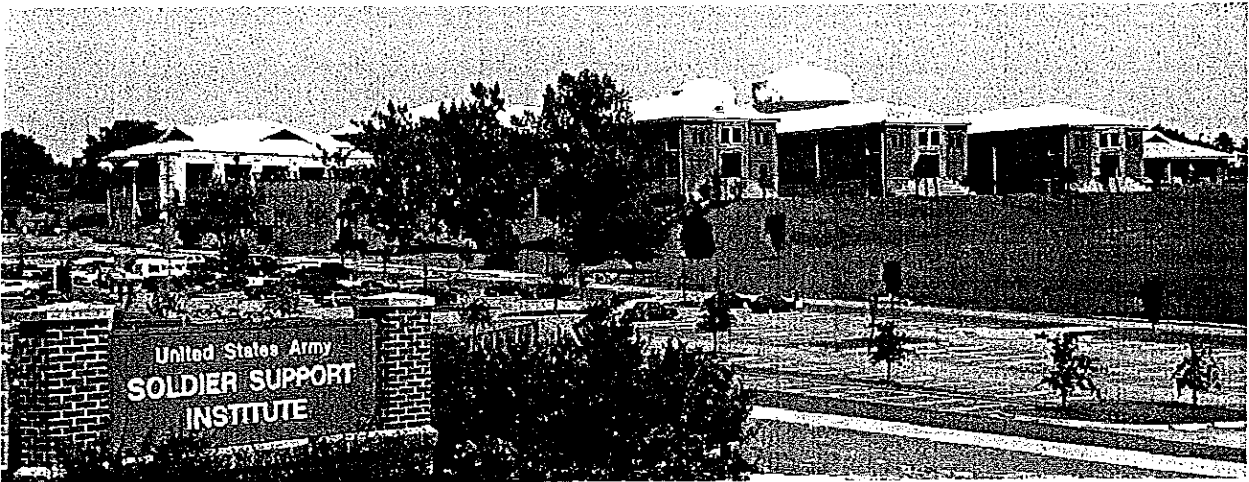
In April 1987, an additional historian was added to the SSC history office to assist with the burgeoning workload. In 1995, with the closure of Fort Benjamin Harrison, the SSC History Office transferred to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, along with the SSC schools and was reestablished as the SSI Military History Office. On 1 October 1998, the assistant historian's position was eliminated as part of a command-wide reduction in staff.

Then, as now, the SSI Military History Office, through the teaching of military history, research and writing, and the collection and distribution of historical information, contributes to the professional competence of soldiers affiliated with the Soldier Support Institute and the mission it will perform for the Army of the 21st Century.

## **MISSION**

*As the TRADOC proponent for the personnel and finance mission areas, the Army will continue to look to the SSI to*

- Prepare soldiers to perform peace and wartime personnel and finance operations.
- Be the architect of personnel and finance systems of the future.



*U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute*

## **PRINCIPLES OF SUPPORT**

*To support the future mission of SSI, certain enduring principles of support will instruct the development and implementation of the history program in the years ahead. They suggest:*

- *That History Provides the Narrative for the Human Dimension of War.*

In the face of increasing dependence on technology and the tools of war as the predominant means for interpreting the future, knowledge of the soldier's wartime experience informs the doctrinal, training, leader, and combat development process less and less. The study of history resists the temptation to view warfare in narrow technical terms only, and leans heavily on an understanding of leadership, unit cohesion, and soldierly values and ethics as fundamental to military professionalism.

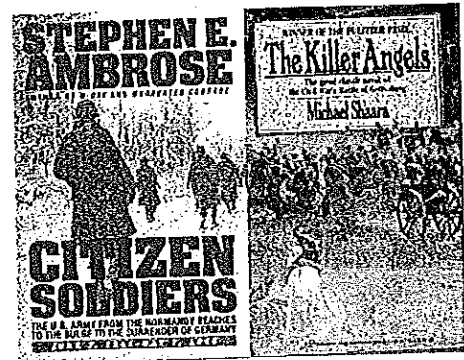


**Captains' Career Course Staff Ride**

- ***That the Study of History is Particularly Suited to Advance the Cognitive Development of Army Leaders:***

Few opportunities for professional development contribute to the sharpening of critical thinking skills like the study of history. As leader development programs have become increasingly oriented to the training of technique and manual skills, the study of history contributes to the development of the whole soldier by strengthening his ability to analyze and

use information for making incisive decisions that order his military life and the lives of his comrades in arms.



- ***That Teaching, Research and Writing, and the Collection and Distribution of Historical Information Form the Basis of Historical Support.***

TRADOC historians will continue to teach, research and write, and collect and distribute historical information to impart the knowledge related to the human dimension of war, the cognitive development of those who lead, and the history of SSI proponent development programs.

## ***VISION***

***By the year 2010, the SSI history program seeks to:***

- Expand awareness of branch heritage, customs, and traditions.
- Broaden the range of teaching, instructional, and professional development methods used to convey the experience of the past.
- Integrate historical study and analysis into the SSI doctrinal and combat development process.
- Leverage automated technology as the principle means for capturing, preserving, and presenting historical information to an ever-expanding constituency.

## ***INTENT***

***NEAR-TERM (1999-2000):***

- Edit and publish the collected oral histories of Adjutant General and Finance personnel who participated in Operations Desert Shield and Storm.
- Edit and publish SSI Leader End-of-Tour Oral History Interviews.
- Refine the USASSI Military History Education Program to offer greater insight into the human dimension of war, the doctrinal principles governing the battlefield, and the historic missions of the Adjutant General and Finance Corps.
- Publish the 1993-1998 USASSI Annual Command Histories.
- Begin digitization of SSI Historical Document Collection as the principle means of accessing and distributing historical information.

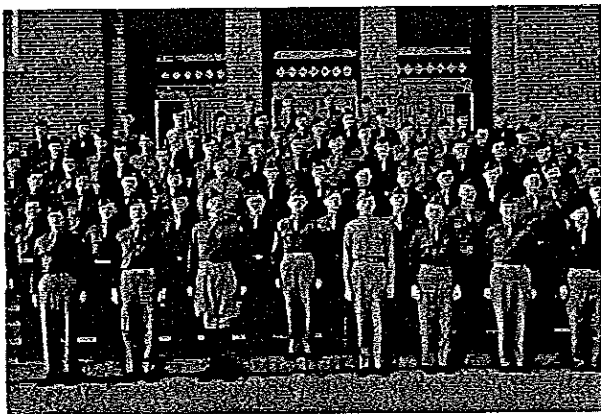
***MID-TERM (2000 - 2003):***

- Identify topics of research and writing that best support the professional interest and need of the personnel and finance mission areas.

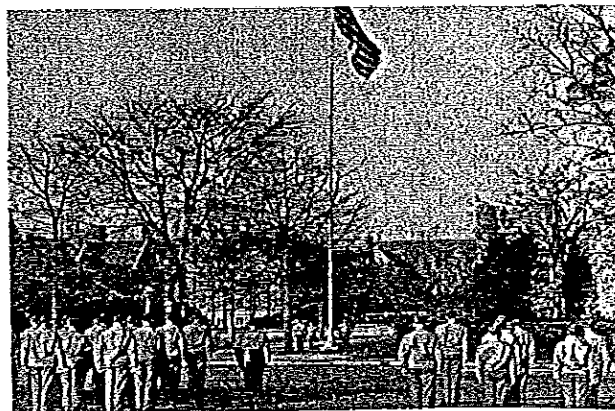
- Expand the variety of historical methodologies used to present historical information to soldiers. Certainly the emergence of information technology offers new and various means to achieve this end, but staff rides, military museums, guest speakers, organized reading programs, contributions to professional journals, and the extended use of historical example in doctrinal, training, and force structural developments represent a few of the possibilities that lay beyond traditional classroom instruction.
- Capture the doctrinal, training, and combat developments related to the emergence of Force XXI and the Army of the 21st Century.

***LONG-TERM (2003 - 2010):***

- Publish historical articles and monographs relative to the professional interest and need of the personnel and finance mission areas.
- Publish histories of the Adjutant General and Finance Branches, capitalizing on branch heritage as fundamental to building cohesion, commitment, and character within the Army's personnel and finance communities.
- Become the resident technical expert for accessing information from the Army's Automated Historical Archives (AHAS).
- Systematize the digitization of SSI Historical Document Collection.
- Institutionalize the importance of historical study and analysis within SSI doctrinal, training, and combat development programs.



**Staff and Faculty  
Adjutant General Officer Candidate School  
1943**



**Finance School Retreat Ceremony  
Duke University  
1942**



## ***CHALLENGES TO THE FUTURE OF HISTORY***

### ***ORGANIZATION***

The reorganization or "reengineering" of USASSI proceeds along with the rest of TRADOC. It began with the end of the Cold War and likely will continue into the next century. Restructuring the USASSI mission and allocating resources accordingly remains a challenge for all of us. Army branches may not continue to exist as they have since the end of World War II. However, branch functions and some form of organization based on military specialization will likely survive in some form or another. What does this mean for "branch historians" and branch history programs?

Regardless of changes in organization -- and the SSI model is instructive -- the basic functions (doctrine, training, and combat developments) of TRADOC and its subordinate commands will continue to be integral to the preparation of our Army for war. Consequently, historians will be asked to support those functions in much the same way as they have in the past.

### ***RESOURCES***

The TRADOC history program has enjoyed consistent command support since its establishment in 1982-1983. Resources for history programs have remained relatively stable despite severe turbulence in the organizations that surround them, but historians must be prepared to defend the few people and modest monies allocated to their programs. Certain developments have marked the resourcing of history programs since 1982:

- **Staffing Levels.** The one or two-person command history office remains the norm despite the headquarters approved 3-person standard staffing model. Commanders have consistently supported the one or two-person history office.
- **Mission Expansion.** The history mission has expanded since 1982 without a corresponding growth in resources; first, through the additional missions associated with teaching military history and the wider Military History Education Program; and, second, through the growth of the command historical document collection and the increasing amount of time required to use and maintain it. With the present emphasis on automating and digitizing the TRADOC and SSI historical document collections as the means of facilitating access to historical information and expanding its pool of clients, the history mission will continue to grow in ways unanticipated by its founders.

- **USASSI Military History Office.** Despite its organization that includes two branch proponent schools, a third school with Army-wide training responsibilities, and a Noncommissioned Officers Academy, USASSI employs only one professional historian, staffing that is equal to or under the level of the typical branch school in TRADOC. Under current staffing constraints, qualitative historical support delivered equally and consistently to USASSI clients will remain a challenge in the immediate future.

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## ***SUMMARY***

As the Army accepts the challenge of preparing for the battlefields of the 21st Century, the Soldier Support Institute will be called upon to develop the doctrine, force structure, equipment, and leaders capable of delivering quality personnel service support to the next generation of soldiers. The SSI Military History Office will strive to be an indispensable part of that process by teaching, researching and writing, and delivering the information that best supports that effort. The contributions that historical study and analysis make to the professional and proponent development programs of the SSI will assist our leaders in asking the right questions and formulating the precise answers that always act as a hedge against an uncertain and indeterminate future.

