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SENIOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER ORAL HISTORY  
PROGRAM

INTERVIEW WITH COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR (RETIRED)  
ANTHONY J. WILLIAMS

Lawton, Oklahoma

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COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR (RETIRED)

ANTHONY J. WILLIAMS

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## I N T E R V I E W

SGM WATERHOUSE: Good morning. My name is Sergeant Major Brett Waterhouse of the United States Army, Heritage and Education Center and today I am interviewing Command Sergeant Major (Retired) Anthony J. Williams for the Senior Noncommissioned Officer, Oral History Program. Today's date is January 24th, 2018 and this interview is being conducted at Lawton, Oklahoma.

Sergeant Major, can you please tell me your date of birth and where you were born?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: 6th November, 1954 and I was born in Canton, Mississippi.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, will you please talk a little about your childhood, family life, places you lived when you were growing up, your hobbies, what you like to do?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I was actually -- I was born in Canton, Mississippi and over time, my family moved north to a little small town called

Tunica, Mississippi, which is really the town that I kind of really officially grew up in because I was a baby when I was born in Canton. So, I remember Tunica, Mississippi from like the fifth grade until I graduated high school. When was in high school, I ran track. I was in high school band from ninth grade to twelfth grade. Had aspirations to play football.

I wanted two things I wanted to do, to play football and I wanted to be a police officer. My mother wouldn't let me play football, too many kids would get hurt and so, I am now, I am a singer in high school and when I graduated high school, there wasn't any work for me to get a job as a police officer in town.

So, a friend of mine and I decided that we would join the Marine Corps Reserve. We went up to see the recruiter and filled out the paperwork, then we come to find that I was not old enough. I was only 17. I needed to wait two more months until I was 18. And he wasn't willing to wait on me, so he joined the Reserves. And so, I went back home and then I was

linked up with another friend of mine and he and I decided that we wanted to give the Army a shot. So, we went down to the Civil Service building, I believe it was in them days, and we asked the lady to allow us to volunteer for the draft, with the stipulation that we will go to Vietnam. We want to go to Vietnam.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was 1972?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: This was in 1972. I think it would probably have been around September at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, we still had troops over there.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yep. They were bringing some soldiers back, from my understanding, but they were still had some sustaining forces there. So, we volunteered to do it. And we knew then that we -- the idea behind the Vietnam thing was not so much that we was all gung-ho about fighting but we wanted to ensure that we knew one way of really getting in without any problems is to just say I want to go to Vietnam. And if you said that you knew that there would be some

kind of sense of urgency and then you will get in.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And that would be for what?  
A year or thirteen months or so?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What would your contract be  
or your draft?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly. During that  
time, Sergeant Major, what they would was you could  
come in to the Army as a -- for a minimum of two  
years.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You could just come in for  
two. We volunteered for the draft for two years, came  
in, went to the MEPS station in Memphis, Tennessee and  
we went through -- the recruiter asked us what we  
wanted to do and I said I wanted to be an MP, well, I  
wanted to be a combat engineer. That was the two  
positions I gave them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Why those two?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I gave them those two  
because one, I always wanted to be a cop --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and that was just one of my aspiration. And the second one, the engineer thing came because I came from a long line of little small town that we lived in and there really weren't many jobs in them days for black people. So, me as a black man, I wanted to get a job that I could get out of the Army and then transition to some kind of civilian employment. So, I was seeing the police as being one of those that could do it, as well as, driving dozers and backhoes and those kind of things.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you are going to go back to Mississippi.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I won't say I was looking to go back to Mississippi but I guess that's the only thing I knew so --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- but I was looking to use those two as a way to get a job in that if the Army didn't work out for me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Now going back to

the Marine Reserve, why were you thinking Reserve and Marines at the time?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Well, at the time, like they said, you don't know what you don't know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We just did not know. We were just two little high school kids, little rookies and all we know is the Marines was waving the flag, says come on join and -- but the part of that was being young and not really want to leave home, there were Reserve and you can come back home after training was very attractive to us because we have never been anywhere. I mean, we always lived in those small town. So, we kind of seen this as being, when the recruiter sold it to us, he says, you can go do your basic training, you can go do your apprentice level AIT-type of training and about when you could come back home and then one weekend a month, I am going to give you 55 dollars every time you go for a weekend and you can do this for six years. And we thought that was a good deal.



SGM WATERHOUSE: Of course, in those days, it would be a lot more money, 55 bucks.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Be a good chunk of change for a weekend.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, we chose the Army and once we chose the Army, the recruiter said that the MEPS station is okay, good, you are going to get one of them, show us that you wanted engineer or MV. Next thing we know we were on a Greyhound Bus and we were headed to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, where we took our basic training there.

When we arrived at Fort Leonard Wood, we went through the basic stuff, you know, reception station and we were assigned to a basic training company and that's where I did my basic training there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, when you got to basic training, all of a sudden you found out you were going to be a 15 Bravo MGM-29 Sergeant and that's the name of the missile, the Sergeant

Missile and you were going to be a crewman on Sergeant Missile, not policeman or engineer. So, how did that come about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, about the third week or fourth week into basic training, we - myself and about eight of us soldiers got called out of the formation one day. We were just getting back from the rifle range. We had no idea. We thought we had done something wrong. And they put us in a group, had us some specialist march us over to Brigade Headquarters. They still hadn't told us what it was all about.

So, we get over there, you know, bunch of privates. So, you just going and do what you told to. Get over there and some Captain called us in the room, one-on-one, and interviewed us. And what he was doing, we didn't know at the time, was he was conducting a background check. He got all our information from us and then, I guess, he did some kind of background check on us. But that was our initial interview to see if we qualified to get into, what then they called the Nuke Sharing program.

So, while we are in the room, when it got done with all the one-on-one interviews, we were all sitting outside in the lobby of the Brigade Headquarters. Then a Captain or a Colonel, one of the single senior ranking officers called us all together as a group and told us, all you guys has been preliminarily selected to be a field artillery man. And you are going to be all going to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

So, knew how young soldiers are, you don't really question that too much but a couple of us raised our hands and says, well, I thought I was going to be an engineer. I thought we were going to do this. So, then this Captain went on to explain to us how important this new job is to the Army and you guys have been hand selected and all of that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And as a draft, you really didn't have a choice.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You really didn't a choice.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You didn't have a contract

--

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You didn't have a contract.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- saying that you are guaranteed this.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's exactly right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And he really sold it to us. So, we walked away and they marched us back down and we went back to training. And when basic training was over, that's how you end up with MOS.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, just going back to when you joined. Do you have any family members or anybody that you had by that served in the service? Or what -- basically what inspired you to serve in the military? And, you know, even whether it was the Marine Reserve or -- and I know you talked about getting a job or was there any other inspiration to join the military back then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I had no family members to my knowledge that had joined the Army at the time that

I joined. Our civilian structure is two older girls, then there is an older boy, older than me who when we graduated from high school, he went to college. He got a scholarship. Then that was me. I am child number four. So, there was no one in our family had ever joined the military. So, I was the first. And as again, I joined the Army simply because I wanted to be a cop, I wanted to be an engineer, and I wanted to get away from this small little racist town I was in that had no employment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, when you did come in -- again you volunteered for the draft. So, you ended up making a career but back then, you were not really thinking of making the Army a career, correct?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, you attended basic combat training at Fort Leonard Wood. Looking at just the basic training piece, how many weeks was that and what did you think of that training back then? How was it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Basic training then was eight weeks long. We did your standard one week at the Reception Battalion. Did the standard eight weeks in basic training. We ended basic training in October, graduated in December just before they sent us all off to Christmas exodus. This is 1972. So, my opinion of basic training, that it was hard. It was cold, it was very brutal, it was cold, it was hot. And when we first got there as time as went on -- I mean, if you have anyone ever been to Fort Leonard Wood, they will tell you, it's got a lot of rolling hills and it's a lot of walking and road marching. For a 17-year old kid, about a 120 pounds, that's pretty brutal.

But the issue there was that helped me to get through basic training was, first of all, I went there with a partner that he and I joined together like the buddy-buddy system. And I had somebody right off the top that we could talk to, we could share problems and things with --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, he was like in the same

platoon?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He was actually my squad leader.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Now what about the Drill Sergeants back then? What were they like?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Drill Sergeant [Campbell], Drill Sergeant [Sparr], Drill Sergeant [Murdoch]. How do I remember them? Nobody forgets those guys. So, 32 years in the Army and 14 years now as a civilian and I remember them guys like it's yesterday. So, I remember Sparr was our Platoon Drill Sergeant. Murdoch was his assistant and Campbell was Senior Drill Sergeant.

I remember Campbell because Campbell was the guy tall, white guy, like about 6'5 built like a truck and he was the kind of guy that -- we never really looked at Campbell in the face in that first couple of weeks because every time Campbell came out to the formation, to address the formation, he had us all in the front in rest position. Campbell never looked at privates. It wasn't until we -- after -- we had to earn

the right to look the Senior Drill Sergeant in the face. And that was their philosophy.

And Drill Sergeant Sparr, I mean, it really told an in-shape guy. He was a little bit shorter guy. He was also a white guy. He was the passionate one of them all. And then Murdoch was a dark-skin black man, E-5 and he was the hell raiser. And because he was an E-5. Sparr was an E-6 and first he was an E-7. Murdoch felt as though he had to punish us more simply because he was the junior guy. And he was just ruthless. I mean, I can tell you stories about low-crawling around the building in the rain and everything else. But at the end of basic training, we thought those three guys were the best heroes we have ever seen.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now were those guys combat vets where they could pass on some of their stories while you were there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't remember but I would probably venture to say that probably at least couple of those guys had served in Vietnam because I remember Vietnam was really hot down there.



SGM WATERHOUSE: You mean was Vietnam a conversation you had to motivate you guys?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Or something used to motivate you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely. They were talking to us about it because they would -- they used to kind of tell us that they were using -- I mean, I don't remember doing anything specific like booby-trap training and --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- nothing like that in the curriculum. But I think the mindset of being a tough soldier was really critical for them to teach us because of a lot of lessons that other people had probably had learned in Vietnam.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you switched over and started Advanced Individual Training or AIT for the Sergeant Missile, did you have the same Drill Sergeants or was that a different crew?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Different Drill Sergeants.

Something significant that happened to me at the basic training was, immediately after basic training they sent all of us home, to go home to do a Christmas exodus. And the next very key thing happened to me was in 1973. Now it was January of 73. That was the very first time I have ever been on an airplane. I had never flown before. I was 18 years old. I am getting my first airplane ride from Memphis, Tennessee to Oklahoma City. That's significant.

I arrived at Fort Sill, December the 7th, 1973. It was snowing on ground at Fort Sill and I was dragging my duffle bag in the snow. I remember like it was yesterday.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You went back in December?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I left basic training in Leonard Wood in December --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and I was at home for Christmas on leave. We had already signed out of basic training, graduated and everything. Now I am on my way to Fort Sill --

SGM WATERHOUSE: In January.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- in January, the very next month.

SGM WATERHOUSE: With snow, whatever.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And it was snow. I got here in -- I am trying to remember my Drill Sergeant there. I want to [Yarborough] or [Scarborough].

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. I made a mistake. I was thinking you are at the same place but you actually went to Fort Sill.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I went to Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. So, looking at that experience, how was that experience? Do you remember how long that training was? About how long? How many months?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The experience here was a little bit different. So now this is when the nuclear weapons part of my life, kind of, kicks in. Right here at Fort Sill, once we got in process in January of 1973, our AIT for Sergeant Missile was about nine weeks long. And it was, you know, basic curriculum while you take

the training. You take written tests and then outside in the motor park, we had hands on tests that we had to do, putting certain pieces together that you had learn how to do that. This was a long-range nuclear missile.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Nuclear and commissional both?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It could do both, yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You can have a commissional warhead and nuclear warhead. And even at that time, my understanding was only stationed in Korea. I don't think there was one in Germany at the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you guys were just doing the conventional stuff?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, at the end of basic training, we were all organizing to a cohort battery and that was meaning that all of the students that graduated out of this particular class --

SGM WATERHOUSE: At Leonard Wood?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- no, no. At Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, for AIT.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The AIT. We all was moved over to another side of Fort Sill over at the permanent deploy side. And at that time, they had linked us up with all of our remaining battery leadership which was all the N-Seals, the Lieutenants, the Captain as the battery commander, the First Sergeant, they were all already here formulating and signing for equipment and all of that. So, once all of our class graduated, they brought us over to the other side of Fort Sill and merited us with our leadership.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it was a cohort unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was a -- and made a cohort unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Huh.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, after they made us into a cohort unit, it took us about a week to draw equipment, to get organized, to be broken down into sections and squads and all of that, take a PT test, all of this integration stuff into the battery to make us

feel like we are part of a battery. Then we started doing what they call collective training. And they actually had us going to the field here at Fort Sill training as a battery, learning how to be a battery going to the field with that leadership.

We went through an FTX phase to, kind of, get us certified and then after we went through all of that, then they sent us to White Sands Missile Range where we actually had to go to down there and actually fire live missile all around the missile range camping in White Sands as a certification that you are certified to be a battery. So, we did -- my job in the section at that time was just a basic crewman on the Sergeant Missile just doing crewmen duties.

Once we certified at White Sands, we all came back to Fort Sill, we packed up our clothes, they sent us home on leave. This was in July of 1973. We went home on leave. We already knew before we was going, we had orders and everything, we were going to Korea. We were going to replace another cohort battery that was already in Korea. And --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, this was your unit that was formed basically here in the Fort --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was the -- entire unit was formed right here.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Fort Sill was a Bravo Battery 3rd Battalion 81st Field Artillery.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then after leave, we all went over the -- the whole battery -- we all landed up in Korea and they formed us over there. We replaced another battery that came out and I did one year in Korea as Sergeant Master Crewman.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, just for folks out there that, you know, we are trying to learn how the Army was back then, was this a new unit or did this -- was, I mean -- was the 3rd Battalion 81st Field Artillery a unit that exists already?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes. The battalion and the Battalion Commander and battalion leadership, the Sergeant Major and all of that was already in place with

Alpha Battery and with Bravo Battery when we arrived.

Our job was to replace the other Bravo Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, they came out and a whole new Bravo Battery went in. The battalion structure was still there. I think over time, they did the same thing with Alpha Battery after about another year.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My assignment was twelve months. I went over as a Private E-2 and when I left Korea, I was an E-4.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, speaking on unclassified terms, over in Korea, what were your primary duties and responsibilities as a Sergeant Missile crewman?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, now when I got to Korea, I did get a specific job and now on the launcher section, once we got over, there they actually made me the actual boom operator. So, I was the guy up hauling in the seat with the controls, responding to hand and arms signals given by Sergeant E-5 Assistant Section



Chief and my job was to lower the horse to pick up a missile section that raise up, slides back into position. Some crew unhooked it, I pushed the trolley back out, I picked up another section. And my job was to operate all the hand controls that actually put the missile together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: We talked a little bit about your Drill Sergeants and some of your fellow soldiers, their basic -- basic and AIT, but just for history's sake, in your opinion, because we hear at every generation, oh, you know, this generation is not as good as the last generation or whatever. So, in your opinion back then, you know, in 72-73 timeframe we are talking, what did you see as the average NCO and average soldier? What was the quality of the man or woman joining back then and serving back then? Because it was a transitional time for the Army coming out of Vietnam.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was -- I think that we were in some real good shape. Can't say we were when we got there but I know when we left, we were in good shape. Those Drill Sergeants that we had in basic

training in 1972, you know, how tough the Army was back then. You know, there were things that happens in basic training back then, you just didn't talk about, they just happened. I mean, I am not going to say we were abused as privates but I will tell you that we did some things that Drill Sergeant techniques such as low crawling around the entire building. If you did that today, someone will say that was abuse.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But Murdoch seeing that as being a form of training and, you know, now that he was punishing us for being late for coming down and stay us on the whistle when he brought us down, but in his mind, okay, I can you punish you and train you at the same time and use that as an umbrella to justify the training. I mean, c'mon everybody knows that that's a technique that probably a lot of Drill Sergeants still use today. In that there is nothing wrong with it but then some form of reasoning.

So, Murdoch will have us out in the rain.

Well, people would say, why you got the soldiers out in

the rain, low crawling in the rain, that's abuse. Well, Murdoch would say, the jungles of Vietnam is wet, you are in the canopy, these guys got to be tough, I got to toughen them up. So, what? They are not low crawling through a jungle. They are low crawling off some cut grass around a building in the rain. And Murdoch would probably look at this being, that ain't even half of what they are going to be facing, so don't give me no grief because I am making them crawling. And for us, the guys, that were doing the crawling, we weren't complaining because we knew and had heard stories about Vietnam and we thought, also with half mind that he was prepping us for it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you had joined to go.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And we had joined to go, yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you didn't see -- so, the quality of the average soldier back then you thought, even though there was probably a lot of draftees but --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the thing that --

one of the things -- the one thing was really mixed in real hard within, we had a lot of racial barriers. And you got to really remember that we are talking 1972. So, we were just going through -- Dr. King had just got assassinated in 68.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, this is only what four years later. So, we were still in the middle of a lot of racial barriers. My roommate was a guy by name Whitney. I don't remember his first name. Whitney was a tall white guy that was in terrible shape and he smoked Pall Mall cigarettes and we were in a situation where here you are, you have a young black kid coming out of a racist town in Mississippi when we hadn't even integrated schools there. We had segregated blacks going over this school --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yes.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- whites in this school.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Some places that hadn't happened till the 75 or so.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely. And I came

out of a town that we still had the old signs up saying -- even in our movie theatre where the black kids had to go up on the side of the building to go to the movie theatre and the white kids went out on the bottom. So, I was in an environment there where we were still feeling that. So, I think the barrier -- the key things in basic training during that time was not so much physical but it was lot of a -- it was bringing in people of different cultures together to try to teach them that they have to learn to work together and then formulate as a team to now go fight what we would call a common enemy.

If you don't get these two guys here together, these two races together to make them feel as though they are doing something there as a team, how in the hell you expect them to survive in a place like Vietnam.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, the Army did a good job of --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I don't want to use the word forced integration but a lot of time in the

Army when you thrust them in there -- I use the example of putting Whitney in the room with me as a story because I never been in a room with a white guy before. I came out of a black school in a little small town. Whitney had never been in a room with a black guy before. He came from wherever he came from. I don't remember where he came from. But the thing that really brought us together was we didn't have no choice. We just didn't have no choice. I mean, we had an area where there was about ten separate rooms, like two-man rooms. We didn't get no choice. They were just calling our names. William go to room 129, Whitney go to 129. I don't know who the hell he was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which they probably did on purpose.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, we all ran in these different rooms and everybody that was left over that didn't a two-man room, they were in these big old huge open bays. Whitney and I, kind of, did a little bit of

small talk but we really didn't do a lot of talking. But what really brought us together was the fact that he was a smoker and I was not. And we used to go running with the Drill Sergeant and Whitney used to always fall out. And when you fall out of basic training run in 1972, you get eaten alive by the Drill Sergeant. So, they was always eating him up, putting him on KP, doing this and doing this. So, I used to ask him all the time as, I said how do you -- I said you got to figure out how to stop smoking.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And nobody had never told him that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: He couldn't smoke there, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. Oh, yeah. They really did allow him to smoke. They gave us smoke breaks.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, they did.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, Whitney -- I am sorry, no, they didn't. Whitney came into to the Army as a smoker so it was all messed up. But I was trying to get

him to understand that, you know, that you can do it. That you can do it. You can make it. So, we used to go running and you know how it is. Drill Sergeant didn't really allow us back in then to grab on to your battle buddy and pull him and said, now do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You can't yell encouragement. But they didn't really want you to do that because now you are falling back and now you got a whole bunch of stragglers. They want you to stay with the main body that was running. Drill Sergeant policed up all the stragglers because they wanted to yell at them. They wanted to stop and then give them push-ups. So, one of the things I did with Whitney was I was always encouraging him to do better. And then we used to go out there on weekend. I used to go running with him to kind of help build his stamina up.

What we were doing at the time, we were fixing racial barriers. Because he had never had a black man help him and I had never helped a white guy. So, we came together that way in a -- it was a like



neutral thing that we both needed some help on. I needed acceptance from him. Didn't want no grief out of him being his roommate. He needed me. We both needed each other and when we left there, we were friends.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, switching focus back to Korea. When you were over there with 3-81, who did you rely on as a new soldier and new to the Army to help train and mentor you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant Jackson, Sylvester Jackson was my Assistant Section Chief and Staff Sergeant [Bowker].

SGM WATERHOUSE: And how did they help you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They helped me because Bowker and Jack got along really well. They were really good at what they did. They were the same ones that made us a cohort that we formed the battery and they got over there. Bowker and Jackson was very knowledgeable about the missile. And because they were very knowledgeable, they also got our attention because they were very knowledgeable. And they -- I credit them for being real good trainers. Again, we were in the black

and white world.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The E-5 Jackson was the Assistant Chief, he was black and Staff Sergeant Bowker was white. They got along so well that they served as an example to us in knowledge and in working together on really what you should be like.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, during your tour in Korea, what were some of the challenges you personally faced and how did you overcome them or deal with them?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: One was weather. Anybody ever been to Korea in the summer time knows extremely hot. Been over there in the winter time knows it can be extremely cold. And you know what the Army is. We go to the field, doesn't matter what the weather is. So, I was the first one. Second one is, just learning language and culture of Korea.

At first when I first got there, I didn't feel safe. When they gave us passes to go downtown after duty hours, I just didn't feel safe. Always went

down there with someone. I didn't know. I had never been around Koreans before. These guys was -- you heard these, lot of black marketing going on. Every now and then you heard of somebody got junked down there. Koreans was high in the taekwondo and hapkido and a lot of the things that we felt like it gave them a fighting advantage to wheels. So, we kind of had some concerns with that.

The MOS never was an issue for me because by the time we had left Fort Sill, went to all the cohort training, I knew my job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it wasn't the job.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It wasn't a job issue, it was the culture issue. It was a being in another country. It was being so far away from home. I had never been that far away from home. Was I going to get letters from home? How often? What's going on? Am I going to lose my mother, my father, my family members while I am over there and I had come home on leave? I mean, these are the things that was on my mind. It wasn't so much learning my job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, how did you deal with that? How did you learn -- did you try to learn the culture or did you go out there and you found out your fears weren't necessarily -- that wasn't reality?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The learning and the culture thing is -- it started in [Heung-Sun] and in processing. You had this one week of head start to go to, they kind of put his thought on you. So, you came in learning some basic words of Korean or customs or things, not to offend the Koreans. So, you did learn some of that kind of things and then process it. And the other part of it was you learnt from other soldiers that had been there for a while. Man, you don't do this to a Korean lady, you don't say that, you don't do this, all of those kind of things. And another thing, keep in mind this is 1973, we was -- we had the honor of a curfew in Korea at midnight every night, the gate closed and all the American soldiers had to be back inside the compound or you get an order 15. That was the --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You get the EBA wall if you don't get in?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: EBA wall. So, there was a good force and function to keep us straight.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time in Bravo Battery 381 FA there, here and then in Korea, what were some of the positive and/or negative things you experienced that influenced your later decision-making thoughts or action? Or in other words, what were some of the lessons learnt that you took out of that assignment that you brought forward into your, you know, into the future?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My -- I would say confidence, learning from Bowker and Jack and just the confidence of knowing that we were assets in an important mission, you are working on a nuclear missile, you had to -- in the nuke weapons department, there is no mistakes. The other thing it certifies is a two-man control. You read it out of a book or a person actually do it. There is no mistakes.

Everything you do is verified by someone else and it teaches you attention to detail. It teaches you procedure. So, it made me a procedure-driven person and

I talk more about that when I talk to my lads. But that's what I took out of that. And I had two assignments there and I am not sure if you are going to see that later on but -- arrived in Korea in the summer of 1973 and I departed a year later in 1974. So, I only did one year.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. So, Sergeant Major, I forgot to ask. So, you are actually -- before you left Korea, you were promoted to Specialist or E-4 --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- in April of 74. And then you ended up getting out of the Army from Korea because your two year -- you know, you signed up for the draft and your two years was coming to an end. Can you explain what happened then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I had a one-year tour in Korea and as you say, I came in only for total two years. By the time I left -- at the end of my one-year tour in Korea, now I had been in the Army, counting all of the training and cohort and all of that -- I had been in the Army a total of one year and ten months total. I

was promoted to E-4 in April.

Now, right after that, because the Army decided to let us go two months early as opposed to extending us in Korea for two additional months making it fourteen months, they gave us the early out. Shipped us back to Travis Air Force Base for about two days to do all of the out processing and from there I actually physically got out of the Army as a Specialist. This is in July.

I got out of the Army, went back to Mississippi. I wasn't even at home three weeks and I was back in the recruiter station talking to the same recruiter, Staff Sergeant Hayes who put me in the Army the first time. He turned around and put me back in the Army the second time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now by this time the draft was over.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It probably was. I wasn't really tracking it then.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, the all-volunteer Army started in 73 --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- while you were in, so --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- you know, all our folks should have been out of Vietnam by then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And so, when you went back, you had to volunteer for the --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- volunteer Army back then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I came back and -- so, I came back and running around home. Spend all of my money, my little saving burn money I had and when I came back home, they didn't have any more -- they didn't have no jobs to be a police officer. That's what I wanted to do. I came back and I tried and then said no, we have got two local cops here, they ain't giving it up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They weren't hiring.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They weren't hiring.

That's okay. It's easy to get back into the Army. I



didn't really want to get out of the Army, to be honest with you. The reason why I got out of the Army is because that's what my friends were doing. Everybody in there was like, man, I can't wait to get home. What are you going to do? Are you going to stay in? Back then there were -- as you say, what are you going to do, you are going to be lifer? Are you going to hang around, man?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But really what we were doing with each other is we was talking to each other but inside each one of me and all my friends, kind of, knew that we did like some things about the Army. But we, kind of, talked out ourselves into getting out of them. Next thing we know, we all got out. And three weeks later after I got home, and I realized nothing was working for me and I was running out of money and I actually I really did like the Army.

I went back down to Clarksdale, Mississippi seeing Staff Sergeant Hayes. Hayes got me. He said, well, you have only been out three weeks. It's easy to

get you back in. He just re-initiated some paperwork. He said you can keep your same rank. And he said, but the MOS that you were in, Sergeant Missile is being phased out. So, you have to take another missile which is Lance. I said, okay. He sent me then straight from Clarksdale, Mississippi. I still had most of all my old uniforms. So, yeah, you didn't have to re-issue anything. They sent me straight to Fort Sill and I came to Fort Sill and I was assigned to First to the 12th, a Lance Battalion here at Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. Sergeant Major, what I am looking at is, Charlie Battery First Battalion 12th --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- Field Artillery. And you were here for about a year. So, obviously -- did you request that specific assignment or that's just where he said you needed to go?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's where he sent me because when I could not get the missile that I was in, somewhere I think in his strategy that my recruiter had

was he had been in one missile, he would fit in another missile because it's the missile world.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Unless you have to go through another AIT or anything.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did not go to one. I had to learn it then, kind of, like hands on. So, when I came in here into that Lance Battalion, from the First to the 12th, I have learned Lance by doing hands on. And they did send me to a Lance NCO Course, they did. It was like three or four weeks. I did go to a Lance NCO Course.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, what I understand is while you were here in the First to the 12th, you served as, what was called an Assembly Specialist, I think?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did. I was in the -- they assigned me to an ammunition platoon and it was -- we called an A&T - Assembly and Transport Platoon and that job was to assemble the Lance Missile.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then we were then

handed over to a firing platoon with a boom and then they would put it on their launch and then they actually go out and shoot it. And I served there as a Boom Operator. I had been a Boom Operator before in Korea in a Sergeant Missile, so, I just kind of fit --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- so they just put me in there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you also served time as -- at least according to your records, I read, a Light Vehicle Driver. Is that --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was a driver.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That is part of the same --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's part of the same thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's like a dual-hatted job?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely. We have, like, five different five-ton trucks. And, you know, when you are operating the boom, one of the things you do is you are truck driver.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, your basic duty

responsibilities were similar to what you did in Korea, just a different missile.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Just a different missile.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, and one-two -- I am sorry. In 1-12 FA there -- here, I guess, in the Fort Sill area, who did you look to back then as your trainer and mentor?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant First Class Norman Andrews. So, when I was assigned as the Assembly Specialist there, name Andrews sticks up my mind is because again, you got to keep in mind, what you were talking about. We are talking about 74. So, racism was still popular and I was working for a little short guy named Sergeant [Cowan]. And Cowan had little clicks in his squad. It was like four of us black guys and then about eight of us in the assembly platoon and about four white soldiers in there. One E-5 and it was just Cowan. All of the rest of us was E-4s and below.

One particular person there Cowan used to hang with him, another white guy because they used to smoke cigarettes all the time and they found themselves

always hanging out inside of the connex, while rest of us was out working. Jesus, seriously, I never get out, I was under the five-ton one time working in the little running shift truck came through selling sandwiches and everything --

SGM WATERHOUSE: We would call that the gut truck.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, the gut truck. So, I get out to go to the gut truck and Sergeant Cowan says to me, now got to get back and leave the truck, we got to rotate and go to the gut truck. That's what you and some other three guys were sitting within the connex this whole time talking and rest of us were here working, changing all along for the five-ton and now you are going to tell them to go to the truck first? So, that was the way it was.

So, Cowan and I didn't get along very well. So, to answer to your question about the person that influenced me was -- my Platoon Sergeant at the time was a black guy -- I hate to keep using the work black and white but I use it because I make a point with that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, Sergeant First Class  
[Neils] --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, this is a big transition  
in the Army.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly. And as we get  
through you will find --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And society, really.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- it does. And you get  
through you will see it has a lot of basis of how -- why  
I don't like racism today. But anyway, my Platoon  
Sergeant at the time was a guy by the name Sergeant  
First Class Neils. And Neils was a church-going man.  
He was a good-hearted person. He was a good NCO but he  
had no leadership skills and he didn't have the courage  
to put his foot down to tell his Sections Chiefs what to  
do. And Sergeant Cowan was one of the guys who used to,  
kind of, always work around Neils and Neils just really  
didn't have no backbone.

You know, we used to go complain to him all  
the time but he -- I talked to him, I talked to him but

never really got anywhere. Now comes this guy told you about named Norman Andrews. Neils retires, same section still working for Cowan, same situation just a few months later. And now comes Sergeant First Class Norman Andrews. Also, another black guy, he is serving his way up. Just come fresh of a Drill Sergeant duty. Whole different persona, whole different personality. A butt-kicking kind of guy, taking names, treating everybody the same, no give a damn what rank you are, keeping everybody in check. And I really enjoyed Andrews.

So, we were out one day, I will never forget and I was operating the boom, Sergeant Cowan was giving instructions, Andrews, my Platoon Sergeant, the new guy, was standing around watching the operation and Cowan was yelling at me because I think I had brought the missile around little bit too fast. And I was telling them, the reason why I did it because I couldn't see a hand and arm signal. And he and I got into a yelling contest back and forth. I am going powering the boom and me and my E-5 Section Chief were having words.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Reason Cowan and I are having words is not because so much that I made a mistake. It's because the culture in our section had always been that I didn't trust him and he knew I didn't trust him. And I thought he was being unfair to the black soldiers in there. So, now that we are having an argument and this new E-7 Andrews was listening in on the whole thing. He stopped everything everybody was doing. He said, Williams, get your butt down here -- he used another word -- come around here. So, he didn't yell at Cowan. He grabbed me in the chest by my uniform, and he took me around behind the connex and threw me up against the connex and says, what in the hell are you doing? He says don't you know you can get an order 15 for what you just did? And he was chewing me out, telling everything and I am sitting here and serious, I was sitting there I had tears in my eyes. He said what is wrong with you? And I began to explain to him the history of all the problems that me and Cowan had had. And it just comes to a head.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And he was trying to teach me, he said that's not the way you solve it. He said that ain't the way. He said the way you are going, you ain't going to solve it. And I was telling him, well, I never had a Platoon Sergeant here to do it. And he said, well, I am here now, I will take care of it. So, I learned a lesson then that one, you don't be disrespectful to a guy just because he is abusing you. You go to a different level in the chain of command and have somebody else fight that battle for you. Well, we would have done that with Neils but Neils wouldn't help out. That's why we felt that we had to take matters in our own hand.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you probably weren't comfortable going to the First Sergeant back then --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- being a Specialist.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely not.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. So, you felt there was nowhere you could go.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I felt there was nowhere I

could go. So, when you put a person in that kind of situation, you need someone to clear the water. So, Andrew came in and he became a thermometer to clear the waters. We used to see him correct Cowan when Cowan was doing anything wrong, just like he would correct us. So, now all of a sudden, things were a little bit different. Cowan didn't approach Andrews the way he approached Neils because he knew that Andrews was a stronger leader.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you talked about some of the challenges there, you know, in that unit. Was there any -- did you like -- I guess, it was -- was it two different jobs because I am just trying to get my head around the Assembly Specialist and the driver. Was that a split time thing or just, today you are driving, you know, tomorrow you are doing the assemble. How did that --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: As a -- the way that -- it's like an official title kind of, paper kind sort of but --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- they don't -- if I look the -- remember the due description, they don't say, I guess, the Assembly Specialist, driver, it is like different positions in that squad.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, like for tanks, you are loader then you are a driver.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you are doing both.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. But you are doing both, kind of thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Did you like one job more than the other?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Well, as a boom operator, an Assembly Specialist that was when we were actually putting the missile together. But when you weren't putting the missile together and the boom is down in the travel position, there is a guy in the track that's driving. He is driving that around, so now what do the other crewmen do? We all drove five tons.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, I get you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Those are --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You weren't necessarily driver of the missile.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No, no, no. This was like -- it was four-five long big five-ton trucks. And on the back of those trucks you carried different missile parts.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I got you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And when we stopped and we all left the truck, we come around the track and then we had a different job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I got you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Two guys was holding ropes to stabilize it. Two guys holding ropes on this side to stabilize. That was four. One guy giving the hand and arms signals. I am on a boom operating a boom. You got two guys over here with torque wrenches ready to grab it and put it together and torque it together. But when we weren't doing the actual putting the missile together part, we all drove trucks or whatever.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. I got you. So, Sergeant Major, you already -- I think, you already

keyed on some of your key lessons learnt from your assignment there at the First and the 12th. Anything else you want to highlight about that time before I move on?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I remember, I was -- when Andrews, kind of, taught me to 'keep my mouth close and not be disrespectful to NCOs', was not your first greater than that, I began to believe that that was a chance that I could get promoted. Now that I had just reentered the Army after being out and I am an E-4, one thing I had made my decision at that point is that I want to stay in the Army. So, in order to stay in the Army, you got to get promoted. You got to move forward, you know, everybody want to get a rank and all of that.

But when I ran into this Sergeant Cowan roadblock, I had lost all hope that I would ever get promoted and I am just going to be another guy here and this ain't going to work and I know after this enlistment, I know I'll end up getting out. And I know I didn't want to get out. So, Andrews gave us hope and now I began to believe that if I worked hard, I would

probably get a chance to go to the E-5 board. I began to think in repertoire that okay, this is going to work.

Cowan eventually left and they brought in another guy by the name of -- we had Spec-5s then, Spec-4, Spec-5. Specialist [Pratt], Spec-5 Pratt. He replaced Cowan. Pratt was an entirely different guy. White guys were laid back, give everybody leeway to do their job and Pratt and Andrews together recommended me for promotion.

So, a key thing that happened to me in the First to 12th was, I learned the lesson not to be disrespectful from Andrews. And I gained hope that I had a chance in the Army to make E-5. But I got the new chief coming in and he now recommend me for E-5, it was just a matter of now studying and going to the board. That is the beginning of that me getting past the first roadblock in my Army life. I went to the E-5 Board --

SGM WATERHOUSE: It was an example too of a successful NCO.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I went straight to the Sergeant E-5 Board. I got on the list to be promoted

and now comes the part of the story where I was telling you I was assigned to third 81st a second time. So, I am now in First to 12th, I made E-5 and once I made E-5, the Army says we are no longer closing down the nuclear weapon sites in Korea for Sergeant Missile because the Koreans in North Korea have started to act up over there and they want to hold on to those weapons a little bit longer just in case that we may or may not go to war. Okay, so --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, January 76, I think, you went back to Korea.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely. So, now --

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you are Sergeant.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- now I am a Sergeant.

So, they sent me back to Korea on the very first missile that they had discontinued. Now, they want me to go back and re-learn the same MOS that I had just a year and half ago.

SGM WATERHOUSE: As a draftee?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, as a draftee. Now I am suddenly going back as a private being the boom



operator up on the boom, I go back at a Sergeant now. The guy on the platform giving hand and arm signals to a guy who now is a boom operator. It was a very good experience for me because it's just like I was being taught one year how to operate controls and now I am a Sergeant teaching someone else to do the same identical job that I just had. So, I am back in Korea, same battalion and did a year there and after I did a year there, then I went to the E-6 Board and I was put on the list for promotion to Staff Sergeant ten months after I was a Sergeant.

My Platoon Sergeant really didn't -- and I will tell you, I only had one roadblock in my life and it was Cowan. After that, as you listened to the story, you see that everything from that point on for me just took off and just never stopped. So, when I get to Korea, I am only working as a Sergeant E-5 and Staff Sergeant Shepherd was my Section Chief and Sergeant First Class [Monte Fleshman] was Platoon Sergeant. Both white guys, key point here.

I am now brand new E-5, go to Korea and

Shepherd now my need to Chief now and we just bonded like crazy. And we had one of the best sections that you could have in a battalion. And we were doing so well, I had just got there, it is only a twelve-month assignment. As soon as I got there, here I am there ten months later, Shepherd dragging me into the Platoon Sergeant and First Sergeant saying, I would like to send Williams to the Promotion Board.

Ten months as an E-5 in anybody's mind is like, that ain't long enough. It just don't make no sense. Why are you in here bringing this guy and then saying that he is ready. Sergeant First Class Fleshman, my Platoon Sergeant couldn't dispute it because he had seen me in action and he gives his best which is, he still did, he says, okay, we send him to the Board. I go to the Promotion Board and I leave Korea, come back here at Fort Sill as a Sergeant Promotable and a year after that, I am made E-6.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, did you feel at the time you were ready?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the time I felt like it

was, kind of, fast.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I wanted it, yes. Could I have stayed Sergeant little bit longer and got some more grooming? Yes, I could have. But when you look at opportunities to get promoted and you knew what you are going through trying to get E-5 and someone is fast tracking you into Staff Sergeant, you don't say no to them. Even though you know you are not totally groomed, you take it and say, I am going to make it work. And that's what I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, was that position that you were serving in over there a Senior NCO position? Or was it a -- what type of position was it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was a Sergeant E-5 in Korea as the Assistant Section Chief of a nine-man section and the job for the Assistant Chief was you get this big huge platform trailer of a Sergeant Missile with platforms on top of it and then a high boom up here. The E-5 stands on a platform and he is the

controller for putting everything together. The Chief's job as a Staff Sergeant was to ensure that he sit back and he has to do programming stuff that he had to do --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- but the Sergeant actually gave all the hands and arms signal to put the missile together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I think, you hit on this a little bit already but now at your second time in Korea as an NCO, who did you primarily look to help train and mentor you as a new Non-Commissioned Officer and a leader of soldiers?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, Staff Sergeant Shepherd, Sergeant First Class Monte Fleshman, my First Sergeant then was an E-7 by name of Sergeant First Class [Persinger]. All of those guys, I looked upon them was good NCOs. Perhaps it was Shepherd, my Chief. He and I was like buddies and Shepherd used to give me a lot of responsibility so I could, kind of, learn. And Shepherd was the guy that pleaded the case for me to Sergeant Fleshman and the First Sergeant saying I would need to

get promoted.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back now at your second tour in Korea with Bravo Battery 381, what were some of the lessons learnt from this particular tour that you took, with you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Teamwork, follow procedure -- you know, I learned that anywhere in the nuclear weapons, everything is item by item, procedure by procedure driven and I learnt attention to detail, I learnt follow the procedure. If you don't, you make a mistake, that's critical. I learnt the importance of what a Sergeant does. How much power a Sergeant has. I pinned it on in First of 12th, but the very next month I was gone.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, my duties -- my first job as a Sergeant was actually in Korea and I was walking through that door for the first time, I am not telling people what to do and being responsible for training the section.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you didn't really have -

- which is hard for most soldiers, the hardest transition is going from Specialist to Corporal or Specialist to Sergeant because in some cases, you are in the same platoon or same battery --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- so, you didn't really have that because you got promoted and then you went to a brand new unit where nobody knew you necessarily as a Specialist.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We was really good. I didn't have to prove anything in front of the guys who just promoted me in the 1st of 12th. I didn't have to go and work for Andrews. I didn't have to work for anybody else. It was a whole new beginning and that really helped me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, before I -- I would be remiss if I didn't talk about the Specialist 5s and 6s you were talking about. So, we still had those in the Army back then. And you said that the Specialist 5 you had worked really well with your Sergeant First Class but how were those Specialist

-- for example, I think it was in Korea or 112 --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The 1st.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- the Specialist 5, how was his duties and responsibilities different than, let's say, a Sergeant filling his rank?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the Army did look very highly on Sergeants. Always have, probably always will. Much more how then they did a Specialist 5. We grew up in the Army in the Specialist ranks understanding that a Spec 5 had power and he was a Specialist on the NCO side with power but we always viewed the hard-striped person as the person that was mostly the leader leader.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because by regulation, right, a Corporal can tell that Specialist 5 --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- what to do.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But the problem that we had was, you know, you had a guy that -- in a lot of cases that wasn't a hard striped person there. So, in that case, the Specialist 5 did do it. When Sergeant [Pratt] took over from Cowan, we know, well, he was an E-5, he

was Spec 5. We knew he outranked all of us because we all was Private C2s and 4s. So, we knew he outranked us and we knew that Andrews had put him in there as a Chief. So, we had to honor him and he was a good Chief. And I worked for him until I left actually.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you didn't see a big difference --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did not, right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- rank was not that big a deal.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Nope.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Pratt did really good and then working for Andrews, he had to do good because Norman Andrews was a -- he was a driver.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in December of 1976, you were assigned back here to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for the second time. Did you request this assignment and if you did, why did you want to come back here?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was in missile community



and at the time missiles was in Germany, only had Sergeant in Korea and they was taking it out and they had missiles at Fort Sill. I got assigned to Fort Sill simply because of my MOS.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I left Korea. Now I had the Sergeant Promotable. Freshman and all the guys put me up for a promotion. When I came back to Fort Sill I thought they were going to send me back to the First of the 12th. Instead I came back to Fort Sill and I had a friend of mine that I had met when I was at home on leave and he was telling me that they had what they called a Field Artillery Missile Evaluation Group called FAMSEG. They had an evaluation group over there that were looking for NCOs that was good in Lance that could -- be evaluated as -- go out and evaluate units. And I said, well, I will look, you know.

Last time I left Lance I was an E-4. I made E-5, went to Korea. Now they put me back into my other MOS 15 Bravo. So, I hadn't worked in Lance in over a year and when I left, I was an E-4, E-5 new. So, how I

can be on a team evaluating people and I have never even served as a Chief in the Lance unit? I said, well, you still know Lance real well and they need people. Go over there and they will interview you.

So, I go over and I see of one of the warrant Officers at this particular organization. They interviewed me. They needed someone. Right after that I got promoted to Staff Sergeant. There wasn't a job for me in the First to 12th. So, the evaluation guys put me in on the team. For the next couple of years or so, or however long I was there, I was going around evaluating Lance units about doing fire missions and fire procedures and all of that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is in the United States, just various --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They were only in the US. I think we went to White Sands and evaluated a crew a couple of times.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, kind of, like we do today at the Combat Training Centers. But you did it for -- was there a home station like the FTXs you were

evaluating?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Home station for us was a building here at Fort Sill over by -- you don't know that much about Fort Sill, but it was right here on Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the time Fort Sill had two Lance Battalions on Fort Sill. Sixth to 33rd and First to the 12th. And they had --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you evaluate units outside of Fort Sill?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did not.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The team did eventually down the road but Fort Sill had two Lance Battalions on Fort Sill and six Battalions in Europe.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: None in Korea.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But your job was here.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My job was here. So, what we were doing here is we were inspecting the two

Battalions here at Fort Sill, doing stuff at Sill and we inspected them when they actually went down to White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico to actually do additional training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I was on the team that did that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, in doing my research for this particular unit and just to reiterate what -- this is actually from an April 1970 Additional Field Artillery Magazine --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Okay.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- but this is what they said back then. And this was a Field Artillery School publication. It says the primary mission of the Field Artillery Missile Systems Evaluation Group or FAMSEG was to quote 'provide technical assistance to Field Artillery Missile Unit Commanders at their request and to render evaluations of performance of the Field Artillery Missile unit and preparing guided missiles for flight and launching them to arrive on target at

designated times'.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And that's just for the audience so they, kind of, see or they can read basically --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- what your unit's job was. So, Commanders at these different units and, of course, the two here, I guess, at Fort Sill were right here.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, whenever they were ready to go, be evaluate you guys or you go over there and evaluate them. Now, what kind of leadership do you have here in that job? Who were your --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That job was --

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- who did you look to for advice because you were now a new Staff Sergeant. So, who do you look to for advice and mentorship here?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant First Class [McNab], Captain Brown, Mr. McClan. This was an organization of inspectors. The Sergeant E-5 through

Sergeant First Class on the NCO side, let's just say, is like eight of us. Then there were like three warrant officers, CW-3s and 4s.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's all just technical stuff.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. There was one Captain and one Lieutenant and that was the team. We went TDY down to White Sands to do that. Now all of us -- one time, they sent five of us down. We maybe have half the team evaluating First to the 12th out in the field one day and the other half maybe evaluating Sixth to 33rd in the motor pool doing some technical training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: When we weren't doing that we were updating technical manuals. We was providing lesson writing materials to DOTD - Director of Training and Development, so they could update publications. So, we did a lot of stuff like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, did -- and I think you said -- I think you already answered this question but -- when you came here, you didn't --

you didn't necessarily get any -- there wasn't like a head start course, how are you going to be an evaluator, so, are we going to send you to this evaluator course? Was there anything like that, kind of, like you do now with Observer Controller trainers?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They didn't send to me do any training. They just integrated me into the team. I just remembered a lot of Lance stuff, I did know prior to that last tour in Korea as a Sergeant. They did was like Train the Trainer on the team. There were no certifications, there were no tests.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They trained me and once they trained me, I just put on an arm band, put on the baseball cap and I was the evaluator.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you were part of the After-Action Report team.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time here with FAMSEG, what were some of the challenges you personally faced as an

evaluator and how did you, you know, get through those challenges?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Evaluator had to know his stuff and evaluator got to know all the changes, updates on the publications. Evaluator got to be able to be a teacher, a mentor. So, we did training sessions. A unit would go to the field and a platoon would go to the field and we will go out with Bravo Battery First to the 12th and then our team was split up in two different teams and I would go with first platoon and this other team run by this one officer goes with second platoon. We would watch a unit go to a Lance 5 mission. Come out of the woods, stop, boom, boom, boom, put the missile up. Do everything they are supposed to do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it's also tactics, not -

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CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- just necessarily --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And our team would be



standing right watching. I am over watching guy who is doing all of this, the laying of the missile with the satellite. You, the one officer, you there watching the guy who is doing the gunning operation on the -- doing all the culmination. And the other Staff Sergeant, he is over there watching what each one of the crew member is doing. We got a notepad and a clipboard. We watch you from the time you come out of the tree line, then do the entire operation and you shoot. You are done. They put it back in the trees, everybody get out -- kind of, like NTC.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We bring all to the back of the track and now we read all them notes and give an evaluation to them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it was almost like an Observer Control --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- type job.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The only difference with us is that is us when we are serving as a trainer and a

mentor. But we also were the guys who had to certify them and say that they are either certified or not certified. So, now we put on a different hat. We are now doing --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, they are not allowed to do a real-life mission without your --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. Exactly right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- 2AQC --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They had to be --

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- or blessing.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- if they don't get it from us, they didn't want it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, it's pretty important. So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time with FAMSEG, what were some of your key lessons learnt?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Stay up on all the changes to the publications to ensure that when you are evaluating someone, you can give them a fair evaluation because you are not talking off the top of your head. You are talking about the latest changes in the manual

and you are actually giving them a fair evaluation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in July of 1978, you were assigned to Delta Battery Sixth Training Battalion at Fort Sill and you attended Drill Sergeant School in December of that year. Why did you report to the Sixth Training Battalion almost six months before you had to go to Drill Sergeant School?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, they had a Drill Sergeant Candidate Training Program.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Prior to being a Drill Sergeant during those days, you had to go be assigned to a unit and, kind of, do a right-seat ride kind of thing with other Drill Sergeants and you had to do in that time frame because they had such a high attrition rate of guys failing out of Drill Sergeant School. You used that time to do extra PT to get in shape. You used that time to study the modules word by word, verbatim to ensure that you were prepared going into the school that you can probably blow through much more of the modules without any problems.

And then they had a, like a little pre-phase you go to before you go to school. You had to go and pitch four or five different modules to other former instructors to see that you could do it. One of the keys ones is, like, how do you teach a soldier how to do inspection arms? How do you teach a soldier how to do position of attention? How do you teach a soldier how to just assembling the assembler of the M-16? And there are procedural steps on how you had to do it. And when you go to Drill Sergeant School you were evaluated and you cannot screw that up.

So, during that time frame there as a Drill Sergeant candidate that you go and do this train up phase you go through all of this. You take two or three PT tests.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, was that the mission of the Sixth Training Brigade?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. The Sixth Training Battalion had a -- they were doing all kind of stuff. They did TOT Howitzer training, they did a lot of different --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, was this individual based on when you went there and learnt there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: If you know a Drill Sergeant Class 4-91, it's going to start in August, a lot of the people that has been identified to go to that class, some of those guys are not even on Fort Sill. They are some way up in Germany, Korea. They are PCSing back, already got a class date, whatever. Some of us, just happened to be -- some of us at Fort Sill who know we have a class date to go to Drill Sergeant School and that particular class just started up in August, what the training center was doing was, they were standing up these little organizations over here for us to go train-up, so we will have a better chance of graduating and not falling out of school.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it wasn't mandatory. It's just something that you are able to take advantage of?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was -- I would like to

say it was mandatory. I mean, some people will get a notice at the last minute because that was a drop-out. They just said the class is completely full and now all of a sudden, one got failed at the last minute. They had some guys on an alternate list and then they will be fill-ins.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But all of us who had a class date and we knew we were going -- and let's just say I was over on First of the 12th. And now I know I am going to the next Drill Sergeant class. First of 12th will have to release me early, let me come over to the training side over here, go over here to Bravo Battery 333, right-sea ride for the Drill Sergeant and then right there, those Drill Sergeants who were actually in the unit maybe the guys I am going to work with. Not necessarily, but they try to put me in the same unit of the guys, I am right-seat riding with. But those guys also -- it was part of trying to help teach me how to do the modules.

What the training center came up, it was --

that was a little bit too sporadic, so it says, I will tell you what we are going to do. We will gather everybody in this Brigade that's going to Drill Sergeant School for that particular class, bring them all over to one room, not let you right-seat riding all of these units and then we will bring in two guys and then deliberately have them in the room teaching you. That's better success --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- than having you right-seat ride you and Bravo Battery holding and people all over the place. And that way the attrition rate of graduating become greater because they are better preparing all of us to go. We liked it because now I didn't have to go there initially with all that stress of graduating.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you would have had more people actually make it through.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You think -- because that's something we don't do anymore -- do you think that would

be a good idea to bring it back?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it's a great idea. I think it is because, you know, when you get a -- it affects a person when they fail. I want to give you a guy who has a boatload of confidence. Nobody want to fail anything. And then sometimes in our lives if you fail and it's some of kind of 10-59 is generated --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Score report.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- it affects you and then it seems all life failing. So, I think we can continue to do that now. It's a manpower thing but yes, I think we can do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, going back, I don't think I asked this question, did you volunteer for Drill Sergeant School to be a Drill Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did. And one of the reasons why I did it is because one, I always looked up to them guys, I will just be crazy honest with you. And the other thing is, we was wondering in them days, how are we going to get promoted? And just like then, just



like now, you used to hear a couple of guys say, if you want to get promoted, you just got to be a Drill Sergeant or you got to be a recruiter. Got to be a Drill Sergeant or you got to be a recruiter. And those was two big things that you threw at a guy that was like a big carrot on his record to get him promoted. So, what best thing to do is you see people getting promoted and you start looking at, well, he was a Drill Sergeant, oh, he was a recruiter. So, you figure I got to do one of those --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and the Army was really pushing them in those days and I wanted to get promoted but the Drill Sergeant School, again, had a high attrition rate and them guys was coming out and a lot of people was failing. So, when we came over here to go to this little train-up thing, I thought it was the best thing since schooling break because now I knew my opportunity and my chances of graduating was just got better.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And why would you -- why did

you want to be a Drill Sergeant, let's say, versus a recruiter? Or did you think that way?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I didn't think that way. I think the most of the reason why I wanted to be a Drill Sergeant also is because it was in my face. It was right here at Fort Sill. It was in my face. The Recruiter School wasn't here; the Drill Sergeant School was here. The Drill Sergeant -- one of the Army's Drill Sergeant School was physically right down the road from where we were. Drill Sergeants running around with big hats on, you see them, they got a bunch of confidence. So, you are around it and somebody is saying that's going to help you get promoted, that's one of the reason why I did it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in April of 1979 you graduate from Drill Sergeant School and was assigned to Echo Battery 5th Training Battalion here at Fort Sill where I understand you served as Senior Drill Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I served as a Platoon Drill Sergeant and in them days they only had one actual

Senior Drill Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They had more than one E-7 in the Drill Sergeant -- out of the 12 Drill Sergeant, I think, four of them was E-7. Well, one of them was actually the Senior Drill Sergeant in the unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: However, on paper, when you make Sergeant First Class, they listed you as a Senior Drill Sergeant on your ERB Promotion, whatever.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you were still a Staff Sergeant at the time.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was a Staff Sergeant the entire time I was a Drill Sergeant except that last year I have got promoted and I was a Staff Sergeant Promotable.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, if they listed Senior Drill Sergeant on my ERB is because once I got the P behind my name, then I went into a Senior Drill Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you were actually in a regular Platoon Drill Sergeant position?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you went through the course, so you had a good prep, so that helped you get through the course. So, looking at the course itself, what was, you think, the most challenging part of that Drill Sergeant Course and how did you get through it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Memorizing. Drill Sergeant School was a world of memorization. You had to remember verbatim words on teaching someone how to do something. Word for word. As an example, the next block of instruction is I am going to teach and demonstrate to you is going to be the position of attention. Position of attention is blah, blah, blah. This is the position of your hand, this is the position of your feet, position of your toe, must be standing on the ball of your feet, head and eyes are together, feet -- shoulder -- talk about your feet.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That had to be exactly word for word.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's verbatim. So, they teach us to teach the position of attention word by word from the head to your feet. So, that was a strategy. So, one of the challenges in Drill Sergeant School was to memorize all of this, so you can recite it to a guy who is evaluating you.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, the hardest part is just memorization.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not actually doing --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Not. Right. Everybody that went to Drill Sergeant School that I know when I went down there, I don't think we had anyone fail the PT test or overweight. I think that was one that you knew you had to do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You had to be physically ready?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, now going back to Echo Battery, your time there as a Drill Sergeant. So, when you first got there, what were some of the initial

challenges you faced?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the -- just trying to see what works. So, what the Army does is the Army gives you, as an example, and I was -- when I go to Drill Sergeant School then, I was a trainer, I used to talk to Drill Sergeant Kenneth, still just about the same thing. I said, what the Army do is this. The Army gives you 40 to 50 privates who now show up on your doorsteps and they all got on uniform. And they give that other Drill Sergeant 50 and the other Drill Sergeant 50. You got 250 of them and you got two Drill Sergeants assigned to each Platoon of 50 or 60 privates. You don't know what you got. But I will tell you what you got. I have learned that. What you got out there, you have got male, female, black, white, Asian, rich, poor, the guy whose dad has said you got to go in the Army just to learn and prove to me and then you get out, I have already got money for you, kind of guy, you get the guy who is -- came out of a cotton field, another guy who came out of a trailer park, you got a guy who is racist, you got a guy who don't know if he is gay or

not, you got a guy who is -- his dad is a Congressman, this guy right here is married and the only thing he got on his mind is he has got kids at home, you got this guy who is supposed to be in jail but not, they gave an ultimatum to join the Army, you got this guy, his dad is a Colonel, he works in the next unit next door.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you did an integrated basic training, you weren't just doing Field Artillery basic training?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Totally integrated.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, this is what you get. And all of them are lined up out there in front of you and guess what, you have no idea who any of them are.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now was this the first time you worked a lot with females --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- soldiers?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, you go there and you got all of these different people there and you don't know. You don't know who you are talking to. So, you

ask yourself, how do I become effective? You get the guy who played football, who can run up and down that track three or four time and never be out of wind. You get the guy who sit on a bench and played video games. You get the guy who was in a high school band. So, you got all these guys, some in shape, some not in shape. You got a guy who never even seen a weapon and you got a guy who goes out and shoot a 28 shotgun all the time going bird hunting all the time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He is used to weapons. So, now you get all these guys now standing in front of you. So, your challenge is how do you, as a trainer, connect with all of these people, with all of these backgrounds and situations and problems and get them to in some way in their mind feel like they need to do what the hell you tell them to. So, you got to figure out -- that's the strategy.

So, in Drill Sergeant School they would teach you different techniques about how to approach that. But really the best way to do it is you treat all of



them the same and your heart on all of them. And you are fair. And they will come around. It ain't like you have seen that movie where, I think, the one where they say, officer and the gentlemen, where they say, he told the -- the guy who is the candidate, let me know when you want to quit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Just give me your deal up, go ring the bell. You know, basic training ain't that way, you don't give a guy a torch. You don't go to him and say, okay, you want to quit the day, just go and ring that bell, and I give you your duffel bag and you can go home. We don't do that. We don't give them that opportunity, we don't give them that offer, we don't give them no way out. We simply get out there every day and we be as hard on them as we can because we know we need to and then we would be as compassionate as we can. But we don't be compassionate to them as a group. We only be compassionate to a soldier as an individual.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now did you as a Drill Sergeant before there was -- I guess, when there was

kids running reception, did you get a read ahead like on their stories or you just learned that as you --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I learned that as I went on.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: As a matter of fact, sometimes you don't know a lot of about kids and they don't tell you until graduation when the parents show up

SGM WATERHOUSE: And then you found out --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Then you found out, man, I didn't know this. And some of those guys, they don't tell you. They don't tell you for a reason because they don't want you to be harder on them because of that or they don't want you to give them favoritism because of that. And some of them, they really try to check you out. They don't know if you are going to be abusive. They don't know that you are racist, they don't know -- I mean, they don't know. So, they just kind of keep the cards close to their chest. They will just go along with it.

Some of those guys out there are some pure

athletes that can probably run me in the ground. And they don't want me to know that they used to run marathons and all of that. They ain't there for that because they know that their things and that they got to do that I know and I can do much better than them. And the thing that you do that I have learnt as a Drill Sergeant is you have to gain the respect of the Private and he will never ever walk away from you. You do things that -- Drill Sergeants do deliberate things to get soldiers' attention and to prove to them that they are worthy to be their leader. Running into fast group, that's the good one.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I will PT them. Show him that you can do more pushups than them. I will shoot him. They love to see a guy that can shoot. Know how we know? Know how I can outshoot the Privates? Because when the Privates are not around, we are on the rifle range shooting, we are practicing. Only way I got good at being good at shooting is when we get extra ammo or something like that we are out shooting. We are out

there doing it. We used to do a demonstration with the Private when they first get there and everybody is in the bleachers, we had the best Drill Sergeant that could shoot the best is out doing the demo when we want to impress the Privates.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But he can see that Drill Sergeant Jones can do it but now he is wondering, can Williams do it. So, at time alone -- the next time you demo something, I got to do it. Next thing you want to do to the Private, you want to impress them is, when you go to the combat obstacle course, the combat condition course, you challenge the private.

I tell people, if everybody asked me the different jobs that I had in the Army and I don't want to skip ahead too much but there is three jobs that I had in the Army that to me is the most important ones and we will it talk about them later -- and you can tell my passion about. One was being the Drill Sergeant. It taught me a lot about me and second one was being a First Sergeant. It's obvious being a First Sergeant

because First Sergeants are your first level of a command where there is guide on that you are in a position to really affect soldiers. You say who go to the Promotion Board, you are mentoring Platoon Sergeants, you are mentoring a brand new Captain.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And the third one for me was being the Sergeant Major of USASMA.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major Guard.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And notice I didn't say Battalion Sergeant Major, I didn't say Brigade Sergeant Major, I didn't say TRADOC Sergeant Major. I said Drill Sergeant, First Sergeant, and USASMA. And there is a reason why I say that because I think that I made my greatest impact there. But the Drill Sergeant one is they are surely a mix of a smorgasbord mixture of people that you deal with. You just got to train them all the same. And then I think at the end, it all come out that way. I think you also -- you can't be worried about who is out there. If you are worry -- you know what worried me as somebody told me that son of the [Tom Coles],

[Jamian Haus'] grandson was in my Platoon. Had somebody told me that Bill Gates' daughter was in my Platoon.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That worried me. It bothered me because I know they are there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But the good thing is you didn't get that information.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They didn't give the information. So, I don't want to know it. So, if I don't know it, I am not going to stress over it, I am not going to lose no sleep over it. If I just stay the course of who I am and how I am for training, I don't get who is out there and what kind of report they say on me, they would always have to end it by saying it was hard but it was fair. They would always put that in there somewhere. But if you tell me somebody is out there, now I got a problem. And I will address that a little bit later on because it has happened to me and my daughter.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, Sergeant Major, I don't think I asked this question yet, but so during

your time as a Drill Sergeant, who did you look up to as far as NCO support chain there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because it's a world where the NCOs run everything.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It is. My First Sergeant, First Sergeant [Menterhol] was a good guy. He was an Infantry First Sergeant. Menterhol took care when I was a Drill Sergeant. Senior Drill Sergeant Soto was my senior. And then my rivalry next door was a guy by name of Drill Sergeant Cobb in another Battery. Jesse Cobb now is a Retired Sergeant Major and he owns a corporate company. I mention him because Jesse was, to me, the epitome of a Drill Sergeant. And I just wanted to be like him. And he and I used to talk all the time because Jesse always had a sharp Platoon, sounded good when they march, I used to watch and be hard on them, how they responded to it. He had been a Drill Sergeant for about a year before I got there. So, he used to teach me a lot of things as we got along. And the lessons I did learn in being a Drill Sergeant is I had

to learn the art of controlling and not being using profanity. Remember this is in 70s.

SGM WATERHOUSE: All right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, in the 70s almost like everything still kind of goes. I was Drill Sergeant in 1979. So, cursing was okay to a certain level. Cursing them out was not okay. Cursing saying damn it, shit or just the basic words --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You couldn't personally hit somebody.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. So, those kind of words was accepted words, kind of, sort of, in certain units that didn't get you in trouble.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you couldn't direct it at a person.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Couldn't direct it at a person and you couldn't go out there and chew them all out. I was so emotionally involved in all of my Platoons that they wanted to be the best and I don't know if you can look at them in my office here -- in my office. I was Drill Sergeant of the Cycle five times.



So, you only see four trophies up there and that's because the last one that I was given, I actually gave it to one of the guys I worked with. Just kind of giving you a little bit of idea of how I really was -- really into that. And so, I was very passionate about making sure that my guys did what they are supposed to do.

And I was leaving -- I went home on leave and I had another guy looking out for my Platoon one time and I came home and one day I got a phone call. And First Sergeant called me up and told me how my Platoon had been acting up. I was so upset about it, I got in my car in civilian clothes, drove on post and then when they came home from AIT classes that -- there weren't in a BT phase, there was an AIT phase. The came home from the AIT phase, about 20 of them, they have gone to Lance or Pershing Missile AIT, one of the two.

And they had got a bad report from the instructor, sleeping in class, back talking, whatever. And when I found out about it, Senior called me and told me about it, I came in and as soon as the guy replacing

me brought them in, that he didn't march them over to the Battery and left them out there, I immediately laid into him. I am standing out in civilian clothes, Staff Sergeant on leave, just cursing out these Privates. And, I mean, I was going up and down. I was just really cursing them out.

So, the First Sergeant sat there and waited till I finished and then when I had got done he motioned for me to come over to the office. Very tactical guy, he didn't want to chew me out in front of them and embarrass me. He brought me in the Olive room, closed the door and he commenced to chewing me out. And he told me, he said, I am doing this because you are one of our best Drill Sergeants we got and I don't want to see you get in trouble and what you just did, if you keep doing this, it's going to get you in trouble. So, I am going to talk to the Battery Commander and see what I got to do to this corrected.

I go home, I am worried, I am thinking I am going to get relieved. Next day I come in and Battery Commander says, look from what you did, we got to do

something. Someone is going to give you a counseling statement. Counseling statement in them days was really big because they gave you a counseling statement in lieu of the letter of reprimand. The Battery Commander then went down and told the Battalion Commander what had happened because he wanted to give him a courtesy. Let him know that I went down there and cursed these guys out and a whole bunch of people heard it and then the Battalion Commander asked him, what are you going to do? He said I recommend that you give him a letter of reprimand not a counseling statement.

So anyway, I end up getting a counseling statement. Battery Commander put it in his desk and it stayed there until the day I left and when I left to give a Drill Sergeant duty he gave it to me. It never was put in my records. But the lesson I learnt behind that is you cannot let your emotions overtake your common sense and I think that's what I did that day.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I think another one too is -  
- and that's just me talking but that Commander gave you a second chance.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He did. He really did because he could have messed me up but he knew that I meant well, I just didn't have the toolset of how to fix it because we believe one of your tools as a Drill Sergeant is to curse people out. I mean, if you really think about it, you are cursing them out, you could, you know, make them do a whole bunch of exercise and you could do a whole bunch of things but that's a tool that we believe at that time that was an effective tool for us.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now, so that Battalion you were in, you said you had female soldiers going through basic training as well?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We did have some females going through because we were pushing MOSEs that were missile MOSs and --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you had basic training and AIT?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, we were in an OSUT training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, it was all

together.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And the Battery that we was in, we were having 13 Fox Forward Observers which was all male. We had the Lance Missile Soldiers, Pershing Missile Soldiers, Survey 82 Charlie Soldiers. And the Lance, Pershing, and Survey had women in it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, as a Drill Sergeant, what your typical platoon would be a mix of all those different MOSes?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was some cycle we wouldn't have no women in our platoon, some cycles we did. It all depends. And if we did, you didn't have no more than three or four.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because, you know, I don't know if it -- I don't think back then, sometimes you -- I am trying to think when the Women's Army Corps stopped being a thing but a lot before, you know, not long before that I think women went to their own basic training.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Fort McClellan. Exactly where. They all went to McClellan, [OSIS] started and -

- what they call it? Another name they called it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Actually, I think it was in 73 when they started integrating the women.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They called it Gender Integrated Training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That was the official name. And so, we did have some men there based on how many recruiters brought in during that cycle.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, any specific challenges, you know, forming those teams of kids with males and females?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The challenge there was you didn't -- some of them -- I mean, we had weak men, all men weren't strong. But a lot of the women were -- didn't, weren't able to do a lot of the upper body strength kind of things. And they take a little bit more time to train them. The other thing was putting men and women in an environment in barracks next to each other, it was a challenge sometimes because we even had some guys trying to crawl out and wanted to get to the

female barracks kind of thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, there were several barracks not necessarily --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They were housed differently.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, that was something --

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is something we as an Army still --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- are working today.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: At the integration of females into now any job in the Army. So, you were kind of at the forefront of --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- that change.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The only thing we didn't have and my challenge as a Drill Sergeant is, we didn't have -- we were not in the Army where we was going through 'don't ask, don't tell' during that timeframe.

We didn't have some of the challenge they have today with transgender, open gays. We didn't have that. So, I didn't have to deal with that. If they were in there, it was not accepted and it was something that we didn't know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in 1979, I think it was your first year as a Drill Sergeant, you went to Pershing Missile Course at Fort Sill?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was that --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- it was at Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The rationale behind Drill Sergeants were that because there were a lot of soldiers failing out of some of the AIT classes then -- so, the instructor was standing on the platform all day long when he would teach those kids and then he would give them homework and then they had no other guy when an assignment coming up be as a hands on, doing something outside or whatever. But they were still having high attrition rate. And they wasn't going to extend the



time of AIT, make it longer to yield more time to learn it, it was still what it was. So, the only avenue they had was that the Drill Sergeant become the guy who does reinforcement training after duty hours.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you can --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, the Army came with the idea that what we are going to do is get a Pershing Drill Sergeant pushing the Pershing soldiers, Lance guy pushing Lance one. Well, that reads well but once your Pershing got PCS and your next Drill Sergeant you get brought in that's assigned to you, you have to get a 13 Fox because there is no Pershing guy out there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The 13 Fox still can't have the Privates on missile stuff. So, meaning what they told us is regardless of what your MOS as a Drill Sergeant, whatever class you are pushing every day, you had to sit in the back of the class, learn it with them so you can reinforce the instructors' instruction in the evening.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And by doing that I graduated with my class. They gave me a little certificate saying that I had graduated the Pershing Missile Class and I was able to use that as my secondary MOS even though I was never assigned to a Pershing unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it really wasn't time away from your --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- Drill Sergeant unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was in the classroom with them in the back.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, December 79 about eight months into your tour as a Drill Sergeant, you attended the Army's Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course or ANOC at Fort Sill.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What did you think of that course and how did it help you as an NCO?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My first year of failing something written happened during that timeframe. I was -- I think I was -- remember back in the days in the

communications class. The Army used to teach the old CEOIs. And we were taking a class in communications and I had studied but I didn't -- and I thought I had it down pat. So, in ANOC we were -- we took the ANOC right here and I was taking the class on CEOIs. I just thought I was just going in and blow through it. But the way the test was asking the questions, I really got to point where I thought I was going to fail. You don't fail an ANOC class. Then you end up with a bad 10-59. You may or may not get rescheduled.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You should be able to get a retest or maybe not.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I wasn't -- well, I don't know if they are going to do a retest or not but I will never forget the day when they had brought us all in the hallways taking the test and I just knew I was going to pass until the guy put the test in front of me and I opened it up and I was just like, wow, like I really didn't know any of that. So, went through most of the test doing guesswork and I end up making an 82 on the test and I passed. But I was sweating bullets the

whole time. When I walked out, if you had to ask me, I would tell you I would fail. That was a stressor. The good thing about ANOC was just being around other E-7s. Just being around other NCOs, learning from them and being in a classroom environment that you can call the senior NCO environment. I enjoyed that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, while you were in that course, did you still -- was that resident where you had to leave your --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It did not. I had stayed at home. Actually, I was still on Drill Sergeant duty.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the time then we were short Drill Sergeants and the Army really didn't want to let us go from the duty as Drill Sergeant and go to an ANOC class even though it was right here and I didn't have to go TDY. It still meant time lost from that basic training battery. You just lost the key guy who is sitting here now going through six weeks of ANOC that mean that six weeks over there, they don't have a trainer.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, how did you do it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Well, they didn't want to release us but they went on and made the decision at the last minute to do it anyway. What they really was telling me was they wanted to defer my ANOC until after my Drill Sergeant duty was over, then have me go to the next class. Well, I didn't think that that was fair because I was in the window -- no, I wasn't. I was a Staff Sergeant Promotable.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I had already got selected for E-7 but I didn't want to defer it because I just wanted to go and get it over with. But anyway, long story short, they ended up saying, okay, we are not going to defer, we are going to let you go where I am going. And I graduated. As soon as I graduated, I came back. I finished my Drill Sergeant duty here in 1981 and they assigned me to Germany.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you were at those six weeks in school, somebody just seen your drill the first time just trying to figure out how to cover down

for you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I think you -- think you hit on it earlier but just in case, looking at back at your time as a Drill Sergeant, what were some of your key lessons learnt that you took with you to your next assignment or following assignment?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Confidence. Confidence. Drill Sergeant duty gave me a world of confidence. Drill Sergeants are kind of like cocky guys. You know, they -- the Army tell you, you good with it. You go to a very demanding school and you graduate. You got a head on and you are training Private the response to your every word. You learn regulations and you know regulations. You are required to come to work every day looking like you just stepped out of a poster. You are required to be in tip top shape. So, you are like at the top of your game kind of, sort of. And even on top of that you -- there is only a handful of you and other NCOs that you go around, your peers and mentors around post, they look at you and you know they kind of want to

be like you. So, you kind of get this persona of 'I am it' kind of thing. So, your confidence level is elevated.

And if you turn around and do like they did with me and a lot of other guys and then they reward you for that by giving you trophies for being the best Drill Sergeant and then they send you to ANOC, you came out of there -- when I came out of being a Drill Sergeant, they sent me to Germany, I felt like I could move mountains when I went over there because they had set me up in a position where I felt like I could do anything. And that's where all the confidence moved forward. And I think that gave me my momentum that I needed.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And I think you were influenced earlier you were talking about that, that Section Chief, I think, or the Sergeant First Class that came in --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- that was coming off the trail.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you reflect back on that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Drill Sergeant Norman Andrews. But I thought Andrews was -- he was such a confident man. And then you just want to be that way and that's where you were.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I think, it was March of 81, you were assigned to Germany and you served over there with the First Battalion or Charlie Battery First Battalion 333rd Field Artillery Regiment where you served as Platoon Sergeant.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did. I was in Germany for two years. Went over there as a Staff Sergeant Promotable. Shortly after being there, I got pinned on for Sergeant First Class. I am trying to think -- I don't know if I did ANT. No, I was not in an Ammo Platoon. I was in a Firing Platoon -- or did I do Ammo? I was in Firing Platoon, I think, both times I was there. I was a -- I go into Germany with all of this boatload of confidence and I get in there and my First Sergeant is a Sergeant First Class, Sergeant First Class



Collins. And regular Lance Battalion, you got two Firing platoons and one Ammo platoon and then you got your Headquarters platoon with all your maintenance and supply and all the mechanics, all those kind of guys. And then you get the First Sergeant and you get a Captain as a Battery Commander. And then our First Sergeant at the time was a Sergeant First Class. And then these three platoons was run by an E-7, an E-7 and me now as a Staff Sergeant Promotable.

I get to Germany and I will never forget my First Sergeant says to me, E-7 Collins. Collins was the kind of First Sergeant that I use as an example when I got down to the Academy and I was teaching Sergeant Majors about it. He would come to the formation in the morning with a coffee cup in his hand. And a cigarette in the other hand.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I had a First Sergeant like that.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And he stands there --

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is at the PT formation.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And he

got the audacity to say, fall in. And I am sitting there like, no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you just left trail.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I just left the trail. And I can't say anything to just get it because he is my First Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And he is a Sergeant First Class.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I will never forget. I go upstairs and he says to me -- he says, this is a first, he says, I am so glad to see you Williams just coming off Drill Sergeant status. I am going to put you in charge of my PT program. So, just listen to what he just told me. This is a E-7 First Sergeant says to me, he is going to put me in charge of his program. You are the damn First Sergeant, who the hell are you to put me in charge of your program. But, oh yeah, then he says, oh yeah, you just came of Drill Sergeant status, you have been working in your MOS for about two years, so you think there is going to be any problem with you being a assigned to a Firing platoon? We have to take

an SQT test then.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I say, First Sergeant, I said, last SQT test I took, I made a 98 on it. Oh, how did you do that?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Which is a test you had to take, what, I think, every year --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- to prove that you knew --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- you are through in your MOS?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. First it was MOS test.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Skill Qualf T.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Then it went to SQTs and then they incentivize it by giving you, like a little stipend for one year if you scored a certain amount.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Money?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. And I was getting paid that for my test.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And what if you failed that test?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: If you failed, I don't think I want to say it was a career stopper, but it probably was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It would probably go in your Non-Commissioned Officer --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- Eval Report.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. So, I had -- did real good on that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you went to Germany -- or before you went, did you request to go to Germany?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did not request to go to Germany. And if you remember, Sergeant Missile, the first one that I was in, went to Korea, came back into Lance, went back to a Sergeant again. Now Sergeant was officially, officially gone. So, the only MOS then I had was Lance as the primary and now they had given me Pershing as a secondary because I was going to school with my Privates. So, now Lance is my primary. There

is only two Lance units at Fort Sill, six battalions in Germany. So, where do you think I am going? My chance were greater, so they sent me to Germany.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Because that's where your MOS was?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's where my MOS was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, so when you got to the 1-333 Field Artillery, what was the Battery or your Battalion's primary mission back then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Primary mission for us was to provide a Lance Battalion presence in that sector of Germany up in the Wiesbaden area and we did training up there and we just prepared to do our mission whenever we were called upon. Went to the field a lot. There was a lot of field training in that area. Did some training down in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was still during the Cold War, I believe so.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. It was 1981 to 83.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you mentioned earlier, you got there as Staff Sergeant

Promotable but you were put into a Platoon Sergeant or Sergeant First Class E-7 position. What led to you filling that position? Is it because were you short -- they were short of Sergeant First Class or because you were Promotable that --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: There was one this Sergeant First Class, Platoon Sergeant that was PCSing when I got there and then there was one platoon that had a Platoon Sergeant in it but he was a Staff Sergeant, he wasn't a E-7. So, me being now E-6 Promotable, the E-6 position that the guy was holding down, they made me the Platoon Sergeant on that one.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, what was the state of your platoon when you go there and what were some of the things you did to try to improve it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, when I first got there, I think all of the platoon was pretty decent, none of them was bad. We had just picked up three brand new Lieutenants that just came out of OBC. So, that was a transition with the three Lieutenants. Shortly thereafter, we got a new Battery Commander. I now was a

new Platoon Sergeant. So, in order to be proficient, there is two major -- there is like, three major things you always had to be prepared for, to train for. One was, we did a -- what Army used to call ARTEPs - a Army Training Evaluation Program. Evaluation so, every year, every unit had to be evaluated by an external source, a light units' leadership, that would come over to your organization and they will evaluate you in a field exercise to do your mission and until was not you passed that evaluation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: This was like a Battalion level?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. It was a Battery level evaluation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Every Battery went through it. We had Alpha, Bravo and Charlie, all had to go through it and we had units out of Hanau, Babenhausen, Crailsheim, you just mix it up. They will come over and take turns in evaluating us. We take turns in evaluating them. So, the ARTEP was one that you went

through every year.

The second type of evaluation that we went through every year, I can't talk too much about was our Nuclear Evaluation. We had to go through a certification program and that was a very intensive one and it had to lead all the way up into being certified.

And then the third one we went to every year was an actual, what they call an ASP an Annual Service Practice where we actually fired a missile. You can't fire missiles on Germany, you had to go only to Crete, Greece to fire. So, they were picked -- each Battery would take turn rotating to Greece and then doing evaluation over there by FAMSEG, the unit I told you about earlier. They would go TDY over to Germany and then over to Crete, Greece and they were evaluating.

So, we did a ARTEP evaluation, we did a Nuclear Evaluation for certification and we did an ASP. And every year, those three exercises you got evaluated on at the Lance Battalion. In between those you were doing maintenance of the motor pool, maintenance in motor pool, going to the field for little short three-



day exercises, maintenance in the motor pool. But these were three targets every year that you had to do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, your primary duties, responsibilities as a Platoon Sergeant. How would you, kind of --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My responsibility was to be responsible for the health and welfare, discipline and training of my entire platoon. My entire platoon consisted of a Section Chief Staff Sergeant, a Sergeant E-5, a Assistant Chief and five soldiers -- six soldiers. And now it was me and then it was my Platoon leader which was a Second Lieutenant. But I was responsible for the Staff Sergeant down and for those three major exercises I just told you, the ARTEP, the Nuclear one and ASP, that was always some type of train up that we were going through in order to get them ready to get past each one of these hurdles within that one year. So, I am the big trainer guy, you know, basic NCO stuff.

SGM WATERHOUSE: All that time probably with FAMSEG would have probably helped you, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It really did and then when FAMSEG came over to actually evaluate us, me knowing what they do because I have been on that team, I didn't get frustrated about it. It didn't bother me. I knew they were thorough, I knew they was going to -- I mean, and some of the guys that were on the team was still on the team that I remembered but they had some new faces on that. So, one day I thought they were going to give me the End of Table courtesy but they had some fake people on there I didn't know anymore but they did respect me because they knew that I had been on the team before.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, in November 1981, about eight months after you got to Germany, you were promoted to Sergeant First Class?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did your duties, responsibilities or roles change at all or increase?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My first month and a half or so I was there, the person that was the Platoon Sergeant was still in the position. He was on his way

to Crete to go through that ASP shooting. So, I was going through a shadow kind of thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They were not going to insert me because they wanted him to take the Platoon completely through the train up, go to Greece and actually go through the exercise. So, I did. I went to Greece with him, didn't have a role. I was as a shadow guy. I was looking at everything. It's a good thing I did because I got to see what all they do and then we came back to Germany after being TDY over there. Now I took over the Platoon and then for the next two years, we did the same thing, going back and forth to Greece one time a year and it was good that I did the first time because both times I took my Platoon over there the next two years, we came back with perfect score of a 100 percent.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, unlike today, while I maybe -- can't get into specifics but today, you know, we have the NAS Training Center open at 82. So, you know, a lot of MOSes or Brigades or Batteries can just

shoot in the United States and they can --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- they could be evaluated in one of those training centers. Back then though you had to actually go to a different country.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Because when you are in Germany, the closest place that they could go to shoot was that. I don't think they had a range at Hohenfels and [Grafe] that they could do that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Back then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, over there in Charlie Battery 1-333 FA, on the NCO side or in general, who did you look to for mentorship, advise, assistance, as a Platoon Sergeant and how did they help you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: One of my peers was a guy by the name of Sergeant First Class Martinez. Martinez was a Platoon Sergeant of the other Firing Platoon. He had the First Firing Platoon. I had the Second Firing Platoon. I looked up him because he had been in

Germany, this is his third tour in Germany. He had been assigned to two other sites in Germany. And now he was at Wiesbaden. Lot of experience, old time Lance guy who knew -- now in a Germany wheel and all that. Very spiritual guy, used to go to church all the time. Highly respected and he was just a laidback kind of guy personality wise. And he was very effective.

Me coming off a Drill Sergeant duty, I was a yelling and screaming kind of guy, Martinez was more laidback, smoked the pipe. So, he had that fatherly figure. And he and I used to have a lot of discussions about techniques about training and how to get past the big three that we had to do every year. You know, it's like a bathtub effect and you are training.

You go, you train up for an ARTEP and you will be evaluated by the guys out of Hanau. You do really well, you come home, clean up all your equipment and then that's really not much going on. You have got, you know, soldiers are leaving, you are doing maintenance, you know, may get a new Lieutenant. You may go to the field just to stay proficient a little

bit.

And then when now the next exercise come up is your Nuclear Evaluation. So, now you got to ramp up again to get everything ready for that. And when that's over you kind of go back down, then you got to ramp up again for your ASP. So, you find yourself in a unit that is always training up for something or you are kind of coming down from something. So, you learn that when you are coming down, you are losing people. You are not -- when you focus on your Nuclear Mission, you are not thinking about a lot of tactical stuff. It's more technical stuff. Because your Nuclear Mission is something that we can do right here in the front yard. You just put some concertina wire around your vehicle and replicate the fact that you are out in the field --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- in a controlled environment and that's what the concertina wire kind of signifies. And you stay inside and you do all these procedural things that you are supposed to do.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And they evaluate you on it.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah and they evaluate you in it. So, Martinez is my hero.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time in Germany as the Platoon Sergeant, what were some of the key lessons learnt you took with you to your following assignment?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Patience. Learning to be patient with Lieutenants. Patience that soldiers don't all learn at the same level. We are getting ready to go to an ASP; our job was to ensure that we put this missile in operation and be ready to fire within 15 minutes. You are going to be evaluated on it. You know the evaluation is coming in August and here it is now. Three months out you got two new crew members. You are trying to train them. They are not getting it as fast as you want to. They are just still making procedural mistakes. Your Lieutenant is riding your back because he thinks you should be training on Saturday. So, you had to learn patience that eventually your crew through training is going to get it. And eventually you are going to get there. And Drill Sergeants, we don't have

a whole lot of patience. So, I had to learn to be patient.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in September 1983, your tour of Germany was up and you were assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma again. This time you served with Multiple Launch Rocket System or MLRS Battery, United States Army Field Artillery Center. Did you request this assignment and if you did, why did you want to go back to Fort Sill and in particular, this particular unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, again I was a product of an Army that another system now was phasing out. I had now went through and worked in Sergeant, they phased it out. They put me in Lance. I had been in Lance. So, now I have worked as a Platoon Sergeant, on my way back from Germany. Before we left Germany, they told -- the word went around and the message around the Army that the Army is now fending to phase out the Lance units. And now they tell all of us that were Staff Sergeant and above to apply for whatever MOS that you wanted and if not, we are going to involuntarily assign



you to different ones. Then they went on to say that some of you going to get picked anyway. Some of guy we are going to put in medical fields, whatever.

So, when I left Germany, they still had these two Lance Battalions back here at Fort Sill. So, thought I was going to go to one of them. But they were just starting up the MLRS. The MLRS was just coming on the scene.

SGM WATERHOUSE: New system.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: New system. So, for me, they sent me back to Fort Sill rather than sending me to one of the Lance Battalions, they sent me to an MLRS training unit that was already formulated and their job was to train Cohort Batteries and make Batteries out of them. They were doing, grabbing a bunch of Privates out of AIT bringing them over, lining them up with a NCO team, like they did with me a long time ago, making a Cohort Battery. This MLRS training team at Fort Sill that they put me on from Germany, their mission was to train those guys how to be a Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you are basically

forming MLRS Batteries here.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly. Right here at Fort Sill. So, here I am coming in with the Lance guy, don't know nothing about MLRS and they put me in a unit that was responsible to train people to be a unit. So, I am like, how can you put me there. I don't have no institutional training. I don't have nothing. So, the Train the Trainer program that that team had -- the same thing when I was at FAMSEG. They integrated me in it, taught me everything hands on. I never actually went through any formalized training and after about six months, I was married up with another E-7 and a Staff Sergeant and a Lieutenant. And we formed a four-man team and we were doing training. That's what we did. I did that for about two years.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, was -- so, by the time you got back here and that was September 83, so they had an AIT in place for MLRS?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They did. They did. They were teaching AIT for AIT soldiers. But they hadn't started any NCO courses that teach NCOs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, they were joining to be an MLRS guy --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Straight, yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- straight out of the street but there was no NCOs with that experience.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They had NCOs that was teaching the classes. So, that was somebody who didn't know how to do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But they hadn't started up in the ANOCs and BNOCs and things like that because the MLRS had just started.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I think your title back then was Platoon Operations Trainer --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- in your first year? So, look back what was -- what would you say were your primary duties and responsibilities in that position? I know you had to kind of learn on the go but --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My responsibilities --

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- what did you do every

day, I guess, in that job?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the Battery comes over, the Privates comes over and now the Battery is a Battery right down the street in the barracks. Our job was to bring the Battery over to the motor pool and then actually inventory and sign out all of the associated equipment to them. Part of my job was to be there with First Platoon on a launcher number 1, with all the BI, all the primary tools, all everything laid out and our job was to physically hand it over to the Section Chief. Section Chief now has his equipment. Everybody got their equipment. It's now parked at the motor pool.

Our second job was now we had to put them in a classroom environment and we had to teach them tactics how to put a launcher in a hot area, how to camouflage, all these kinds of things. And we also now had to teach them on the technical side, we had table top computer looking boxes we call a replication of a fire control panel and each -- every two soldier on a desk in a classroom had one of them in there and I had one upon the blackboard and I am teaching them how to put fire

mission in and how to do fire missions on the computer.

I also had to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Almost like a bigger AIT --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It is exactly --

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- or a unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's like an individual.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Lot of the Privates who had just came out of AIT, who had just gotten their training already knew a lot of that but they didn't know a lot of things that we had a little bit more time to teach them. For instance, you can teach a guy how to correct the fault but you can't teach him how to correct 25 different faults. He came in learning that, okay, they said when there is a fire mission in a buffer, this is how you fix it. Yeah, but they didn't teach you this other technique, that if that don't work, all you got to do is go outside on the track, disconnect this cable off of the computer, reset itself, re-put it in and clear your buffer and the mission go on. Now, they didn't teach us that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's almost like restarting your computer.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Exactly. So, we were teaching them things that the institutions didn't teach them and make them smarter.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, I think we already answered this, what specialized training for this job you pretty much learned it after you got here?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: OJT.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. So, looking back at that your time in that organization, the MLRS Battery, what would you say were some of the key challenges other than learning of the system? But any other challenge you would like to highlight that you had to, kind of, deal with in this particular unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, lot of time in the field, lot of time away from family, the platoon operation training job was about a couple of weeks in the Garrison area, you know, we did drivers' training. These guys show up -- we had to teach them how to drive, the [HEMTTs], take them out to the driver's

course and actually give them license. They would be a licensed driver. The guys who were driving the [HEMTT] launchers, we had to take them to the field to a driver's course and actually give them so many hours of the driver's training to get a license because you can't have a guy -- first time you have an accident, that's soldier would need, a license on that equipment.

Then we had to take and give them FDC- Fire Direction Training in the motor pool. We are in the motor pool, we got all the tracks lined up over there, on the hard stand, and we got the FDCs sign and fire missions to each one of those tracks while me, and a guy like me is sitting inside each one of those tracks with each one of those crews watching that mission come to the computer, watching them open it up, executed, elevate the launcher, teaching them and talking them through all of this, watching them and helping them do it slow, crawl, run, walk phase in that motor pool.

Then we take them to second phase, behind

the motor pool, now in the dirt and have them do a little bit of maneuvering every time the mission comes in, then they move out of 50 yards stop, do the mission and come right back. That was a controlled environment.

Then the third phase, now we are taking them actually way the hell out there in the field, and then we would really separate them and then they would go and get the same kind of training missions to come to them. And I am in the track, my buddy is in the next track, now instead of being side by side or right behind the motor pool side by side, now you are a mile apart from each other. And we are all on the radio and we are training.

SGM WATERHOUSE: A lot of time away from home.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: A lot of time away from home. So, once they go through all of that phases in training, now the last phase, they go out on their own as a battery and now we'll come back and we take our training hat off, we put our evaluation hat on, and



we'll give them a draft - a preliminary evaluation while they go to the field and we tell them how good or bad they did.

Then the last phase is, we keep our evaluation hat on, we put them out in the field, and now we certify them and say whether or not the Army can call them a unit or not.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in this MLRS unit, training unit, who did you look up to in that unit for advice and mentorship?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: First Sergeant Peterman and Captain Snyder. Captain Snyder was not the Battery Commander. The Battery Commander was a major -- we had a specialized unit, Major [Wayt]. Captain Snyder, because he was a very knowledgeable laidback guy. He and I worked together a lot. And First Sergeant Peterman was just a very open and fair First Sergeant. I remember him because he was a hard guy, oh boy he sure used to look out for us.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in September of 1984, you moved to an Operation Sergeant

and Senior Instructor position in the MLRS battery where you served about two and a half years?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's where I worked with Captain Snyder. He and I -- they pulled me off the line and after I had been on the line, training and training and living in the field, after a while, got some new E-7s in, some new staff Sergeants in. So, some of the senior guys we can kind of move up a little bit. So, same training battery, now they have an Operations section in there and I become the Op's NCO.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now, was that a Sergeant First Class position as well?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it was. I don't remember how it was coded but I am quite sure it was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But what brought about the move was getting two different --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The Operations guy there was -- it was not like an Operations and then an S-3 and a Battalion --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was an operation inside of a Battery that kind of did the same mission. It was just wasn't as big. And our job was to ensure that we scheduled the ranges, make sure that ranges was available when they decided to go out there. Our job was to make sure that the driver's training range was available for us to go for drivers' training. We had to order all the ammunition, whenever they had to go to the field, they have the ammo, we had to make sure that they had Medevac available, Medevac knew days who is going to the field, we scheduled all the PT tests --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, this was a normal kind of rotation in that unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, you already pretty much explained what you did as an Operations Sergeant. Why did they say Senior Instructor? Was that just what they put on paper?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it was just what they put on paper, just title.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, in that job, did you get any specialized training or you just kind of learned from your NCOIC in there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No specialized training, hands-on because I had been on the receiving end of all this stuff. I had been to the drivers' range, used the ammo. I had been on the receiving end of all that stuff. Now, me and Captain Snyder and I think it was one other person in Ops in there, it was just a matter of -- we had to learn to schedule all of this stuff and all the resources that everybody else was going to be using. I was used to using it, I just didn't know how he ordered it and how he set it all up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, as the Operation Sergeant in there, any significant challenges you faced during your time in that section?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Operations was one where if we screwed it up, it affects so many people. So, you really couldn't screw it up. If you didn't get the field ordered, if you didn't get the ammo ordered,

somebody is not going to go to the field, that person's training is not going to take place. So, it is a really critical position. And Ops is one where you had to brief people. I mean we had to brief the training schedule. We had to brief it to Major Wayt which was the Battery -- the Task Commander, and we also had to accompany him when he went over to the battalion in order to lay it out if he needed our help. So, you had to know it and you got to be able to brief it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in 1985, during your tenure as an Operations Sergeant, you attended the Army's First Sergeant course at Fort Bliss, Texas.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The weird thing to happen with that was -- or maybe it was just kind of coming out I guess, if you will, when that First Sergeant course in --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it was new at the time.

CSM WILLIAMS: It was kind of new and again, when you get back to promoting, you get to thinking, I

got to do whatever I can in order to get promoted. So, I wasn't in that First Sergeant position but I was in a position of leadership within the unit and I was a Senior Sergeant First Class. My next step was to be a First Sergeant if you would have asked me -- and First Sergeant Peterman left and I know the [EAE] didn't come in, I was probably the guy that they were going to make the First Sergeant. Peterman knew that but he didn't know how long he was going to be there. So, he knew it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, did he send you or recommend that you go?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: What happened is the Battalion Sergeant Major had told all the First Sergeants that they were given in that Brigade over there five slots for the guys that go to the First Sergeant course. And that he wanted us to submit some names to him and then, then he sent to Brigade. And they were going to have some kind of competition to compete for.

When Brigade got it -- when Brigade said,

well, you got to send it to Post and the Post is going to do an evaluation. This is really weird. I don't know why now we got the Post Sergeant Major involved but it is. So, now all other brigades sent in about 15 NCOs who show up at Fort Sill Post Headquarters, when a Post Sergeant Major and whole bunch of Brigade Sergeant Majors set aboard in there, and we all going one-on-one to go in there and answer a bunch of questions to see who qualifies. Then narrow it down, then put it on a list to make one of the five slots out of Fort Sill, just bunch of stuff.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, that's right.

Remember this thing was just getting started. So anyway, I went in there, went through the little Board process, class As and all that. I mean, what I got to do is just go to school. Anyway, finished that, sent back, found out that I was one of the guys that did qualify and that's how I got to go to the First Sergeant course at USASMA.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, that course back then,

was that a course that people already in the First Sergeant positions did or was it -- or they just set up a new generation to try to get them on track?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes, and yes, because as we went through the Army -- and I will tell you another story later on -- later on, now, when I get to TRADOC, I get to be the guy that says what happens now, meaning the [SMA]. So, but now I am on the bottom down here --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and I am one of the guys going to school that don't fit the model, that now when I get up here, I say what the model is. Back here, I didn't fit that model.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it's most Master Sergeants going?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right, right, so, when they sent me to school, I get ready to go to school, in my First Sergeant's mind and in my mind, and maybe my Battalion Sergeant Major's mind, I don't know, I was going to be the next First Sergeant because I am



one of the senior E-7s in the battery. And then we had about 97. Remember, we were the training unit that trained all these guys. So, it was all NCOs and officers. And so, I was probably going to be Peterman's replacement. So, he asked the Sergeant Major of my battalion, why he sent me up there to compete for one of those slots because he knew I was going to be one of his First Sergeant. So, I really didn't violate anything because that's what he was thinking anyway. But if the [ruled] in were, don't send them in unless they were in a position or don't send them unless they were going in a position, I didn't fit either one of those because they hadn't earmarked me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you went to Bliss and you attended this course, do you remember how long it was and what did you think of the course?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't remember the length of the first few First Sergeant courses that went out but I would say probably about eight weeks, six weeks, something like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's pretty long then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. It was pretty long, it was pretty intense. I mean I really liked that course because for the first time, I am in a room with guys who were in other branches of service. I mean I am an artillery guy, this is artillery world. Everything I did was around the other artillery folks.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And now you are at Fort Bliss?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And now I am at Bliss with a bunch of guys that --

SGM WATERHOUSE: They had a fence there at the time, I think.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. And the third ACR and some other units probably.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Learnt a lot.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, who was teaching that course? Do you remember what type of folks were teaching?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: There was a Sergeant Major

teaching it. I want to say it was Sergeant Major [Soto].

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somebody that was stationed there at the Academy?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, it was one of the Academy's Sergeant Majors, yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking -- now switching gears back to MLRS -- looking back at your time there at MLRS Battery at Fort Sill, as a Platoon Ops trainer and then Operations Sergeant, what were some of the key lessons learnt that you took with you forward?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I learnt -- I am going to say that -- you couldn't tell me at that point but at that point, I was a senior E-7, I guess I learnt all the discipline kind of stuff. So, I learnt lot of patience, I learnt how to live in the field because I didn't do a field training at that time. I think I learnt a little bit out of my comfort zone, it was learning Ops. Ops was different. It wasn't online, give me a hand, dirty going to the field, you know.

Bus and track. Ops was planning and I learnt planning.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I don't think we even had computers back then, yeah?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They had computers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Typing stuff?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You had to type in. No secretary.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's back when a runner was a runner.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: A runner was a runner.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in July of 1986, you were assigned Turkey, the country Turkey where you served with the 27th United States Army Field Artillery Attachment for about a year and you were the First Sergeant there.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's amazing how things sometimes you don't want to do, end up helping you a lot. Turkey was one of the things I did not want to do. And the reason why I didn't want to do it is because of the way it actually started. I am in down

at the barracks, I am the Ops guy, and I am sitting there and the [eight] list comes out. First Sergeant calls me in, Peterman tell me, congratulations, you made the [eight] list. And I would think then like --

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is back in the MLRS unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: This is back in the MLRS unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I was so happy. When they released the list -- so, now right around that time, I am trying to figure out what I am going to do and I am trying to figure out -- now remember that I went down to the First Sergeant course, I graduate that, and I come back and I just know that I am going right down the hallway, Peterman was going to go somewhere else, and I know this stuff is going to be easy. So, I go down there and of course, he wouldn't retire. So, he says, S1 want to see you over at Brigade S1. I go to Brigade S1, this is then a ATC, the Training Brigade where they do basic training and

AIT. Go there and the F1 tells me, well, DA already got you on an assignment and we are trying to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Department of the Army?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- Department of the Army and we got you on an assignment already. I was like, how can they have me on an assignment already. I said I just got notified. She said, you know they are picking your assignment, they just need to figure out what it is. So, anyway, I am -- you know, in them days, you don't just pick up the phone and call anybody at DA. You wait until they call you and send someone over.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Brigade S1 maybe could call or not even know that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: What they did, what they tried to find out and then they finally let me know, and she said, call this lady, and she wants to talk to you about your assignment. That kind of made me curious. So, I called the lady on the phone at the Department of the Army. She said, we have you on an assignment to go to Turkey and you have to be there in

the next 50 to 60 days. I said I just made the list. I said why I got such a short notice. She said, well, we got such a short notice because the guy that was going to go was eligible also to retire. When he found out what his assignment was, he --

SGM WATERHOUSE: He retired.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, therefore, in that short of amount of time, we notified you. So, now you are on a short notice -- short stamp notice. And I didn't take that very well at all.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you said the First Sergeant at MLRS about he was going to retire and then he said he is not?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. No. Peterman down the hallway, my First Sergeant, he hadn't said he was going to retire. So, he was just still kind of --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You just thought he was going to retire.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. He was just hanging around. So, anyway, long story short, what they did with me was, they told me you are going to go and I

accepted it. So, I talked to my wife about it and it was like, oh, okay, okay.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because she couldn't go with you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: She couldn't go with me. That was the one that I can't talk a lot about on some of the things we did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But it's like a deployment.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's like a deployment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And anyway, my Brigade headquarter was in one part of Turkey and I was stationed, what I can tell you is I was stationed in the northern part of Turkey.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And it was a one-year assignment. The beauty of that assignment that I didn't want to go on was they put me in an isolated detachment. I was there and my first now Battery Detachment Commander that I ever worked with as a First Sergeant is a Major, a field grade officer and he had --



SGM WATERHOUSE: Not a Captain.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Not a Captain. He was a little bit older, much more mature, much more settled, and I learned how to be a First Sergeant by working in my first unit as a First Sergeant with a seasoned officer, not with a brand new Captain. I had one Captain up there as an XO.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, I am sure he had a couple of Batteries that come under him.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh yeah. So, he was really good and he was very patient with me because I was a young First Sergeant and we did have semi-classified mission. It was a twelve-month assignment. After six months of being there, I came home on mid-tour leave to visit my family and I went back and I finished that assignment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now were you actually -- had you been promoted to Master Sergeant before you went over?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: As soon as I got to Turkey, I was still waiting Sergeant First Class. I had my

orders in my hand, and as soon as I got there within three days of being there, you got to go through your in-processing like your head start and my Brigade Sergeant Major promoted me before he actually put me on the plane and sent me up to the detachment.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you showed up you weren't --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I sort of had already --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, there wasn't really -- did you have a transition with the outgoing person?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. The guy that was outgoing had left and they just had a one of the E-7s who was just standing in when I got up there and -- I mean, it was an easy job. It's isolated, in the middle of nowhere and a lot of snow, the weather was extreme in the winter.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you were pretty much one of the only new folk showing up.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Unit was already --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Already there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- doing what it was doing?  
Okay. Did you have to like motion as we try to improve upon when we get there, is there anything that you can talk about that you saw that, you know, you want to -- when you made your assessment and there is things that you want to improve upon?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The main thing that we had was morale issues.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We had -- and when you are in an isolated detachment in 1986 or 85, whatever it was, 86, I think it was, you have --

SGM WATERHOUSE: 86, yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- we have a huge TV problem. And not getting information in, mail issues, not getting any supplies, extreme cold weather, not much to do, no females, on and on and on.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it's an all-male unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: All male unit. No women in sight.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Maybe even the guys are

probably too being --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- away from the family.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then the Turkish community, they don't play that. They don't want Americans --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you weren't really able to go into the local community?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. So, we would give soldiers weekend passes, like once a month you could get on a hop that came into the detachment and then go over the Incirlik Air Force Base and they could spend the weekend over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, Incirlik Air Force --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Where they actually had, you know, dependents over there, spouses over there, and things was much better over there. So, you could go there and hang out over there but in detachments, it's all men.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, how did you try to approach the morale issue?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The morale -- the first thing we did on morale was -- so, in everybody's room, just a picture of regular barracks, in everybody's room there was a cable hookup just like you got in your house coming out of the wall.

SGM WATERHOUSE: For TV?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: For TV. And that cable line in every soldier's room ran all the way over to a server room and hooked into a set of about four-five, believe it or not, I am using the right word, four-five VCRs. And we had the guy who was on CQ at night, his job was, we would publish that movie schedule. And each one -- and his job was to put a VCR movie in each of these VCRs and then in your room you could hook your television to it and then you could watch whatever movie you could and that's how you did it. And that's all you got was to change in the VCR.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you couldn't get any of like, Armed Forces Network or any other thing.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Couldn't get nothing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, no live TV.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No live TV, no live radio, no nothing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you were able to get the guys TVs in the room.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. So, what happens is every week when the C-130 comes in and brought us our supplies, he would take out a case of old movies and they bring in some new movies and that's what. So, that was the morale issue. But what had fixed the morale issue with the TV was halfway through my assignment, we got some funding in and they brought in this big huge satellite dish and now they were able to get live TV.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, over there -- again I can't talk into detail but as a First Sergeant, you know, this is your, I think, first First Sergeant position, so what did you see as your main roles and responsibilities?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was learning. I was so much in the learning phase but I also felt as though I had to be like the daddy for these guys because in the middle of nowhere, you can get in trouble. I mean, lot

of fights because short tempers, no place to go, nothing to do.

We were in an extreme snow area where the snow was so high that each one of the four buildings we had, the engineers had built above ground tunnels that connected all the buildings. And all of these tunnels that would go 20-30 yards to connect to another building was completely plexi-glassed so you could still see out and then there was -- you could walk from one building to another. Other than that, you couldn't go from one building to another.

So, we played snow football, snow volleyball --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Snowed in.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Snowed in. We had skis, we used to do ice skiing. So, it was cold most of the time that we were there. Then we were issued all of the arctic gear, we had the white parkas, white boots, all of the extreme cold weather boots, you name it, we had it. So, we had all the equipment we needed. We even had, every year, all our vehicles either had sleds on

them or they had snow chains on them. So, we had all of the arctic stuff. Wrote a lot of letters.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I think you mentioned most of the challenges there but as the First Sergeant, you know, did you have any personal challenges. I know you said you had a really experienced officer but as the First Sergeant and all those NCOs and stuff on to you, anything job-related challenges that you had to overcome?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Not so much. I think four Lieutenants who knew how to speak Turk --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh really.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- one Captain and these four Lieutenants had graduated out of --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, they were handpicked to go over there.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, they were handpicked to go. So, there we had four Lieutenants, one Captain as a XO and then we had the Major. So, six officers in a closed-in environment -- you know, room over here on my right was a Detachment Commander Major Hislop's



office. Then there was my office in the middle. And then on the left was a office where all of the other officers were, the four Lieutenants and the Captain. They all had their little cubicles in there. And they had me right in the middle of all of them.

And this is a hard environment to picture but on my desk was an old TA-312 radio. You know the old TA-312, I mean, you get this thing and you roll it up and then you pick up the receiver and it's ringing down into each station. Or it's like a party line, you ring it, the guy at the PX answer, the guy in the A6 has it. And that's what we did. And oh, by the way, we had the TA-312 and you ring it up and, in an instant, the Ankara operator answers. She connects you to the Incirclik operator. Incirclik operator connects you to a civilian operator in San Francisco. She then rings my wife's house, when she was staying with her mother and then now we are connected. So, now I am talking to my wife through an Army TA-312 --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- through four operators

and you got to be careful what you say.

SGM WATERHOUSE: They can all hear what you say.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Everybody can hear what you say.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But you were able to get guys to call home. That's good.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They could call home.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, while you were over in Turkey, I think your next higher NCO in the NCO support chain was your Brigade Sergeant Major. Is that who you looked to for advice and mentorship and help while you were over in Turkey?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. The structure that we had did not have a Battalion level structure in it. It was a Brigade Headquarters and that Brigade Headquarters had about five outlined detachments. And each one of these detachments had Majors as a field-grade officer based on the level of responsibility for that mission. So, therefore you have got a Major in each detachment, they had to be working for probably

another senior field-grade which was an O-6. So, my Brigade Sergeant Major, and I apologize I don't remember his name, but he was my mentor kind of guy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, he was the guy you could call if you needed to.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Anytime of the day. He was really good.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time as a First Sergeant of the 27th United States Army Field Artillery Detachment there in Turkey, what were some of the key lessons learnt that you took with you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I learned how to again re-energize the ability to motivate people when they were in an environment where not much going on, they are in the middle of nowhere, you got to be very creative about -- we used to do all kind of games to keep the soldiers motivated. We had a bingo night, we did Christmas parties, we did Halloween costume parties. We did all of these things in the middle of nowhere and at the same time, we had x number of teams in full gear doing what

they do and then you had the other half down here in the buildings trying to relax and have fun, knowing that within the next 24 hours, they got to convert over, put the same gear on --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Switch roles.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and switch roles with these guys to do the tactical mission.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in July of 1987, you were assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma again. This time you served as the First Sergeant of Service Battery Second Battalion 37th Field Artillery Regiment, which was later re-flagged as Second Battalion 17th Field Artillery Regiment and you were there for about three plus years or so. How did this move to Fort Sill come about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Being an Artillery guy, now I am eight - E-8, which you can kind of go just about anywhere. So, they didn't bring me back to Sill necessarily because I was a Lance guy because now I am a Master Sergeant but they brought me back because I think just because of Artillery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I did not request to come back to Fort Sill. It was just open assignment, I just took what they gave me and I ended up coming back. I was assigned as a Service Battery First Sergeant. There were five Batteries in Second 37th and three of them was Cannon Artillery Batteries. One was a Headquarters Battery, one was a Service Battery. I was deliberately put in Service Battery by Sergeant Major Boone because I didn't have a Cannon background and to go in the Alpha Bravo Charlie of the three Firing Batteries he wanted the First Sergeant that had a Cannon background because those were Cannon Batteries.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Were these power-ons or --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They were power-ons.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Power-ons, okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, he felt even though I had an Artillery background, no Cannons, I would fit better inside of Service Battery. And I did. The Service Battery was a whole different mission simply because the Service Battery I believe was the hardest

Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And what was the mission of the Service Battery?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The mission of the Service Battery was we had to provide -- I was in charge of the dining facility, the mess hall. I was in charge of all of the Battalion level maintenance. We had a Captain, a BMO, a Warrant Officer, a Master Sergeant, and a whole Battalion maintenance team. We were responsible for Battalion ammo. Each one of those Firing Batteries had some ammo trucks assigned to them. The bulk of their ammo was pushed to them by my Ammo Platoon, call Battalion Ammo. And the last part about that Service Battery was assigned all of Battalion S4. So, the Major inside of S4, the Warrant Officer, all of the good folks, all of S4 was assigned to Service Battery. So, Service Battery had the maintenance, the ammo, the S4, and the mess hall.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, that was a HHB or Headquarters Headquarters' Battery, had the rest of the

--

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Then they had an HHB on top of that. And the only thing HHB had Battalion [Cormo], Battalion Survey, they had all of the Battalion staff, S1, 2 and 3. They didn't have the 4. And they had the Sergeant Major and the Battalion Commander. So, HHB had all of the staff stuff, with the exception of S4. I had everything else.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, did you get to do a left seat, right seat, or transition with the previous Service Battery First Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did not. I think he was there a couple of days and gone. Everything I learned in that Battery, I learned by just doing it or Boone, kind of, did some mentorship with me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And he was the Battalion Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He was the Battalion Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you got there and you made your assessment, what do you think the state of the Battery was when you got there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the state of the Battery was good. I think we always did maintenance, it's like all we ever did was fixing them trucks and stuff because trucks is our lifeline. I mean, we have like five deuce and a half vehicles and all they did was haul the mess hall. When you got a Battalion mess hall, you need a whole bunch of trucks to haul all that stuff to the field. So, we had like five or six deuce and a half just for the dining facility. Then I had about ten HEMTTs and all they did was haul ammo for the Battalion. Then Battalion maintenance had two wreckers and a whole bunch of vehicles in Battalion maintenance and when S4 went to the field they had to take care of all of the logistics and we had all of them. I had all of the POL guys, two big old HEMTT fuel tankers, and a five-ton fuel tanker. All of these vehicles in Service Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And so, this Battalion that you supported as that First Sergeant in that Company or Battery, that was a regular like Force Command Deployable Field Artillery Battery, right? It wasn't a training unit?



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was a straight up MTO Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, as far as initiatives you took or actions you took when you first took over with your Commander, is there anything you had to key in on that you thought to make things better or was it going pretty well when you got there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Hard thing about a Service Battery or a Headquarters Battery is trying to get them people out of staff agencies to get them to do something because they are also on by so many other people, which is some case is a senior to you and your Commander. In my case that was exactly the case. I got a brand new young Captain as a Battery Commander. Guess who he has in his Battery? He has a Major in S4 that's senior to him. He got a Captain down in Battalion Maintenance as a BMO who is equal to him. Actually, he was senior to him in date or rank. So, he is down there. Ammo, we have Lieutenant, so that wasn't no bad deal and we had a E-7. Over in the down facility, we had a Warrant Officer and we had a E-7 -- E-8 over there, so it really

wasn't a big deal.

Trying to get those guys to come to PT in the morning, trying to get them to go in and do a height and weight at the end of the month and for us to try to get them all come down there and for me to weigh them in and all of that was like pulling teeth. I mean, it was so bad there that, you know, we got a Warrant Officer in the motor pool calling up the Battery Commander -- I am sorry BMO calling up the Battery Commander, says Captain [Rose], my guys won't be down there for formation in the morning because we got to do some services.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And he is the Battalion Maintenance Officer?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He is a BMO and the BMO obviously, kind of, feels like he works for the S4 and he don't work for the Captain. So, the Captain and I --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Works for Battalion.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, yeah. So, the Captain and I, we are just the figure head guys at the Battery but every time we get ready to do a cyclic training briefings and we end there with the Brigade

Commander and we are throwing these slides up there and we are saying how ugly our PT scores look and how our BRM scores looks and all of that kind of stuff, everybody go turn --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Whiteboard scores.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. They are going to turn to the Battery Commander and the First Sergeant says, what are you all doing down there. Well, the issue is we are doing our job, everybody won't let these guys go. So, my challenge then was for several times that I put my foot down and would not let the soldiers leave the formation to go back to work because the leaders down there was playing hard ball with me. So, when I got the soldiers coming there to go to PT, I got them to come up over there for the morning formation, you know, it was so bad that one time that here it is Battalion Maintenance is over here in that spot. So, I got all the formation, everybody lined up fall in, and I got two people standing there. So, I said --

SGM WATERHOUSE: And how are your --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- so, why is everybody else there. Well, Chief told us that, you know, I am going to come and get all the information and he and I go back down there and let me know they are still doing services. But Chief ain't call the Captain and told him nothing that he ain't down there in the motor pool. He ain't call me and negotiated because he know what we are going to say.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No, no, no. They are coming to the formation. So, that's the kind of challenges we had there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, was there anybody on the Battalion staff -- and this is, kind of, getting into another question, but is there anybody on Battalion staff, you know, whether it is the Battalion Sergeant Major or XO, anybody that you looked to for help in your job as the First Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the answer is yes and the answer is the Battalion Sergeant Major, Sergeant Major Boone. But again, anybody over the First Sergeant

know that the first thing you do is you fight your battles yourself first before you go dragging somebody else. Because one, you don't want your Sergeant Major to say, can't you handle this on your own. You don't want to say or you don't want him to imply it and he is busy doing other stuff. So, you wait till the last minute to do that with him. So, you use every tool in your arsenal to get this done without having to take it to him.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I did take it to him a few times. He did put his foot down and helped me out. But I don't want to go to the well every time --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- unless I have a problem.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it becomes -- it's --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It becomes now his problem

--

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- to solve.

SGM WATERHOUSE: What do you I need you for

First Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, we have already touched on this but any specific guidance that you received, regular guidance from your Battalion Sergeant Major or Brigade Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I tell the story that Boone, Sergeant Major Boone, my Battalion Sergeant Major, told me a long time ago. We get there. I was in the First Sergeant position.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Is this is Boone as in --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Boone, B-O --

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- cannon goes boom?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. No. B-O-O-N-E.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh. Boone.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Like Danny Boone. So, we were in a -- and stick with me there, we were in a First Sergeant meeting and Sergeant Major Boone says something that puzzles all of us and then he explained and it made sense. He said -- when he first got there he says -- I had just got there. Me and First Sergeant Rodriguez

came in just after me. I mean, we had a meeting one time and Boone says, I am going to tell you right now and all the First Sergeants are there. He said, I am going to tell you right now, I am going to treat every one of you all different. And everybody was like, okay. How is that going to be? We think that you ought to be -- his analogy, none of you are the same. And we are just trying to think, how is it that -- how did you as a Battalion Sergeant Major going to be treating all five of your First Sergeants differently and expect us to come together as a team and all.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It didn't make a lot of sense. He is like, well, let me tell you why I am going to treat to different. It's because I am going to ask Williams over there one day that do something for me, I am going to tell myself, I want you to give me all your NCOERs in. I want everybody in by next Thursday because we know we always get them in late. I want you to get all NCOERs in by next Thursday. He said -- and then we were the ones who were going to react to that.

He said, I am going tell Jones over here, First Sergeant Jones, your motor pool, kind of, screwed up. You need to get that motor pool fixed. And I am going tell First Sergeant David over here, hey look, come over and let me know when your Battery is going to the field and what kind of training plan you have got. He is going to give all of you all some instructions throughout the day or tomorrow, at different times while we are all working together.

He says, and every one of you is going to react to my instructions differently. He says, I am going to tell Williams that I need to go out and get them damn NCOERs done and Williams is going to go down there and he is going to drag his feet and he ain't going to do like I told him. He is just going to be, kind of, messing around and next thing you know, two NCOERs are going to be late.

I am going tell Jones over there, go and get that motor pool straight, First Sergeant Jones. And Jones is going to go down there and he is going to get that motor pool straight just like I told him on the



timeline I told him. And I am going to tell this guy here to do something and he is going to do it just like I told him. This guy, he ain't going to do it.

He said, I am going to react how you guys react to my instructions. So, that's why I am trying to tell you, I am going to treat you differently because when Williams going over here, he is going to tell me and that he blew on them NCOERS, I am going to chew his butt and I am going to treat him bad and I will do this and I will do that. When this guy comes here and tells me he is getting everything on time, I am going to pat him on the back and praise him and tell him what a good guy he was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the lesson that my Battalion Sergeant Major was trying to teach us is I cannot run an organization with First Sergeants in lieu of offering throwing out shotgun blast. If I bring all of you in and only one First Sergeant got a screwed-up motor pool and I bring all of you all in and get on hearing about it about how screwed up the motor pool is,

I am really only talking to one guy. I shouldn't do that. If I bring all of you all in and as man I sure lower them PT scores, but I know Bravo Battery's PT score is all jacked up, why is he in the room getting praise from me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, he said, I don't recall for shotgun blast, be it good or bad, he says, that's why I am trying to tell you, I am going to treat all of you all differently. And he said, that's how it is. And he said, if all of you all had to be coming in, you all did everything you are supposed to do, like you are supposed to do it, I am going to tell everybody they did it that way. So, what he was teaching us is that you need to teach me how to react to you.

When I was a -- when I came back and I was a Sergeant Major, I will never forget, one of my First Sergeant's always wanted to be close to me. Like he always wanted to suck up to me, kind of thing. That, kind of, made me feel uncomfortable. And it also made me feel uncomfortable because I knew the other guy was

watching what he was doing. And they felt that I was providing favoritism.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Because he was always there. Which means that he would put me in a position where the other guy always thought I was alienating them. So, you don't want that. You don't want to crush the guy because he is doing it. But at the same time, you don't want him to do it and you sure don't want him to do it in front of somebody else because then that's not really not good for leadership. So, Boone's technique was not that he wanted to be the guy in the corner by himself and didn't want his First Sergeants close to him but he wanted us to understand that I am going to treat you differently but I am going to treat you fair.

SGM WATERHOUSE: How often did he give you guys guidance like that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Boone was always --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You had like weekly --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- teaching us something.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- meetings or he just, kind of, made his way around?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Well, we had meetings probably every week and normally our meeting with Boone was after the training meeting. Battalion training meeting was always --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Every couple of weeks?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, so after that. And he is always on the floor teaching us something.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in that particular -- your time there as a First Sergeant, any particular challenges in Service Battery that you haven't already talked about that you would like to highlight? And how you overcame those challenges?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't think -- Service Battery was just tough. I mean, with all of the different agencies working for it, did rotation to NTC twice. That was challenging. Railing equipment, going through the box, mess hall all over the place trying to mind my chow, carry it out to soldiers in the middle of an OP4 environment, tough. So, that was a challenge. I

wanted to be in the Firing Battery but had a missile rocket background, Boone didn't put me there. I think he later on learned that the way I handled Service Battery, I could have come over to one of the Firing Battery and learned cannons. I mean, you don't go to all I had been through in the Army at that point and not be able to learn enough about cannons to pick out a safety violation if you had seen it.

First Sergeant in the Cannon Battery is not in a gun. First Sergeant in the Cannon Battery is not laying the guns.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I would say he is not even on the --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He is not even on the gun. I mean, I think the value of being a 13 Bravo First Sergeant in a Cannon Battery is if you are walking past a gun or happen to be at a section going through some missions and you see something unsafe, you can stop it because you --

SGM WATERHOUSE: The team Sergeant may not even notice.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, yeah. That he didn't notice. Put a missile guy in there, I may walk right by and not see it. But you can train me on that. You can train me on that. So, this ain't like, you had to take me to school and send me to eight weeks of AIT and then back to an ANOC to get me all trained up on it. My Chief of Firing Battery can train me on that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in looking back at your time as a First Sergeant in Service Battery there in 237 later 217 Field Artillery, what were some of your key lessons learnt or takeaways from that assignment?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Learn as much as you can. I had a good trainer. Boone was a good trainer. I had a good Captain, Captain Rose, Captain Stanley, those two Battery Commanders I had that was there. My soldiers reacted to me in a positive way. I was ruthless on them about weight control, I was ruthless on them about PT tests. I think that people didn't expect, these like Service Battery and Headquarters Battery like ash and trash. They didn't really think that you could be

together.

SGM WATERHOUSE: The line units.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They thought the line units was the cream of the crop. Headquarters and Service Battery because you are all over the place. No one had the vision that we would be together. So, I brought them together and we won a lot of flag football and basketball, interim sports kind of thing which, kind of, brought the Battery closer. And, kind of, gave us some respect along with the Line Batteries who used to dominate that kind of stuff.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And how was your relationship with those Line Battery First Sergeants?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My relationship with them was really good. First Sergeant [Echo], First Sergeant Rodriguez, there was a Cormo Master Sergeant was a HHB First Sergeant -- I don't remember -- yeah, Williams had other Firing Battery. I got along with them really well. I was the one that -- I was a junior guy of all those guys by date or rank.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in

January of 1990, you attended the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. When did you receive word that you had been selected to attend there and did you have any concerns going in?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: A lot of concerns. I remember when I learnt about -- this is where -- this is another turning point in my life where you are going to hear how my life changed. And I am going to key some key people as we go through here.

So, high school education. Didn't do good in school. Didn't even like going to school. Never was a good writer. Hated math. Probably would have failed school if it hadn't been for my mumma because she was always beating us up. Not that I was a bad student. I just was -- wanted to hang out and play. I looked at school being a little bit different.

When I got selected to go to the Academy, I was just ecstatic. First of all, simply because they recognized me. I mean, c'mon now. They actually recognized that he likes this. I had done something good enough to get selected to go to Sergeant Majors



Academy and then I started to try and learn as much as I could about it. And then the first two things that hit me was speed reading and passing entry tests and ask ASVAB scores and all of a sudden now, I entered into another world of thinking and I started hearing all these stories. Ain't nothing to worry about the PT, ain't nothing to worry about hiding weight, I got it. So, he said, whenever you going to go to education centers, you got to get speed reading, you got to do all this stuff and you got to get stuff ready.

SGM WATERHOUSE: This is what the Academy said or peers of yours that you had talked to?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: This was a requirement to go to the Academy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, went in and scheduled that, took that, didn't do good at all. Actually, borderline failed the damn thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Speed reading course?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Speed reading course and comprehension. You take a little test almost like an

SAT test. So, anyway. Didn't do good but I think I did good enough to get in. So, that was my main concern. I was still assigned to Service Battery and then at the end of 1989, I went down to the Sergeant Major Academy and I got down there early because I put my house on the market, I sold my house. I ended up getting down there early.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was student number 10 in the Sergeant Majors class that I was in. It had 500 and something students. Show you how early I got down there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 10th person to sign in?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: 10th person to sign in and I forgot who was the Sergeant Major down there but First Sergeant [Field Kennedy] -- [Kinnery], Kinnery, who ended up later on coming back as a Sergeant Major down there, was my Company First Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And we will about the Academy later on, but, so you graduated from the Academy I think in July of 90, that sounds right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you were assigned back here to Fort Sill.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I have asked this question much times but -- because apparently you always come out of Fort Sill. So, this time, what was the reason to come up at Fort Sill?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You know, it bothers my mind because I don't know because you know as I told you I sold my house.

SGM WATERHOUSE: When you have done that you know you --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, if you see how long I had been there, I came back from Turkey in 86, so I am thinking, man I have been to Turkey, I have been to Korea two times --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Germany.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- Germany, I just know I am going somewhere after the Academy. So, my wife and I prepared, we sold the house --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somewhere new, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- we just knew we were going.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somewhere different.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, when we got my assignment and I ended up back here, I came back here and then they assigned me to an AIT Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you found out while you were in school where you were going?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, and then this time you came here, you were stationed for about two and a half years or so.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And you served in four different units. And I will kind of hit those as we go. So, you arrived here, I think you served first as a First Sergeant with Delta Battery?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 3rd Battalion in 22nd Field Artillery Regiment but that was only for a couple of

months and then you moved to Delta Battery 2nd Battalion 80th Field Artillery Regiment where you served for about a year.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Re-flagged.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, so it was just a re-flag.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Re-flag, same unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, you went there first to a First Sergeant position after the Academy, so that kind of answers my next question, why were you there for only two months. So, it wasn't a really move it was just, we are re-flagging the unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Re-flagging the unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, we just renamed. Okay. So, coming out of the Academy, you went into another First Sergeant job Delta Battery became Delta Battery 2nd Battalion 80th Field Artillery Regiment. So, when you got here, was the previous First Sergeant still here? Did you have any kind of transition with him?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think he was still there. Had a little bit of transition. Guys move so fast. So,

now I am in an AIT Battery.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And what were they -- what was their focus?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They were signal soldiers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Signal soldiers?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Fort Sill was training a lot of signal soldiers over here. We had 400 to 500 Privates at one time and 12 Drill Sergeants, 2 big huge four-five storey buildings, the male-females whole bunch of Privates, and our job was the housing and marching the class the every day. Six weeks of class, they graduated all the time on cycles and they were out of here.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, if they were signal soldiers, why were they called Field Artillery Battery?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the Field Artillery Battery was just to shell of us who housed them and trained them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The MOS of the soldiers that we were housing and training, the Army's then -- I am not a signal guy, so I don't know how Fort Gordon, Georgia is -- is now or was lining up but I think the volume of guys that they were pushing through the signal MOSes at the time, Fort Sill was the place where they did all the training at.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't know why they weren't being trained at Gordon versus here. But they were being trained here at Sill and that's what we did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, how comfortable or uncomfortable were you with that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was an easy job but the weird part about it is, you know how they are. I went from being a Drill Sergeant as a Staff Sergeant and this job here was -- there are some jobs that fit me, that was really easy and it me fit me like a glove. And this was one of them jobs. It really really fit me like a glove because now I felt as though I was a subject matter expert. Of all things, now I am a First Sergeant

in the battery where now I have Drill Sergeants, now I am the First Sergeant.

Remember Williams the guy who cursed at all those Privates out there, almost got relieved. Remember Williams the guy who was Drill Sergeant of the same old Williams that blew to Drill Sergeant school and that guy. Now I am the First Sergeant. So, now what I do, as soon as get over to my Battery and I haven't been there very long. I found that one of my guy is about to get relieved.

SGM WATERHOUSE: One of the Drill Sergeants.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Because he had done something crazy. So, I am under the mindset that I can save and salvage everybody. So, that was my -- one of my claim to fame. I am going to make sure that none of my guys get relieved. I am going to keep them all out of trouble. I know what Drill Sergeants do. I have been one of them. I know I can keep out of trouble and I got this. And that's what I went into it as I went into it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when you got there, did



you receive any guidance or what guidance did you receive from your Battalion Sergeant Major then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant Major Camille was my Battalion Sergeant Major and he didn't do any more than any standard guy do. Bring it down, talk to you, kind of remind you where you are. He see a [petra] in my pocket. He knew I just graduated from the Academy, he knew I ain't no rookie. Ain't no rookie nowhere in not form right now. Hell, I could do his job at that time. So, he just had to remind me of keeping those guys out of trouble, you know, when he asked me to do something administratively, make the timelines, the suspenses, you know, be a good steward, you know, keep yourself out of trouble. So, he gave you the basic kind of stuff.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, what was his role to you, kind of -- I mean what's --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: His role to us more was a, you know, as every Battalion Sergeant Major regardless of what you are, he is my mentor, he is the guy I got to if I got a problem that I can't solve, he is the guy I

talk to especially if I am having some problem with that Captain down there. He is the guy I need resources from. We need more money so we can buy more stuff. He is the guy that I talk to if they are trying to give a field-grade Article 15 in one of my drills or one of my Privates and I think it's in excess. I run down and talk to him. And sometimes he just comes around as a thermometer and just talk to you and just kind of see where you are headed.

When I grew up, I needed my Sergeant Major to be around just to be there in case I need him. I don't always need him to give me instructions.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, as a First Sergeant, was he, kind of, like your primary mentor advisor or was there somebody else who you relied on to help you as a First Sergeant when you needed it?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: There were other First Sergeants in the Battalion I used to hang out with and we used to kind of get advice from each other. First Sergeant [Warren] was over there and in one of the Battery's, he and I used to be on Drill Sergeant status.

So, now he had one of the Batteries that we could talk. I had other friends in the Brigade but not in the Battalion that I used to confide in. As a matter of fact, the guy that I was telling you that I joined the Army with, went to basic training with and the joined the draft, by that time he also was a First Sergeant. He was here overseeing the 5th Brigade and he and I used to talk a lot.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, you said it was a fairly easy assignment for you because it fit, you know, your background. Was there any kind of challenge that you can remember that you did have to, kind of, jump on, you know, when you got here and assessed the unit?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Too many -- I was alarmed by the number of non-judicial punishments that we did on a regular basis. Now keep in mind, we had 500 Privates. That's a lot of Privates. So, you got 500 Privates and these big buildings and out of 500 Privates, I bet you about 95 of them were women. So, where are all the Article 15s coming from? Missing curfew.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Were these trainees or --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: All trainees.

SGM WATERHOUSE: All trainees.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, when you are in AIT, they will give them weekend passes. Remember they are in AIT. They ain't like basic training. So, we were giving Article 15s because Sunday afternoon as the rule says everybody got to be standing in formation at 1630. 1700 they are still rolling up in taxis. Article 15s, you get out --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Straight Article 15?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No, no, no. Not because of that but I am saying those are offences that make it to a counseling statement the first time and an Article 15 later --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- I am just saying. That's the example of some of the Article 15s being given out.

SGM WATERHOUSE: For that --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: For stuff like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- repeat offenders or something.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. And we were giving Article 15 for these things like every time you go on the floor, you find four-five guys sleeping on duty, fire guard. Remember now you are in the building. Then you got women in this wing and you got guys on what -- going inside the women barracks. You can get Article 15 for that.

Then you got your standard old fighting. There is always fights going on. You have 500 Privates, either fighting over a girl or fighting over something or whatever. Every now and then, not very often, we will end up running the dogs through and you will end up hitting them somebody had a marijuana cigarette in somebody's locker and last but not least, you still get your few cases of disrespect to the Drill Sergeant.

When you got 500 Privates, we were averaging 15 to 20 Article 15s a month. So, when I got over there that was kind of alarming to me. So, my job was to -- we had this big old platform, kind of reminded you of

patting on a stage. I was on fire escape and I was down on the fire escape with all these Privates out there, all the Drill Sergeants lined up in the middle and the best way to get people solve your problem like you got Article 15, is first tell them about the problem. Make them have ownership in it. Make them know that you ain't crying to them or pleading to them to slow the Article 15s down because your unit is looking bad to the Battalion. That's not it. That ain't their problem. You tell them how they are ruining their lives and their careers over petty stuff that's going to affect the rest of their lives and they don't really know what they are doing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: If they don't get kicked out.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: If they don't get kicked out. So, you tell them things like that. You tell them --

SGM WATERHOUSE: You can still get failure to -- whatever it was back then. They can chop them out of AIT, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, and you tell them that -- and you say things to them like, how do you explain this to your parents when you go home and they say you are being kicked out of the Army because you were 15 minutes late in getting out of a cab from being downtown. You just got to plan it better.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you just got to adapt.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. So anyway, Article 15 was a challenge.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, they even live there seven days week --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Seven days a week,

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- but they had weekends to go --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: A weekend pass.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- off the Post.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Off the Post. Not out of the city.

SGM WATERHOUSE: But they could outside in the town.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. They didn't have

weekday passes because in the evening when they came back from school and we marched them up to the dining facility and the friends are having dinner, they will come back and we used to give them one hour of what we call admin time. Do whatever you want to do.

After that, we would break them down into different groups based on who was about to graduate and had a test going on. And we had classrooms in the basement of the building and we were bringing different groups down there and we do what we call reinforcement training. We know class 6-91 is going to be graduating in two weeks and most of those guys always fail their hands-on radio test, we had radios down there on tables and we have Drill Sergeants down there walking them through it. That's what we did during the week.

Friday evening, I am going to tell you man, it's like you opened up the floodgates. So, Friday evening they come back we just let them go into Sunday and they had to be back, unless you had duty.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, were the Drill Sergeants always at the barracks 24 hours a day? Was there always



somebody there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We had two Drill Sergeants there all the time, 24 hours a day.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Even on the weekend.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Even on a weekend. And because the number of Privates we had, we had to have two Drill Sergeants. Now every floor had a CQ/5 Guard but if the Drill Sergeant down on the main --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Are those Privates?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They are always Privates.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But if you can't have a Drill Sergeant as a staff duty down on the first floor and right there at the First Sergeant office. Once he leaves there, he got two Privates down there answering the phone. But once he leaves there, you don't know -- we had a radio. We had a little radio thing. But hell, he is up on the third floor of building number 4 and somebody is fighting over here and something going on over there, so we know we needed two Drill Sergeants.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at your time as the First Sergeant of Delta Battery 322 and actually which became 280 or 280 DFA, what were some of your lessons learnt you took on before you switched to Alpha Battery?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: There wasn't much for my Battery Commander so he hung around the golf course. I guess when you got a unit where a First Sergeant that has been a Drill Sergeant before, a real good strong training NCO like we had and then all those Drill Sergeants, you to a good stable group of NCOs.

During the day time from like 8 o'clock in the morning to 4 o'clock in the evening, all of your AIT Privates was in AIT in a classroom. That entire building of Burleson Hall was filled with all of just our Privates out of Delta Battery. All 500 Privates was up there.

What did the Drill Sergeant do during the day time? They walked the halls of Burleson Hall making sure that they are available when instructors need some extra help or whatever. Or they all come down to the

Battery instead of updating the counseling statements, inspecting rooms and doing all the Drill Sergeant kind of stuff.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Lot of administrative stuff.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. All administrative stuff. What's the trained NCO doing? Doing training NCO stuff. He is making sure that he got -- they had to go PT test while they were at the AIT, they had to do BRM familiarization, not qualification, so we had to take them to the range. He is doing all the training records, getting them prepared, so when they graduate, they can leave.

What does the First Sergeant doing like me? I am going review them Article 15s, make sure trained NCO is doing what he is doing, make sure Drill Sergeants doing what he is doing, going and meeting with the Sergeant Major. I am doing all this First Sergeant stuff. What's the Battery Commander doing? Nothing. So, what he would do, he was hanging out the golf course, doing things like that because really there is nothing for him to do. I ain't trying to belittle him

but --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- really there is nothing much for him to do. So --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, what did you learn from that then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- what I learned from that -- I will never forget a short story that happened to me one time was I was down there one time, we get an unannounced inspection from Colonel [Brentley] was my Battalion Commander.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Battalion Commander.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Battalion Commander and he just did a walk-in. We were there and Sergeant [Holmes], my training NCO, we all said, hey, Battery attention. Called attention. I was like who the hell is calling attention for. I stepped outside the door and here comes the Battalion Commander and Battalion Sergeant Major coming in. And they are coming in to do unannounced inspection. So, he picks out of my big three buildings, he walked through the floors of two of

the different buildings. He looked through the Headquarters area and he gave in a compliment and said how well the facilities looked and he left. Battery Commander wasn't there. I think quite in a way was I think I knew he was on the golf course. And he kind of was. So, anyway. Colonel comes out, we get a good report, blah, blah, blah, thank you.

And the next day, if not the same day, they had the training meeting, our staff call. And the Battalion Commander gave him a compliment and said that he had been down there in his Battery and told him how good everything looked. So, he got a little pat on the back and Captain [Mihey] was there. He was really happy about it. So Mihey comes -- this is weird. He comes back down to the Battery and he finds me and caught him chewing me out because I didn't tell them that the Colonel had been in the area.

So, I am sitting there thinking, I said, well sir, how did you know he had been in the area. He said, well, I just left staff call and he was telling us that he had been to the area. I said, what else did he tell

you. He says, he was telling me that the Batteries look really good and all of that. I said, so let me get this straight now. So, you left the golf course and went straight to a meeting. You didn't come here to see by the Battery. You went straight to staff call. Which means now that the Colonel is going to see you before I see you. I said, so the reason I didn't tell you that the Colonel -- so I told myself, the reason why I wasn't able to tell you that the Colonel came into the area, I said, because when you left the golf course, you didn't come by the Battery to see me, you went straight to the meeting.

SGM WATERHOUSE: It's not like you had cellphones back then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. Not like we had cellphones. So, that's why you didn't find out about it. I said, oh, by the way, you are kind of chewing me about this and he gave you a compliment. He didn't chew you out though we was jacked up. He gave you a compliment. But anyway.

My lesson learnt in that Battery was, I mean,

my goal was to reduce that Article 15 number. I thought we was giving out too many. I thought that we could give counseling statements instead. Non-judicial punishment is non-judicial but if it goes into your records, it could affect a lot of those guys. So, I think we could -- my lesson out of that was, find a different way to punish the soldier without putting something permanently in his file. You can't -- you can protect Drill Sergeants all you want, you can't save all of them. They are going to get in trouble and you just can't do anything about that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now what about this -- in the story you said about your Commander, what did you learn from your -- he is supposed to be your battle buddy there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the thing I learned with him is, I wish he had came by the Battery before he went to seeing the Battalion and I could have gave them that good news. I wish I could have done that but I learned then that, I mean, these guys rely on us a lot, Battery Commanders do. We have been taking care of them

about tradition for a long time in doing things and I wish he would just continue to trust us that we are going to do that whether he is there or not.

I mean, I didn't care was he on the golf course, hell. I know I couldn't be on the golf course because my job wouldn't allow me to do that. His job did allow him to be there and I didn't have a problem with it. Hell, with him being on the golf course, he kind of was out of my way. I mean, I didn't have a problem with that. If I needed him I knew where I could reach out for him. He never was out of pocket in such a way that I could not reach out and get him when I needed him.

But I think that was just one of those days that he wished he could have went into the meeting with his chest stuck out and knowing what had happened. Instead he got blindsided with something good and his reaction probably led him now to have to explain why he wasn't there. That's what made him feel uncomfortable.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I was just thinking as an outsider looking in, how does the Battalion Commander



feel about him not being there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. So, but, you know, it was in the middle of the day. The Colonel probably thought he was probably doing something constructive. And I didn't tell him otherwise. I just said, sorry he is not here right now. I didn't say where he was, you know.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in September of 91 or 1991, you were assigned to Alpha Battery 280 FA, so same Battalion but now a different Battery --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- where you served as an Assistant Adjutant for about six months. What led to this?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That was a placeholder.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The beauty of it is --

SGM WATERHOUSE: S1 shop, I guess.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. S1. So, coming out of Academy now been a First Sergeant in three different

places. First in a detachment, then in 2nd to 17th in a Service Battery. Went to the Academy, graduated, came back. Third job as a First Sergeant now in an AIT Battery. Year and a half gone by, bingo. I popped on the nine list.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, selection for Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They pulled me out because I got selected for E-9. I had a sequence number. They put another guy in behind me and the Alpha Battery and a basic training AIT Battalion that Alpha Batteries are also their Headquarters Batteries.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it's like a Headquarters --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's like a Headquarters.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- unit. Okay. So, did you have any kind of duties responsibilities you had to do in there or was it just get ready for --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did. So, in Battalion Headquarters we got a Battalion Commander, a Battalion Sergeant Major and then you -- the staff members are

enlisted. So, the S1 inside of a Battalion -- they didn't have one. So, they made me the S1 as a Master Sergeant.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, they pulled me out of the Battery, took my diamond off, put on Master Sergeant, put me there as placeholder waiting on my sequence number to come up and I was the Assistant Adjutant because they didn't really have an Adjutant and I would have been --

SGM WATERHOUSE: It would have been an office position.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah. Yeah. An officer position. I was coded there, that's all.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Anything you want to talk about that before we move on? Anything --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I learned a lot about PAC operations.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And probably helped you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, they did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Probably would have helped

as a -- prior to the First Sergeant time.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Something you got out of sequence.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And that was one I got out of sequence. You know, I mean, I saying, you learn -- remember that, as you said earlier, we still had typewriters in. That's when we were still making corrections on stuff and sending it back for days and days. So, I learnt a lot about administration especially when it come down to -- we were doing what we call SIDPERS in those days. Remember those SIDPERS days?

SGM WATERHOUSE: You learn about personnel management.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Personnel management.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. So, Sergeant Major, in February of 1992, you were promoted to Command Sergeant Major E-9 and selected to serve as Command Sergeant Major of 5th Battalion 17th Field Artillery Regiment at Fort Sill?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Where you served for about a year. So, this is back before the Command Select list -  
-

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- stuff that we have today. But how were you chosen and notified that you would be the next 517 CSM?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: In those days you could be and I was selected for both CSM and Sergeant Major at the same time.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Remember I was already an Academy graduate, it's just a matter of pinning me. So, I sat down there as S1 for about eight months until the number popped and a Battalion came open. 517 was not physically on Fort Sill. It was a re-flagged Battalion that came out of Germany when they were downsizing Germany. They brought that Battalion to Fort Sill, opened up the barracks, put a flag out in front of it, brought in another unit out of -- no, I am sorry. Then

they actually brought the unit itself out of Germany into Fort Sill. The whole unit. Battalion Commander and everybody. Flew them all into Fort Sill, brought them all in. All the equipment, railed everything in. I am already here.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The guy who was the Sergeant Major retired, and when they got here, they just married me and inserted me into the unit.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Do you know how that came? Was that HRC's decision or --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That was a -- I don't know if that was an Army decision to move them here and that was going on. When I was down there as a First Sergeant, that decision had been made years before and they were already moving.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, who actually notified that you were going to get that job?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was notified, I think, by the Post Sergeant Major here locally.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, you said the

previous Sergeant Major in that unit coming from Germany had retired. Was he actually with them when they came here?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, you came in and you were --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They just inserted me in the job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, that unit 517 FA when it stood up here, what would say their primary mission was?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was an 8-inch Field Artillery Battalion, 8-inch was our long-range shooter and 8-inch was phasing out of the Army inventory.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And was this a self-propelled artillery piece?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: 8-inch was being phased out. Lot of old equipment. I worked for a Battalion Commander by the name of Colonel [Ray Kenton]. I only worked with Ray Kenton for four months because he was --

once he brought the Battalion to Sill, he immediately retired.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I worked for him for about four months. Then we got Colonel [DiGiorgio] came in and I worked for him the remaining eight months of the twelve months I was in the Battalion.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, looking back at the time, so, the Battalion is coming from Germany which is always going to be fun trying to move an entire unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, when they got here, what -- one, how long did it take you to assess what you had and --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That was tough. It was tough because I didn't know nobody. And no one knew me. And it's a fresh start. If you really think about it, if someone inserted you into something and you don't know them and they don't know you, you can change your image if you needed to. If you were a guy that was too



hard or too easy or whatever, you could -- it's a time you can reinvent yourself because nobody really knows you. I am sure they were assessing action-coursing about me like I was action-coursing about Colonel Kenton. I was more worried about him.

So, I think the challenge there was, for that entire year I was there with them, they were still doing a whole lot of integration. They were still trying to integrate into the Battery. They were still trying to get people in the government quarters with families getting in. They were trying to get into the system here. They was trying to get soldiers plugged into NCO classes and [PLDC] and all these kind of things. They were trying to bring all their equipment up to 10-20 status. I lot of the howitzers that came in on rail here, over time had a lot of rust on the breaches. So, we had a lot of maintenance in the motor pool. So, we did a lot of that. And once they got all that done, they started sending them to the field to try to do some kind of certification because some of the people that came in from Germany, some people didn't come. They

stayed over there.

SGM WATERHOUSE: I was going to ask you how much turnover did you have --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- when they got here. Did a lot of people get out?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Lot of them did and some of them that came here, did like the Battalion Commander, they came here and showed that the day after there, they was retiring. So, there is a rebuilding of that unit and I just got inserted into it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, with that, you know, basically being a fairly new unit here and then all the turmoil of trying to set up shop here, so to speak. What did you see as your primary role and responsibilities in that year you were in?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Help that unit get integrated into Fort Sill. Help myself to get integrated into the unit. And certification, see if they can pass certification, so we can say that we are legitimately coinsured on Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And this was a Force Command Unit too, deployable?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: That now, when they got here, you said that weapons system was being phased out but at the time that was, if they had to deploy, they would deploy with that --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you weren't told, hey, don't worry about this equipment. You got to get this equipment working.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's why I would have to go to motor pool and clean it all up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then they had to recertify because a lot of those guys and some of those gun session, there wasn't there anymore.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, in this unit, I am not sure who your higher headquarter was -- did you have a Brigade to this all?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: 17th Brigade was our

headquarters.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, did the Brigade Sergeant Major is that -- or who did you look to, you know, now as a Command Sergeant Major of a Battalion, who did you look to for your mentorship?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Almost called his name, I can't think of it. Brigade Commander was a guy by the name of Colonel [Robin Elder], very mean, stone faced kind of guy, business like, new artillery rear rail. His Sergeant Major, I can't think his name, but he was a guy I got along really well. He went on the become a one-star Sergeant Major with two star and retired [Spicinger], Sergeant Major Spicinger was my Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now he had come from Germany?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. He --

SGM WATERHOUSE: He was the Brigade --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They stood the Brigade up too here --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- when they brought in that Battalion and they reorganized some of the current units and three Brigades that was already here to fill in 17th Brigade. Fort Sill at that time had 17th Brigade, 214th Brigade, 75th Brigade and -- 212th, 214th, 17th and 75th. Had four Brigades.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, it was a big time for the Army.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. Right. Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Army was moving out of Germany.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, lot of change, not just the Battalion, the Brigade. So, who did -- you may have answered maybe I missed it but who did -- who was your, I guess, key mentor, advisor as the Sergeant Major now?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Spicinger, my Brigade Sergeant Major was -- used to learn so much peer-to-peer. So many of the Battalion level guys in that Brigade I used to hang out with.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You knew them already?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I had been there with them already. But Spicinger was a level-headed guy. Sergeant Major [Marlborough], I think his name [Maybury], Maybury was one Battalion Sergeant Major, an older gentleman, older than all of us. Very seasoned and he used to teach us, you know, patience and how to strategize around Battalion Commanders and things like that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, looking back at your time there in 517, I know you said in your key challenges, of course, it's -- I know what unit but at a new location it is turning into a new unit because you got new personnel coming in. What would you say are your key lessons learnt from that experience as the Battalion Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Keep in my mind, I am new now. This is my first job as a Battalion Sergeant Major. So, because I was new, I was learning how to insert myself talking to senior people. So, now you got First Sergeants, you are no longer talking to E-7 Platoon Sergeants. You are now talking to First

Sergeants. And it always crosses any E-9s mind, little things like, will I be effective with them? Will I tell them to do something and they just go do it? Will they be argumentative? If they give me push back, how do I react to that?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because they answer to a Captain.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Their boss is a Commander.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, another story but I used to teach inside the Academy so -- so, we used to kind of talk through that in my mind, how do I react to that? So, I used an old technique I used as a Drill Sergeant. Get them to buy in. Get them to respect you. Get them to want to be like you. Get them to listen to you because you are saying stuff that makes sense. Get them to want to be close to you. Get them to see that you are going to protect them. That you are going look for them. Get them to know that you got their best interest at heart even when you are getting on them about something. You know, don't embarrass them in

front of other people because that sometime is something that they can't recover from. So, if you follow those rules then they will kind of gravitate to you anyway because they think that you really want to do the best thing for them. Even the guy that's a challenge to you --

SGM WATERHOUSE: There is always one, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. You just kind of -- you still got to kind of don't make him feel bad and eventually he will come around because he will buy-in on it. You know, you get more about getting the guy to want to do it, then you do by forcing them to do it because he is only going to really do it because you are standing there forcing them or he feel that's some kind of punishment that's going to cause him some problems. And you don't want to do that. And at the same time, you have a responsibility to teach him to want to change the way he is, if he is that kind of guy. I don't want to have a damn First Sergeant I always got to stand over and threaten all the time. That's not the guy I want. So, my challenge was, when I was there, is I got to



learn how do I take my skillset that I used as a Drill Sergeant to convince Privates to do something, and turnaround that and make E-8s do it and make them like it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, that time actually helped.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Because you got a lot of experience back then.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then I am new, I am trying to figure out if this works. I have got the answer to the test. If it don't work, I got to try to fix it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And did you talk to your peers on your left and right about how they approached that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I always do and I still talk to people today about things like that. I think we always can always learn something about that because we tend to think that what it is that we are doing is right just because that's what we are doing. And sometime we

as men, find it hard sometime to take correction.

That's a pride thing.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in February of 1993, you were assigned to Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So not Fort Sill this time - - where you served as a Command Sergeant Major of 3rd Battalion 7th Field Artillery Regiment which is think was part of the 25th Infantry Division.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yup.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Actually, this is part of the 25th Infantry Division Artillery for about two and a half years. When and how were you notified that you are going to be the next 3-7 FA Command Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I got assigned to that Battalion from Fort Sill because I called the DA up and said I want to go to Hawaii. And Sergeant Major Branch was like, who are you. You are a brand new Battalion guy, calling up here asking somebody --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, about a year in the

seat.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, I mean, who am I? I mean, which really taught me a lot. I will tell you when I get down to the end of that book how that changed who I was when I got at the four-star level but -- so, anyway. I pleaded with my Branch Manager, ended up going. And I got to Hawaii and I was assigned at 3-7 DS Battalion and 119 Battalion, 105, 3-7 as Battalion Sergeant Major.

First time I was being assigned to a light division. I am a heavy guy, I have been -- heavy motor pool, tracks all my life and now all of a sudden, I am in a light division. I show up and I am already into PT shape. So, I didn't have a problem with that. I wanted to show the light community that I could do what they do. I realized that we went from PT three days a week at Fort Sill like we was going through the motions kind of crap, to I get over to 25th and there is real PT and it's every day and it's not scripted and everybody is dirty, the weather is warm all the time and that's a way of life.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, when you were talking to your Branch about the assignment, did you know you were going in the Command Sergeant Major position?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, back then you could --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- today that doesn't work that way but that way --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- you actually got that position, knew it was coming in.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Knew it off the bat.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, what -- did you have time with the previous 3-7th Sergeant Major? Was he there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant Major Lunsford, yes, he was there. We overlapped for a few days. Lot of time CSMs don't think they need a lot of overlap and I have learned that they probably need more than they

think they do. But sometimes we all are eager to get in the seat. We immediately see things that the other guy is doing that we would do differently. We don't want to offend that person and start changing things while he is there. So, we kind of rush him out because out of respect, we want everybody get focusing on us and not him. And sometimes because that is the way it is, we don't take time to learn -- man, I ain't going to do that. I see what he did and I am going to follow him around. I know I ain't going to do that. Or you follow him around long enough to say, yeah, I mean, that's a really good idea. I am going to pick that up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Or you follow him around and you learn his contacts, who he has been getting stuff from. Man, I know these guys over here at the BSB, I know these guys over here in 3rd Brigade. If you want to get something done at S4 go over here and get this done.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, certainly we are not taking the time to get to learn --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- those folks.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, we as --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Made him successful.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, exactly. We as senior people, we tend not to do that because we think we are so smart and so crafty and so good that, don't worry I will figure it out on my own. I don't need him. Let him go and take care of his family and all that stuff. And we tend not to do that. So, when Lunsford and I was there, I think we were forced -- we were faced with a little bit of that. That helped it along Colonel [Slocum] the Battalion Commander wanted Lunsford out too.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now he is ready for a new partner.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. He was ushering him out. And then I was -- remember this is just my second Battalion and my first Battalion I had only been there in one year. So, who am I -- I would say I am really new.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, for 3-7 FA, what was their mission back then? What type of a unit was -- you said it was a light unit.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We were a direct support Field Artillery Battalion in support of 3rd Brigade.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: In 25th FA Division, you had three Infantry Brigades, you got an Aviation Brigade, you got a Support Brigade, you got the Division Artillery which is a Brigade. And then you got a lot of ash and trash units. This Division Artillery Unit here is made up of all of the artillery that goes to war with these three Firing Brigades. So, out of the three DS Battalions that they had in the [Devoney], every time we go to war, our Battalion went to war with 3rd Brigade. One of the other Artillery Battalion when to Brigade with 2nd --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, DS as in direct support?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Direct support.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And our Battalion was in

direct support of 3rd Brigade.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 3rd Brigade. Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Which means that we went to war, I had all of my soldiers, we farmed them out to them.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, your Brigade assets are attached -- assigned or attached to that Brigade for that mission. So, Sergeant Major, when you were -- you know, you just said you got a little time left seat, right seat or transition with the outgoing Sergeant Major and then, you know, it sometimes takes a unit sometimes a while to assess it. But once you assessed your Battalion, what did you see as a state and what kind of initiatives or things that you think you had to act on initially?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the thing was I don't know if they -- I can't say that they have a problem with this but maybe it was just me trying to get a feel for it. But I was like -- togetherness, team work. I am a team work guy. I wanted to make sure that the focus of those soldiers -- I am heavy, I am coming



out of heavy into light. So, I am excited. I am more excited than they are because I am the one that's the new guy --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and I am learning the new face of immediate fight. If you remember, Fort Bragg has got that green ramp thing where you always got to have a --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Somebody ready?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah. Already ready. So, here I am, I go to Hawaii and I get assigned to an organization that's doing DRB. I mean, they had to have a Brigade ready to go at all the times and we had to learn -- I had learned, what do you mean? That means that all of your equipment is taken out of your motor pool, it's pre-positioned in a certain spot on Schofield Barracks ready to go, ready to be airlifted, ready to be put on LSVs, whatever it is.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Emergency response.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Emergency response and you had to do that and you had to be ready. So, when you

enter an organization that has that type of mission, your way of thinking about war fighting is something different. I am in a heavy unit in Fort Sill. We are in a motor pool.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Part of my stuff is broke. I got a deadline report. I mean, you got to give me a notice to move me out. You got to move me out by rail.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You got to bring in C5, C17s. I mean, you got to do all that to move me -- 25th, you tell them to move now, they are even moving now.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Stuffs got to be ready.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They are moving in the next two hours. So, when I came into that organization, I had to learn how to up my game to be part of a rapid deployment force.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you said team work was, kind of, the main thing that you had to address when you got there. How did you do that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I had a -- we had a lot of -- another -- maybe it's answered so, we had some safety issues, I remember a couple of times due to the fact that soldiers weren't swing loading the equipment right. This is me, again, and my story, walking myself into something that I say I was going to do and I end up having to do it. 25th Division have an Air Assault School there. And one of the issues where we had to maintain a certain percentage of the NCOs that were air assault qualified.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, they could do all your swing load.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, they could do all the swing load. Specially the Chiefs, every Section Chief on every Gun Section and every Gun or every Assistance Chief, our goal was to have all of them 13 Bravos, all air assault qualified. We even get to a point sometime where, some of that numbers, kind of, went down and we was up briefing our QTB slides through the Division Commander. He would always look at it and say, you need more air assault qualified kind of guys for safety

reasons. And we had a couple of slip ups over there. So, one of the focus I had when I first got there was how do I push these guys to go to air assault school? Well, lead by example. So, I figured out -- well, I got to figure out how to do this myself.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Not an easy school either.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I hadn't never even been.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I said, well, I will tell you what I am going to do, I am going to go to an air assault school. I will never forget, we was up in the theatre and when had a Battalion formation on the inside, it was raining that time. The Battalion Commander was up there talking about -- and that was one of the issues that we were talking about. So, I right in front of all those soldiers, I said, I am going to air assault school to -- and everybody be all, yeah, sure, sure, sure.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah, right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, right. Yeah,

Sergeant Major. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But they know I was in good PT shape, so they know I could run. So, anyway. I make good on my promise and you know how we are. We don't do nothing if we prepare ourselves not to fail. You don't become an E-9 and just wake up one day and you get stupid. So, what I did was I went over and I got one of my best NCOs to teach me how to do swing load. I am down at motor pool about three days a week -

SGM WATERHOUSE: Before you went.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, before I went.

These guys are training me how to do swing load. Then I went and got a couple of Lieutenants there, they had all their little smart books, they had in air assault school and I was asking them all the problems that they had and on the written test and all that kind of stuff. And oh, by the way, now I got my rucksack put everything in that you are required to have in there with the right amount of weight and I started rucking every other day. And that's why I tore my back and knees, until I got --

SGM WATERHOUSE: That's self-development,

right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah, yeah. Yeah. So, then I went and told the Battalion Commander and I told the Division Commander, I said, look Division Sergeant Major, I said, I am going to air assault school. They said well, you know you ain't got to do that. I said, look, I told them so it's I am doing what I am doing. Long story short, when the air assault school graduated, and then now --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now you are wearing it --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- now instead I am in front of them and getting them to do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, what -- as a 3-7 Field Artillery Command Sergeant Major what did you see as your primary role and responsibilities, you know, with your soldiers and maybe with your Commander?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Senior listed advisor, keeping them out of trouble if we do go to war, bring them back home, certification. You are in an artillery unit, you ain't certified, you ain't no good. If you can't shoot and you are not trained, why have a gun that

the guys who own the gun can't shoot it and hit what they are supposed to. So, I was held responsible by the Battalion Commander to be the subject matter expert, ensuring that all gun sections are certified. Every Battery First Sergeant in that Battalion had the primary role of that job, of the responsibility. Me as the E-9, I had the secondary role to ensure that they did their job and that they followed the certification and I went around with selective NCOs that I would pull out of each one of the Batteries and actually do go around and do spot checking with their Chiefs to see that they did it.

Personnel assignment. Obviously, you know that's what E-9s do every day. Make that when we didn't have the application of soldiers that we needed to do our mission, that I am the one screaming to Division saying, we need soldiers.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, did -- and this is, you know, a couple of years removed from Desert Shield, Desert Storm, so, did that have any effect on that -- your unit, you know, when they came over? Did you have any veterans in there that would maybe help you

as far as -- I mean, I don't know if they use those weapons in Desert Storm but --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't know if we had -- we probably did have some veterans in that that did that. When we first got there, they had an old deuce gun which we later on phased out and brought in a 119. Same caliber of weapon, just a different platform actually shooting.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Toad artillery.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Toad artillery. So, I don't think we had any veterans that made an impact --

SGM WATERHOUSE: That would help.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- that would help.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, in that position and you may have mentioned it earlier but any specific guidance or regular guidance that you received from your higher Command Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the Division Sergeant Major and the -- my next level was --

SGM WATERHOUSE: [DIVARTY]

CSM WILLIAMS: [DIVARTY]. And [Bill Perry]



was my DIVARTY Sergeant Major. Bill Perry was just a solid leader. He had all the credentials, he did all the right things and highly respected, very smart guy. He is doing financial planning now in North Carolina.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, he was your next higher

--

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Very good guy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Is he -- would you say he would be kind of your go to guy in that job?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Any particular challenges, Sergeant Major, you haven't mentioned before in 3-7 that you want to --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No, I think, 3-7 was tough. I mean, we are deploying to the field, going to the big island for training. The good thing about being in the Division was you always felt like you had a real-time mission. You always felt like if you went to war, you could actually do what it is you are asked to do. You could hit what you are supposed to shoot at. Your guy was physically fit. So, you kind of felt good.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you were actually training for --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- a real mission, not necessarily just to do a training mission.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in August 95, you were assigned to the 25th Infantry Division Field Artillery School there at Schofield Barracks where you served as Command Sergeant Major for about a year and a half. Is that correct?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Well, no. When I was in 3-7, I was in there for two and half three years, whatever it was there in 3-7. The guy, I was just talking about Bill Perry, my DIVARTY Sergeant Major, he left.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Came to Fort Sill and took over the Post job here at Fort Sill and I was one of the guys of the three left Sergeant Major and the DIVARTY Commander picked me and made me Bill's replacement. So, I became DIVARTY Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Yeah, for some reason on your record just said you are Artillery School Sergeant Major. But it was actually the Division.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was but it wasn't at that spot. It left there, it was further down the road.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I get to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you took over as --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The DIVARTY.

SGM WATERHOUSE: -- the DIVARTY Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Did it for about a year and a few months.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And so, looking back at that position in 3-7, what would you say are your key lessons learnt in those two positions?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My lesson learnt in those -- it was four years and nine months total in Hawaii in the Division. Most of that time was in 3-7 as the Battalion Sergeant Major. Like I said, two and half, three years of that time. And I think what I learned is

the importance of physical fitness. The importance of combat ready. The difference between a light division and heavy. The importance of PT. All of that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, let me back up to get this right. So, in August 95, you were assigned to 25th Division Field Artillery where you took over for Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. As DIVARTY Sergeant Major.

SGM WATERHOUSE: DIVARTY Sergeant Major. So, how did that come about again?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It came about because the current DIVARTY Sergeant Major PCSed.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He was selected to come to Fort Sill and be the Post Sergeant Major and the DIVARTY Commander took the remaining Sergeant Majors and selected from them and he selected me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, did you -- he PCSed, so did you get time to do any kind of transition with him before he left?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We were billing out, we did do some of that before he left. Not much because he was on a timeline and also to come at Fort Sill. The move for me was just going from one building over --

SGM WATERHOUSE: To another.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- to another building. Really was transparent to me.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, when you got over there and now you got -- of course, it's a different area, even though you are familiar with it, now you got to assess that unit as a new Sergeant Major coming in. So, when you did that, what did you see as the state of the DIVARTY or Division Artillery when you got there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: When I got there the person that hired me was a -- my DIVARTY Commander at the time didn't have a real good reputation with the Battalions and the leadership within the DIVARTY because he was such a hard nose kind of guy. And so, he was a true artillery man, we knew his craft but he had a personality issue where he was one of your in-your-face

kind of guys. And that's not the way I am. So, he and I had to learn to, kind of, you know, figure out all of that. And trying to give advice to a person that has a personality issue is -- you got to be very careful and crafty how you do it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Now was he a Lieutenant Colonel or a Colonel?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No, he was a Colonel.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Colonel. Okay. Because this is Brigade level.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. Brigade level.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, a lesson learned for me is, now I am at the O6 level, you are dealing with more senior officers and now some of them can be set and you don't want to damage your incoming relationship with the guy but you want to be able to provide him with some feedback. You want to be able to let him know that his delivery is pissing people off. And that's kind of the way it was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You want to be an honest

broker, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, right. He had been on broker.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You mentioned that earlier.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I think Colonel [Todd] respected me so well that he could take that from me and he did on several occasions but at the same time he still sometimes did it his way. Not that he didn't listen to me. He was listening but he would still go off and sometime do it the way he wanted to do. So, I can't say he didn't listen but I will just say sometimes he was very set in his ways when his mind is made up, it's kind of hard. So, that was one of my challenges.

The other thing was now I am the DIVARTY Sergeant Major and I have all these Battalions and I am trying to make sure that those other guys are having the same kind of relationship with the Brigade that they support, that I was having with 3rd Brigade. In 3rd Brigade and each one of those Battalions, I knew those Sergeant Majors over there and those Infantry Battalions because my solider was going over there and I knew -- I

was the one who did that.

I wasn't quite sure because I didn't know if my other two DS Battalion Sergeant Majors was actually doing all the stuff that I was doing with my buddies and I didn't want to insult them and try to tell them like, hey, this is what I did and that's what you ought to go down there and do. Starting out as a DIVARTY Sergeant Major, I didn't want to do that because one of those guys was kind of sensitive anyway because he wanted the DIVARTY job and he didn't get it. So, I would have to be very careful with him on how I approach him or I would end up alienating the two of us over a technicality of something small.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, how many Battalions Sergeant Majors did you have that were under the DIVARTY?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, that was three Battalions at the time that was -- they deactivated one before I went to DIVARTY.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, there was 3-7, 2-11 and



1-8, which was an 8-inch, which was a 155 unit and then we had three separate Battery. We had a Fox Battery, Radar Battery and HHB -- yes.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And those Batteries fell under those Battalions?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. All of them fell under my --

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, you were basically a 3 and then 2 Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. And then we had an ADA Battalions. We had four Battalions, two direct, two DS Battalions, 181, 155 Battalion and an ADA Battalion and then we had those three separates. So, it was a pretty good size. And when I get picked for the job, now I am trying -- my challenge now, you know, I thought I had a challenge one from being a Battalion Sergeant Major, now I have got give First Sergeants in front of me and they were senior.

Now I am an E-9 and I have got four other E-9s and now I got to be very careful how you do it because Sergeant Majors to Sergeant Majors had to be

very careful with each other. You have to be crafty in a positive way to get people to do things because these guys have senior people underneath them. So, you got to be very careful how you deal with them and you got to get them to get buy-in and last thing you want to do with another E-9 is making feel he is doing something because you are making him do it. You lose him right off the top. And we don't want to do that.

So, my challenge then was how do I get these guys to want to work for me like them five First Sergeants did. Five First Sergeants would do it a little bit easier because they look at you, your collar look a little bit different than mine, so it's -- even though they are working for Captains, they are kind of still going to do what you say. But you get three Battalion Sergeant Majors, four of them lining up in front of you and two of them outrank of you anyway --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Let's say, may have you on time and grade.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They got you on time and grade. You just happen to get the job.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You just got the position.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. You got to be very crafty about that. And that was one of my challenge. Colonel Todd being hot-headed and me trying to figure out how to get those E-9s to buy-in and work together and be close to their Brigades like I was without telling them to do it, that was my challenge.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, what would you say your approach was with those CSMS under you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My approach is always have been to spend some time with them. You know, don't have them come to me. Me go down to their office, kind of thing. Never embarrass them, rooting them on. You never embarrass a senior guy. Damn sure don't do it in front of his family, you damn sure don't do it in front of his Commander. You better not do it in front of his unit. You embarrass him, get him in a room one-on-one and you can tell him whatever you want. Anybody else going to hear, that's probably okay. He would probably argue with you, you all may even get close to fighting. But at least you respect the fact that everybody else

didn't hear the conversation.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I had that kind of case with a guy by name of Sergeant Major Freeman, which was one of those guys I was telling you about who wanted the job --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- who didn't get it. He had a profile and his delivery wasn't conducive to what the DIVARTY Commander wanted. So, now when he didn't get the job, I had an uphill battle trying to get him to do things. I ain't going to run to the DIVARTY Commander saying make that Battalion Commander, make that Sergeant Major do something. I don't want to work that way. So, I am always down there dealing with Freeman. And it was like pulling teeth and I didn't like it. I didn't like --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Did you have an Ops Sergeant Major, somebody else that you could try to help. Hey, can you talk to your buddy there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. In my S3, we had a

Sergeant Major in S3 but in -- Freeman was a -- he had Master Sergeant in his --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Three shop.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Three shop.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But Freeman was playing hard ball with me simply because he didn't get the job. And over time we had to allow on him to leave, somebody else come in and start fresh because other than that what he did do, he did little bit of. You know, I ain't going to give you all of what you want, I am not going to give you all the support you want, you know. I am going give a reason why I am not coming to your meeting, I am going to send one of my First Sergeants. You know what I am saying?

SGM WATERHOUSE: Like Commander is making me do XO.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. There is ways to get around it. Well, that's unfortunate. But it's life, right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Life as a Brigade Sergeant Major. So, as the DIVARTY Command Sergeant Major, who did you look up to -- who did you look to as that person that you could do --?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My Division Sergeant Major, [Johnnie Olston], 3rd Brigade Sergeant Major [Joe Johnson], infantry guy -- actually on my subordinate Sergeant Major within the DIVARTY and I was pretty close. We used to do a lot of talking. The guy who replaced me out of 3-7, Guardman Sergeant Major [Broward], he and I became very close and he became a sounding board. I mean, he is junior to me by position but he still -- he and I, kind of, bounced things off. We used to talk a lot not about my problems internal to DIVARTY. We used to talk a lot of time about challenges I am having with my DIVARTY Commander or we talked about us, problem we are having with the Division Headquarters, things like that, problem we with other infantry guys. But I wasn't down there pissing on one of my Battalion Sergeant Majors leg about the problem I

am having with Freeman. I wasn't going to be doing that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I didn't load him up with that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, any other challenges you want to cover before we move on about -- while you were as a DIVARTY Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't think there is -- that's about it.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay. So, as your time -- looking back at that time as the DIVARTY Sergeant Major, any key takeaways or lessons learnt that you kept with you in your kit bag, so to speak?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, the key thing that did happen to me there -- didn't happen to me when I was a young soldier is I am 40 years old by then, I think something like that. I go to the Division and I go to air assault school. 39 years old. Graduate to show and set the example for my soldiers. I show up at the Division and I get over there and I mean, I am going

into PX and I am seeing E-4s walking around with ranger tabs on, airborne, air assault -- E-3s, E-4s, common in an infantry type world. I didn't got artillery guys like that. And here I am, nothing on my chest. I am thinking, I got to fix this. So, that was another big thing that caused me to go into air assault school.

So, when I came at air assault school, got graduated, got my wings, I am feeling all good about myself and then I says, this ain't enough, I want to do more. So, then I went to Division Sergeant Major, I said, look now I want to go to airborne school. And he said, well, you know -- you know, you are a Battalion Sergeant Major, blah, blah, blah, probably don't need to send you. Later on, I said, okay, whatever you say. Next thing I know, yes, I softened him up. He paid the Division money. Next thing I know, I am in Hawaii, they fly me all the way back to Fort Benning.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Sorry, three weeks.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Only three weeks. So, look, they sent me back to Benning and to go -- now remember I am an E-9, sent me back to Fort Benning to go



to airborne school, I had -- I don't think I had ever been to Benning. So, I show up there and running around kind of lost, so just like a good Sergeant Major I do a recon and I goes over to the airborne school the day before so I can find a place. I don't want to be late.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I am wondering if there are going to be any other Sergeant Majors in that class.

SGM WATERHOUSE: You can see the towers, free for all.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You see the towers. So, I go down there and do, I am going through all this crap there. And then the next morning we all show up and the guy there black head calling roll and all that kind of stuff.

Oh, I am sorry, prior to that the same afternoon I did my recon. I went over and found the classroom and they had some guys and I am talking to them. And one of the First Sergeants came over. The First Sergeant of the Airborne Battery -- Company that we was going to be assigned to. Charlie Company or

whatever it is. So, anyway. So, he was out walking around outside. And then I was walking around outside the building also heading back to my rental car. So, and he had seen me and he said, yes, Sergeant Major is there anything I can do for you. You got any of them problem. I said, no.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, you were in uniform?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I was -- we both was in uniform.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I said, no, I said, I am just kind of looking around right now to make sure I know where everything at. He said, are you assigned down here? I said, no. I said, actually I am a student. So, he looks at me and he says --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Thought you were pulling his leg.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- are you are a student like in the school here? I said, yeah. And then he had to do some stuff. He said, well I am the First Sergeant here and he says -- just as blunt as he could -- he

says, Sergeant Major, can you run? He said because we do a lot of running down here. And I have been maxing on my PT test.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I didn't bust him. I said, First Sergeant believe me, you ain't got to worry about it. I will be okay. He says, do you know we do a lot of running. I said, I have already been training for. He said, okay, I just want to sure everything is good. And he said, okay. And then I left. Then next morning I show up and they did a roll call. I was really the only E-9 in the that went through. We had a Lieutenant Colonel, a Major --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Really? Lieutenant Colonel there too?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. They just like me the late bloomers those kind of like get thrown in there. But most you had in there was Lieutenants and Privates. So, yeah, a bunch of Lieutenants and Privates. Anyway, long story short, I graduated. So, two big things happened me there when I was there. And

the other thing is, really significant is that was the very first time that I was given a chance to go sit on an Army Promotion Board in Indiana.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Was that for a Staff Sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was for Sergeant First Class.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Oh, Sergeant First Class, Centralized Board.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Centralized Board.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You are talking about an eye-opening experience for me. So, I went there and I came back and I felt like a kid in a candy store. All I wanted to do is do NCODPS and teach people what I knew. And I mean, I was on a mission. The Division Sergeant Major had me come over and then when he had the meeting with all the Sergeant Majors, he brought all my slides in and I wasn't the only guy that had ever been to a Board. He had two of his Brigade Sergeant Majors had also been to a Board.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, now you knew exactly what it took to --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. And then I got up and I gave a 15-minute pitch and I showed about five of my slides. And the good thing about it was two of those Brigade Sergeant Major in the audience that had also been to, they helped to reinforce some of things I was saying. So, that was my first form of giving back. And then I went down and I had within DIVARTY, we put all of the NCOs in DIVARTY in the DIVARTY classroom one Friday afternoon and also gave a class. But that was another experience.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, in June of 1997 you were assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma again, where you served this time as the 3rd Corps Artillery Command Sergeant Major and you did that for about six months.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the time the Army had three or four Corps Artillery Headquarters and one of those -- and each one of those is like commanded by a Brigadier General. So, one of those, the largest one

was here at Fort Sill. And that Corps Artillery now has in it those four Brigades I just told you. 17th, 75th, 212th, 214th and it's got a whole host of separate Batteries, a BSB in it, an Engineer Company, whole bunch of stuff. And it's commanded by a one-star General. One was here at Sill, one was at Fort Bragg, one was in Germany 5th Corps Artillery at the time and I think there was one in the National Guard. So, in the artillery footprint, there was those four one-star jobs out there. Those are -- most Sergeant Majors will go from Battalion to Brigade or Battalion to a DIVARTY and that's kind of what it is, so your next progression was usually one of those one-star jobs.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, from DIVARTY to one-star was typical.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was typical. And Division -- obviously with only being three active in the Army and a whole bunch of Battalion Sergeant Majors, obviously everybody can't get one of those three. So, you may go from one Brigade lateral to another Brigade or you may go from a Brigade to a DIVARTY. In some

cases, you may end up going from a Brigade nowhere else to go may end up going back down to a Battalion.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, how did this come up? How were you interviewed for this job? Or how did this all come about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I was -- at the end of my tour in Hawaii as DIVARTY Sergeant Major, I knew eventually I got to leave Hawaii. And the guy that I replaced Bill Perry in the DIVARTY in Hawaii was now the Post Sergeant Major at Fort Sill.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And again, somewhere along, I will come -- conversation we are going to get into the Army now and the Army then, but I will tell you a part now is that the Army then was a whole lot different than the Army now. When you start talking about who had the power to move who around --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and influence that thing. Bill Perry then being the two-star Sergeant Major for the branch of the artillery guy had a lot of

influence as to say who go where and influence those decisions even though the final decision was made by HRC.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, Bill Perry says to --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Recommended you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- yeah. He says to me in Hawaii that the guy that was in the Corps Artillery position here at Fort Sill was moving up, going to Fort Riley to a two-star job and now that needed to be filled. And he was happened that one-star Commander put together a list of Sergeant Majors that he should interview.

SGM WATERHOUSE: And he recommended you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And he recommended me. And I got interviewed and I got selected.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, that must have made you feel good, huh? Going to --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It did. It was one of those things that -- my career path wouldn't -- I wasn't -- so, everything happens for a reason, we just don't



know what it is. And sometimes you have to just let it happen. If you -- nobody says I walked my way through, you start asking me things like -- so what did I go after. Did I go after anything? If you notice what happened to me is I made the E-9 as a seal in 517 and they said no to any staff job, so they told me to go that Battalion.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I went to that Battalion. I -- now that's one thing I did do, I did go to Hawaii because I called them up.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Yeah. That's the first time you actually asked to go to --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So, when I get to Hawaii and I get there and I go to 3-7, Perry is getting ready to leave. There was only three guys then that owned the three Battalions there. All three our name go to the DIVARTY Commander. I didn't turn my name in. Perry said, sir, you got to interview all of these three guys and pick the one you want. That's exactly what he did and I didn't ask for that. So, now I am in that

job. So, I come back from this Promotion Board I was just telling you about, when I was in the DIVARTY and I got to give these classes and everything.

But when I was at the Promotion Board -- or did I do two over there? I have been to three Boards before. So, while I was at this Board, Perry calls me up. Now he is at Sill and said, oh, by the way, I know you are getting ready to leave Hawaii and right now because we don't have any other O6 level positions open for you, how would you like to go to Fort Bragg, North Carolina now that you are airborne qualified and we put you in 18th Field Artillery Brigade and make you Brigade Sergeant Major 18th Field Artillery Brigade. And I said, sounds good to me Sergeant Major. Then I can at least stay at the Brigade level. I said, but, I mean, I can't just go there, I mean, how do you do that? He said, don't worry, I will take care of that. Remember he had the power to do it. He said, I am already working on an angle, you are going to get it, you are going to get some orders. This was going to happen. Okay.

I finished the Board in Indiana, flied back to Hawaii, another couple of months go by, Perry calls me up on the phone says, forget everything I told you, now you are on the slate to go and be competing for the Corps Artillery job at Fort Sill. I tell my wife, she said, well, I would love for you to do that and then be jumping out of airplanes again. So, she was happy with that.

SGM WATERHOUSE: 140-141Q or something.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. So, the way I got from Hawaii to Sill is Perry put me on a slate in that one-star interview and that's how I got here. And so, I came in here. I worked for General [Broadwater] who selected me and I worked for him until he left and moved on. And then another General came in named General [Hartsel] and I worked for him. I think the total time I was in the Corps Artillery was over a year. Total time actually in the seat.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, so the previous Corps Sergeant Major was not here when you got here.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes, he was.

SGM WATERHOUSE: He was. Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The General was here, we did a overlap. That was a good overlap. Now you hit the one-star level, so there is usually not a lot of overlap when you start working with Gos --

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- because they know the General has such a much -- has a big influence on which direction you are going. So, we did a few days here and there but wasn't that I was a stranger to Fort Sill. Hell, this is the place I have been.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right. Yeah. So, in layman's terms what was the mission of the 3rd Corps Artillery?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: 3rd Corps Artillery was -- we were a unit, we were combat -- we were the provider of combat forces in support of different Divisions in different parts of the world like 5th Corps Artillery in Germany, that one-star worked for the Corps Commander of 5th Corps.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And they were the one to provide artillery forces to 5th Corps. We here, we provided all our forces to 3rd Corps but down the road here in Fort Hood which now they have 4th ID, 1st Cav and so, we were giving them forces to help reinforce what they were doing when they go to war.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, what would you say your primary roles and responsibilities as the 3rd Corps Sergeant Major? That's a big organization.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, now I have always learned in the Army that sometime the higher you go in position as a Sergeant Major, the more generalized your duty description becomes. There is nothing really specific anymore. You are like, you are the generalized kind of guy.

SGM WATERHOUSE: Right.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, now I am the one-star guy and I have five Brigades and so, what would you do with them? You become the coach, teacher, mentor, logistic provider, open doors, you are fighting red-

cycle taskings when they are pulling your soldiers when they shouldn't be. You are the standing Post Sergeant Major when he is not around. You are flying all over the place with your General doing stuff like visiting units in NTC. I mean, you are doing things that are not really specific because you are no longer specific anymore.

SGM WATERHOUSE: So, Sergeant Major, how would you -- so, you have got pretty good footprint, you have got units going here, going there, how would you prioritize or come up with your travel plans when you would go to see folks?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it's important for every Sergeant Major working with a Commander to know this Commander's calendar. I think he ought to know his calendar. You ought to have access to it. You ought to get it every day. You ought to be on your computer that way you can see what your Commander is doing. That's the guy you work for. That's the first thing.

When you see what he is doing now you can determine based on what he is doing how that affect your

line. If he is busy in one of your Brigades, you know he is going down to 17th Brigade next Thursday, I think you ought to be able to know that. You ought to be able to call. You know what I am going to do, I am calling my Brigade Sergeant Major down there and say, hey, hey, Ronnie, I don't know if you noticed right now but General [Broadwater] was coming down next Thursday and say, you all -- you will be giving him your cycle training brief, right. Oh yeah, we already know it Sergeant Major, we are tracking it. You know, the Brigade Commander is already knowing it. I said good make sure you get it.

Now, I can determine if I need to be with him, or do I need to say yes on this guest speaker thing they asked me to do for Audie Murphy down at Fort Hood. Should I go all the way down to Fort Hood, be an Audie Murphy guest speaker; or should I be out on the range with 212th Brigade doing certifications with them; or should I be in a conference room over here with the 17th Brigade Sergeant Major listing to a cycled training briefing that they're giving my boss

so I can kind of help protect his butt -- I need to determine where I need to be at.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So how did you figure that out? There were some people you went to --

MR. WATERHOUSE: I think it's one of those things that if you know your commander well enough, you kind of know where you're okay with him being alone and that he's not going to be a bull in a china cabinet. So you don't want him to do that without you being around. If you know, first of all, that him and Colonel Davis in 212th Brigade -- they already buds (interruption bell ringing) -- and you think --

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major as the III Corps Artillery Command Sergeant Major, what guidance did you receive from the III Corps Command Sergeant Major and the guidance here at Fort Sill, that Command Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the one that -- not so much on the guidance's -- but maybe so much of a -- one of the challenges that we had in Corps Artillery at Fort Sill was our headquarters down at



Fort Hood a lot of times didn't quite understand us. We were a large asset to them, but we weren't even on their post. When you've got 450 to the 4th ID, and the First Cab, and this big CASCOM, and all these other large organizations on Fort Hood right there in their face, you see them every day; you talk to them every day; you probably go to social events; they attend meetings all the time; but then you've got all of the artillery that's up here at Fort Sill that belong to you -- four brigades, and all these separate companies -- they're out of sight, out of mind.

So a lot of times -- I mean the amount of soldiers that I was in charge of at the one-star level was almost equal to that of a division that he had down at Fort Hood. So we were kind of out of sight, out of mind. I never forget a long time ago, Sergeant Major Pulascio came up one time to visit me, and he was a Corps Sergeant Major, and he said in the motor pool, I had no idea that we had this many soldiers up here at Fort Sill. He said you're almost the size of a division.

So then after that he started more time with me; calling me more; and being a little bit more involved because he realized that so many of his soldiers were up here and they weren't at Fort Hood.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, as the III Corps Artillery Command Sergeant Major, what were some of the key challenges you faced during your time in that position; and what kind of things did you do to kind of overcome or deal with those challenges?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Being an attendant unit on a TRADOC post, we provided a lot of the red-cycled taskings for the post: grass cutters; people working for DPW; gate guard. They had a concert, we needed to have road guards; I mean you just name it. All of the taskings -- there is a brigade worth of taskings when you break it all down from lifeguards at the swimming pools; the gate guards, you name it. There's a world of taskings; and they were task-Corps Artillery because we had four brigades. At one time, one of those brigades was always on some kind of red-cycle duty, which means the other three brigades had a

chance to train, and they were pretty well protected. So one of our challenges was one, to make sure that we wasn't being abused on the taskings; and that the other parts of the post was taking up some of the responsibilities to do some of the taskings as well.

The next thing is because we had two bosses sometimes if there was a conflict between what your Fort Sills boss was saying versus what your Fort Hood boss was saying that could probably put me and my one-star CG in a dilemma as to what to do; and we always try to error on the side of doing what everybody wanted because you couldn't afford to alienate or piss off any of those.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And most of the other units here -- maybe I'm wrong, but a lot of the unit, but not most -- a lot of units here, obviously, were training, so you couldn't mess with the AIT and the basic training?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. That's one of the reasons why the taskings was for us; but what we did realize was that there was still some smaller taskings

-- some of these guys over here, who wasn't platform instructors; who wasn't doing things like that, that they still could help out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So, basically, what you did was just protect your organization by talking to those folks?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And say, hey, wait a minute, there's these other guys who can help.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Not just my guys.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, looking back at your -- I think it was six months or so here -- as a III Corps Artillery Command Sergeant Major, what were your key lessons learned that you took on to your next assignment?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: First time working with a General officer -- that's a big lesson. I mean Generals are different people; people react to them a lot faster; so when he goes places, his name gets

thrown around; people tend to work at getting answers a lot faster; so the good part about it is working with them, things get done a little bit faster.

Sometimes I felt as though I probably needed to be a little bit more professional around him than I did at the battalion and brigade command.

I kind of felt a little bit like I've got to be a little bit more polite around him at times. I didn't like to feel that way -- that way when I started working with him -- General Broadwater to start out with, my first one -- was I wanted him to know that I'm a regular guy and I can't keep up this persona of all that politeness and all that stuff because it just didn't fit who I was. I could do that when we were around other people; but when I'm around him one-on-one, I'm going to let my hair down and I'm just going to talk to you just like anybody else. I can't -- and I understand the professionalism thing -- but I was wrestling with that a first; and then I think after a while, he began to get used to me and I got used to him and then we just became more of battle

buddies than we were Sergeant Major to General.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in December 1998, you took over as the United States Army Field Artillery Center in Fort Sill Command Sergeant Major where you served for about 3-1/2 years. When and how were you notified about taking that over, that position?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Bill Perry , the post Sergeant Major of Fort Sill that I used to work for as the (inaudible) Sergeant Major in Hawaii is now the post Sergeant Major of Fort Sill. He brings me to Fort Sill and I now work for General Broadwater in the Corps Artillery -- just to show the influence he had.

Once Bill Perry bought me here and he's at the post, Bill immediately retired. So he was planning to retire when I left Hawaii to come take the one-star job, he just had not officially made his mind up. There was another one-star Sergeant Major in Germany who was PCS-ing out of Germany who needed a place to go; and there wasn't no more one-star jobs to go to; he was looking to come up to the two-star job.

So Bill Perry was trying to find a way to take care of two of his fast-moving artillery Sergeant Majors. One was coming out of Hawaii, which was me; one was coming out of Germany, which was Bill Commode . Bill Commode was coming out of a one-star job out of (inaudible). I was coming out of Hawaii out of a colonel position, O-6 -- both moving at the same time.

Perry, on the other hand, was leaving out of the two-star job at Sill and at the same time, the one-star job I was earmarked in, to go into at Corps Artillery was also vacant. So we have two vacancies, and you had two guys moving; and we had to go in one of those two places.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So the two-star commander here -- General Baxter -- had already interviewed a lot of guys; so he already kind of knew a little bit about everybody. So Bill Perry took upon himself to take care of both of us; but he wanted to take care of both of us in a sequence. So what he did was he made sure that he got me, the junior guy in position first.

So he brought me out of Hawaii and had me go through the slate process with the one-star until he put his hands down and say Williams is the guy I want.

Soon as they signed the deal that said Williams is the guy I want, then he went into his boss; dropped his retirement paperwork; and told his boss that he wanted the guy out of Germany to replace him; that way he could take care of him too. His boss says okay. They brought the guy out of Germany into Fort Sill and put him in Bill Perry's job as a two-star. So Perry's job was to take care of both of us. There was only one problem with that was nobody told the two-star about all of this until it all had actually happened.

Once General Baxter found out who I was and that I was coming from Hawaii, he wanted to know why he was not allowed to interview me; and Perry didn't want me to be interviewed with the guy coming out of Germany because he didn't want us competing for the two-star. Because one was already a little bit above the other --



MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- he wanted the one-star guy to go into the two-star job; he wanted me out of O-6 to go into the current one-star job. And in Perry's mind that was his way of taking care of both of his guys and us progressing at the next level. However, General Baxter, the two-star head did not like that. He, in turn, wanted me to be put at the two-star level, not the guy he chose.

And now we'll get into the other part of the story. So now, that we are all in position and the guy Commode is working for General Baxter, you notice my time in Corps Artillery was very short.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And because it was very short is because the guy that General Baxter did pick to go into the two-star job, they didn't get along.

MR. WATERHOUSE: He didn't like him or didn't get along?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And they didn't get along simply because that really wasn't the guy he wanted.

So, now what happens, they had an effect on them and finally Commode didn't take it any longer and he said I'm going to find me a home. So what he did was he found him a home.

MR. WATERHOUSE: A different job?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He actually got promoted. He went up to the three-star level and he went down into 5th Army.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So he went from one to three?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Then General Baxter, right after that, didn't even run a slate, he just picked me from Corps Artillery and brought me over to the post without doing the slate. That's how I got to the post.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So did you have a transition at all with Sergeant Major Commode?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: A very short one. I really didn't need a big one because -- the job was much bigger -- don't get me wrong. I didn't need a transition with him that much because I was already on

Fort Sill; I left Sill going to Hawaii; I'm back at Sill; and by now I had been here a year already, so it wasn't much I needed to know.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, when you did take over here at the Field Artillery Center, what did you see -- when you did your assessment -- what were some of the things you saw you thought needed to be initiatives or whatever you needed to take to make it better or more effective?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Now, this job was one of the first jobs that you get to make like a major impact on the branch. The Army now has one-star commandants and all the descendants of excellence; and the two-star of the post is no longer the commandant. My world -- when I grew up -- the two-star was the commandant and the one-star was labeled as the assistant commandant. So now, the two-star at Fort Sill in my area with me was the guy in charge of all the field artillery branch. Me as a -- and I'm going to elaborate on this at the TRADOC level of why this made me do some things at TRADOC I did.

So me now, at the two-star level, now as a Branch Sergeant Major, I now become the Bill Perry, the guy now with the power to move artillery Sergeant Majors around. Keep in mind, as I told you earlier, HRC makes the final decision. Boy, during those eras, we had a lot of power as the artillery Sergeant Major to say where people go.

So now I'm sitting up there, and that position to me was a position where my job was to get on a plane; fly up to HRC and try to make as many friends as I could; make sure they understood who I was; what my thoughts and my philosophies were; and get some buy-in with those guys because I did not want to be playing hardball with HRC. I didn't want to be sitting down here saying well, I'm the artillery guy and I say move a Sergeant Major, move a guy that used to be doing that -- no, we don't get involved in moving specialists and privates, no. I only had my hands in on moving E-9s.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So that was one of your first stops -- is you go (inaudible).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. My first stop was to go to HRC and say look, this is who I am; I ain't against you; I just want to work with you; make some friends. I took some gifts up there, and passed around some pens and stuff; trying to make as many friends as I could; and I did real good at it and that kind of helped me out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So looking back -- so that's part of building the team as they say -- so as the Field Artillery Center and Fort Sill Command Sergeant Major, what did you see as your primary roles in that position, and your responsibilities?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So we were responsible for ensuring that -- as an example, on promotions to write the board requirements for promotions. All proponents are responsible to ensure that when you send in your packet to the promotion board that it has a description in there, and a history in there, of trends over time of different MOSs in our branch and how they fair when it comes to promotion. How the effects of drill sergeants is; how important it is to

give credit to a guy who is an OC in the CTC; what the importance is of an instructor or a drill sergeant; you should be a chief before you become a platoon sergeant. So we had to outline all of that and how important it all was -- that was key.

Second part was I remember when we used to go to these personnel briefings in the old Hoffman Building up in D.C. and Virginia; and we had to go in there and plead the case for getting bonuses for certain MOSs. You ought to be giving the 82 Charlies more money to get them in. They want to know why is it the artillery is so low on 13-Foxes. Well, 13-Fox is a hard MOS. These guys spend a lot of time in light divisions; they're getting banged up. In order to get guys to go into a MOS, you have to incentivize them with a bonus. Why don't you have a re-enlistment bonus behind the guys who are 13-Echoes -- it's a critical one (inaudible).

So I've seen my challenge as being one that I had to be with our proponent section, helping them to craft what the Army looked at when it comes to

promotion and help them to craft what it is that when you're giving out bonuses what MOSs in our branch should get the bonuses. This is the nug-work of what you do. You've got to sit down; and you've got to have some analysis to show why you're building the case that this guy should get a bonus versus that guy.

And when someone asked you why your recruiting numbers are so low, you've got to be able to say well, we got a high attrition rate in AIT; people are finding out about it; and nobody wants to join the Army and be a 13 Bravo because they aren't good at math and, therefore, you can see at the (inaudible) Station, when they're coming in, they're failing math -- these are trends. So I'm no longer in a Humvee running around with some war paint on my face trying to be a soldier out in the field like I was in 25th; I'm now in HRC trying to do nug-work, paperwork to justify that kind of stuff; and that's what I was.

Why is it you don't get guys who want to go be airborne? Well my question to them is why the hell we got a bunch of guys out of the 82nd who don't want

to leave; and why should they be protected? And the guy says well, because you've got a lot guys that's airborne qualified but they don't want to go to Bragg and jump out a plane; but you've got a bunch of guys at Bragg don't want to leave; they've got homes, they want to stay at Bragg. And then we're saying well, why don't we switch some of those guys out. Bragg says no, no, no. I got these guys here; they're already been jumping out of planes; they're already jump masters, blah, blah; don't give me a bunch of novice guys coming in; never grew up at Bragg. You know how it is, if you don't grow up at Fort Bragg, you ain't kind of a Bragg guy, you know. So we were fighting all of these challenges out there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Were these initiatives that were in place, these things that you were doing from your previous Sergeant Majors?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: These things have been in place for years.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you just picked up the ball where it was and carried on?



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; we were tweaking them. As a branch Sergeant Major, you're also a branch messenger. Who is the best guy to criticize the White House -- somebody who is outside the White House? Who is the best guy to criticize what the hell's going on in the Pentagon -- somebody that ain't in the damn Pentagon? So who is the best guy to criticize that Fort Sill and the field officer branch is all jacked up? Some 13 Bravo sitting in a motor pool down there wants to know why he ain't getting certain regulations and shit; and master gunner and why he ain't got no re-enlistment bonuses because they view Mecca -- Fort Sill -- as a bunch of guys in the back, sitting in a room, making some damn policies that they've got to live by and we don't know what the hell their real world is.

So really what I've seen is I became in my mind the voice of a guy who's been in heavy divisions, light divisions, and done all of that; so now I'm sitting in a room crafting up crap that they've got to live by in the field. So that was an important job.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, obviously, you had a big responsibility not only for the branch but for the installation here; how did you balance your time and efforts for your Fort Sill, specific, duties with the branch at (inaudible)?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think when I was the Fort Sill Sergeant Major, I was wearing two hats.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was actually the post Sergeant Major at Fort Sill. That's everything from red cycle, make sure the post look good; 5th security at the gates; anytime a soldier loses his life, the medias, congressional folk coming on; Brack -- I mean you just name it, anything that had to do with the post, it affected us -- everything -- you were just all that.

Under the branch side is all that other stuff I kind a put out there. The balance is you've got to hope like hell you've got a good garrison Sergeant Major, a good garrison commander because they're really are the mayor of the post, if you will.

That's what they do. They're the stewards of the day-to-day working of the post. If you've got them thinking right and they have the same thought that you and the CG got, you probably won't have to do too much because they're all involved in it. I don't need to be riding around on post and telling Sergeant Major General out of 17th Brigade that his police car area's jacked up. That's probably something I probably would have done 20 years ago, but me as a post Sergeant Major, I don't see that's something that I need to spend a whole lot of time doing. You know why? Because I trust that brigade Sergeant Major; he ought to be doing that.

And you know what the slip up is -- I think the garrison Sergeant Major ought to be working on old Jones down there and getting with him and saying hey man, I drove through some of your area. I did see some problems out there. That's what the garrison and the brigade Sergeant Major do. Because the brigade Sergeant Major got three battalion guys down there, he don't need the post Sergeant Major running around and

getting in his butt about some trash I seen down there by one of his motor pools.

Now, not saying I won't do it, but that's not what I do. So my time to be a little bit more valuable doing a few other things. I'll give you an example. Post Sergeant Major sitting at Fort Sill and it was -- we do what they call a counsel of colonels -- and this is me learning budget. So the chief of staff of the post says to me one day, he said Sergeant Major, I'm sure if you've seen this or not. He says this to me because he knows that me and General Baxter, the two-star, is very tight; and he makes sure that he keeps me informed. So he said we're doing a budget meeting and we're usually do it with the Council of Colonels -- and he says, I'm not sure if you're tracking of some stuff's going on, but if you are available, we're going to have a meeting before we brief the CG on this budget thing; and I want to know if you'd just stick your head in and give us some comment. I'm thinking, okay. First I'm thinking to myself -- okay, this is another meeting I've got to

sit-in on, and (inaudible); I hope I can get some input; okay, I see if I can do it. This was supposed to have been like two days from now, whenever it was.

So, anyway, before that, I get in my Humvee and I'm out there running around, just doing basic stuff on the range. I go out here on the range -- right here at Fort Sill range, on top of Thompson Hill. I see a bunch of guys shooting, and I mean some 13-Foxes up there, and here I am the post Sergeant Major; I got some free time on my calendar. I drive up on top of this hill and I got a bunch of 13-Foxes up there. They're up in there, they doing call for five; looking through their binoculars; doing what they're doing; and down below at the bottom there's a firing battery down there that's doing all the shooting; and you've got a bunch of lieutenants here, and part of their class, and then you've got a bunch of privates over here, a part of their class; so they're taking notes and they're calling and firing -- they're doing just what they do for training; and the artillery battery down here shooting. I say okay, I'm

going to go down there and see them.

So I come off the top of Thompson Hill, come down to the bottom, go down there; and who do I run into a guy by the name of Sergeant Major Walker. I'll never forget him; he was my neighbor. Cold, windy day, walking down there; got his gun guys down there and we're visiting with them; and he says to me on the way, he says me and my battalion commander been beating up CIF about trying to get some Gore-Tex jackets that they can put in the CIF inventory that we can take; and then(inaudible) out to these guys because, Sergeant Major, these damn Parkers they're wearing and all of that wet-weather gear they've got, that ain't really doing no good; they need some better equipment.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah; they were freezing?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; they're down here freezing. Makes a lot of sense; I say okay; I'm going to see what I can do. I'm going to talk to the guy at CIF. This is like on Monday. Now I'm going to fast forward to Thursday when we're having this Council of

Colonels and I go in there with the chief of staff for the post -- which is also an 0-6, they got all these colonels in there -- and their job is to go through the useful lists and nug out, and argue, and negotiate all of these things on the lists.

MR. WATERHOUSE: They were unforecasted (inaudible)?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; and put them all on the lists.

MR. WATERHOUSE: These are things we need that aren't budgeted for?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; and then they're going to go in -- now they're going to brief the CGO. So, when they did that, I'm in the room. Guess what I see on the list -- Gore-Tex jackets down around about item number 25 of about 50 things.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And what's above it?  
(Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And a whole bunch of other stuff. So I say, sir, the only one I really recognize is -- tell me about that one for Gore-Tex jackets. He

said well, yeah, Big Duce put it in; they said they need it. We just put it on list; we're trying to figure out to (inaudible).

MR. WATERHOUSE: That was the entry you had just seen?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I had just seen it; so I told him the story and I told him I say, I think we ought to move that a little bit higher. Well, you know, a couple of guys in the room talking, well, yeah. So it went from like wherever it was, maybe up a couple of spaces. So, anyway, long story short -- two days later when the CG comes in -- same people in the room; now I'm in the room again. And then when it got down to my turn, the CG asked me the same question, saying, Sergeant Major you got any input about anything on there? I said, sir, the only thing is I did notice the one on Gore-Tex jackets up there. I didn't tell him what I said to the staff or anything. One of them got on Gore-Tex jackets up there; and I just talked to Sergeant Major Walker and his guys; I think that needs to be a little bit



higher. Them soldiers out there are cold; they need to get this taken care of.

Roger -- we got through a discussion. It went from what it was to item number 3 and it got funded that day. They put them in and go over there, and I got it fixed without telling him that I had already brought it up to these idiots in the room, and they wouldn't move it. I didn't have to say all that; I didn't have to put nobody on the spot; I had to get what I wanted without making them guys in the room look like they couldn't make the right decision; and I still got what I wanted.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, during your time here as Field Artillery Center Command Sergeant Major and Fort Sill Command Sergeant Major who did you look up to? Who higher up the chain of command did you look to for advice and assistance, mentorship, etc.?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did a lot of -- Sergeant Major Bob Deales was the Fort Leonardwood post Sergeant Major. He and I used to do a lot of talking.

I don't know a lot of other names. When I used to go to those TRADOC meetings when the TRADOC Sergeant Major used to bring us all in that's how I get to meet the Huachuca guy, the Bending guy, the Gordon guy.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Other guys doing similar positions?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; those guys; some of the things. And I learned from them and I pull from a lot of things I learned from 25th Division. I had just come out of 25th. That division star major over there was pretty thorough about post-level stuff. The branch-level stuff was stuff that you had to learn because you just had to work with HRC. You just worked with proponency; and you just had to do it. You can't teach that, you've just got to learn it. But maintaining a post, soldier safety, discipline -- those kind of things -- by the time you get to the two-star level, you done learned all that now, you're just kind of tweaking stuff.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, looking back at your time here as the Field Artillery Center

and Fort Sill Command Sergeant Major, what would you say were your key lessons learned, or significant lessons learned, that you took with you further in your career?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Working now with a two-star. More power; he gets more done; people react to him even faster than they did the one-star; you've got to be very careful what you tell him; you don't want to tell him something and he go drop the hammer and crush people. You've got to feed it to him and kind of tell him what you want; tell him what you don't want him to do; so he can kind of stay and keep himself out of trouble; learning a lot about senior Sergeant Majors above me. I was being pulled into a lot of meetings at Bragg and other places; kind of see what the three- and four-star guys were doing; kind of learning some of them. I didn't know many of them.

I used to think that it's amazing how -- I always say that God does things in our lives for a reason; and if you notice that when I was at the one-star level here at Corps Artillery, I was having

problems with the post Sergeant Major, Sergeant Major Commode -- personnel issues. He didn't really seem like he really cared that much about us. Remember I told you earlier, I'm now in Corps Artillery 4 Brigades and they're red-cycle tasking the crap out of one of my brigades. I'm the guy down at the one-star level fighting everybody at post saying no, no, no; and doing all of that stuff; and then all of a sudden now, in 1998, guess what happened.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You're that guy?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They took me out of Corps Artillery -- of all guys, they have never in the history of Fort Sill taken a Sergeant Major out of Corps Artillery and brought him to the post -- it ain't never happened. Those guys always progress somewhere else because they're an attendant unit; and they're like looked upon differently. All of a sudden now they took one of the attendant guys over all these other guys on post and made me the guy. Now my whole thought about red-cycle -- the people that used to task the crap out of my soldiers over in (inaudible) -

- oh, they knew they couldn't bring it to the table now. When we would stand in those (inaudible) military manpower meetings over there on post; now the post Sergeant Major, they know not to bring that crap in there; they know not to come in there and say I need 6 soldiers for this, 10 for that because --

MR. WATERHOUSE: So now you can kind of right some of the wrongs?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely. The Corps Artillery Sergeant Major, the guy that replaced me, he's still here on Fort Sill. He retired and he runs CIF. He was sitting right there. He don't even have to fight his own battles anymore because he's already got a champion. I'm going to be doing the battle fighting.

Now sometimes I would fight too much and kind of get in his way a little bit; but I made sure soldiers didn't get screwed over.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in May 2001, you were assigned to Fort Bliss, Texas where you served as Command Sergeant Major of the United States

Army Sergeant Majors Academy, and I think you did that for six months or so; so how did this come about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sitting in my office one day and -- you were asking about people who impact your life and do things -- I told you I didn't ask to be the post Sergeant Major at Fort Sill, General Baxter put me there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

JUDGE GRIMES: So now I'm sitting there; Baxter retires; General Strickland comes in after him, the next two-star here at Fort Sill; I'm working with Strickland -- worked with Strickland longer than I did Baxter. So I'm sitting there and Sergeant Major Cynthia Pritchett was the CAC Sergeant Major.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Command Arm Center at Leavenworth?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Command Arm Center at Leavenworth; and Cynthia Pritchett and I were pretty close; and I was one of -- CAC was kind of traced to be the overseer of some of these installations so they wouldn't be direct to guys like Davenport --

MR. WATERHOUSE: For training, and --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: For training, and things like that. So Cynthia was like my direct person -- I was dotted line to her even though I was direct to John Beck, which is the TRADOC Sergeant Major. But in those days we always --

MR. WATERHOUSE: At the Academy, you're talking about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No; I'm still at Fort Sill.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Oh, okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So Cynthia and I had a real good relationship. So there was a rumor going around that Sergeant Major Kinnery at the Sergeant Major Academy was moving on and that they were looking for somebody to go to Sergeant Major Academy. And when I heard it, it went pass me just as fast as the guy told it to me and it never crossed my mind. It's always been the hand-picked guy by the SMA.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major Kennery ?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I just naturally assumed I

had never been an installation, NCO Academy guy, so I didn't never feel as though I would even qualify for nothing like that; so I didn't even pay no attention to it. But I do know that they guy was leaving. So I'm sitting here at Fort Sill and, finally, one day I get a phone call and Sergeant Major Pritchett called me up and she said the SMA had asked the four-star Sergeant Majors and some of the three-star Sergeant Majors to provide him with a name of somebody they recommend to go to the Sergeant Major Academy, to be the CSM down there.

And she said I gave them your name; and I said well, wow; I said well, I'm really honored. I mean like -- I'm still trying to figure out why would she give them my name and why would I qualify to do something like that. I was like, yeah. She said would you do it if they select you? And I said well; I said, yeah, but ain't nobody going to select me to do that. Why would they select me to do that?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Thinking about your experience.



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; I had no experience with that and -- I don't want to just sound wrong, but I wasn't one of the SMA's friends or nothing like that. I'm ain't saying he only picks his friends, but Jack Tilley at time, he didn't even know me. He didn't know me. She said okay; but I'm turning your name in. So, I think, Sergeant Major Beck told them all to pic somebody.

Man, about a month goes by and I got another phone call and it's Pritchett again; and she says well, I just want to let you know that you name did go on the list and they narrowed it down to three people, and you're one of the three. That's when I got nervous. And I said are you serious? She said yeah; she said, but now that we got down to three what the SMA wants to do is he wants to call the three -- and you're one of them -- and he wants to call and talk to you and kind of do a phone interview.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So he interviewed all three people?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So he'll interview all

three of you on the phone. So I said to myself; I said well, okay, maybe I do have a change -- I'm saying to myself -- after he'd been through all these other guys that she said he took off the list; she said but, he's also going to call your commander and talk to your Commander, General Strickland -- no problem.

Anyway, he called Strickland first before he called me. When he called General Strickland -- no; I had told Strickland the very first time Cynthia called that they were looking at me; so he wouldn't be blindsided. But he and I thought a shot in the dark. Anyway, now when he called the second time, when Tilley called, he called to talk to General Strickland. So Strickland tells them look, I don't want to lose the guy; we've got a good thing going here; we kind of made this little pack thing that he's going to give me the flag; and we're going to go out together in a blaze of glory when I retire; and I was always under the mindset -- I would tell everybody, the last job I had I thought was going to be my last

job, that's how I always approached it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, anyway, so then the next day after he talked to Strickland, Tilley calls me up and he got to talking to me. That's when I said, Sergeant Major -- he said I heard a lot about you; and I said good -- but I'm going to tell right now I never been an NCO or Academy Sergeant Major (inaudible).

Anyway, the next day Pritchett calls me about access. Well it ain't no more three on the list, there's only two, and it's you and one other guy. That's when I knew, based on the way she told it to me, that I'd probably get the job. Tilley called me back that afternoon and said hey, congratulations. This is what I want you to do; and I want you to do it like right now. And I closed out; in May of 2001, I got sent to the Academy; and the world changed after that.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, your predecessor there at the Academy, who was that again;

and did you get time?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did get time to overlap with him. Sergeant Major Kennery was the guy down there; and I mean that's the best assignment I ever had.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So upon your arrival when you got there you said you never served in an NCO Academy for BNOC or ANOC, or anything like that before. Now you were here where you were over some of those things, right?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But when you got there how did you go about assessing the Academy because they have the Sergeant Major course; they have other things -- battle set course and other things are out there. But how did you approach when you got there; how did you approach kind of learning that organization?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I was nervous; I did not have a college degree; I didn't even have an associate degree -- no college degree; never served as a commandant of an NCO Academy. Very first black

Sergeant Major ever set foot into that job -- not saying race has anything to do with it; but it's pressure.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah. I think the first class was opened in '72, I think?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So being the first African American, I felt pressure to succeed, not fail. So my other one is, I didn't know Tilley -- I didn't know the guy that picked me; but what I did know is that I didn't need anybody to micromanage me. I'm a leader so I need guidance; I need funding; I need resources, but I don't need a manager.

And so I had all these things going on in my mind; and then I went down there; and I was thinking. So, first of all, if you're sitting here and you are a one-star Corps Artillery Sergeant Major and you've got four brigade guys working for you, and you're tip-toeing around how to deal with four brigade Sergeant Majors and the battalions under them, and you kind of get your way through it; and then you come over here to the two-star level -- now you've got even more

brigades and you kind of tip-toeing around -- and you're trying to figure out how not to be a hard ass, but don't be perceived to being too easy. You finally get through that; and now what you just did was you took that same guy and you sent him to the Sergeant Major Academy and you put him in charge of an organization that's got more E-9s in one spot than anywhere in an entire world.

So I go down there and I'm trying to figure out how am I going to be who I am without pissing everybody off? Am I going to be a politician walking around patting people on the back and trying to tell them join the team?

MR. WATERHOUSE: How many, do you think, Sergeant Majors did you have working there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We had 42 group rooms; each group room had a Sergeant Major in it -- so that's 42 E-9s.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We have Alpha, Bravo Company Commander Sergeant Majors -- each company

commander is a Sergeant Major; the battalion commander is a Command Sergeant Major; and the training section back there where they write all the lessons at -- you've got about 10, 15 E-9s back there. We have an Army Reserve Sergeant Major; a National Guard Sergeant Major on the staff.

Then you've got all of your senior instructors, your chief instructors -- they're all Sergeant Majors; then you've got your first sergeant course; then you've got E-9 instructors in the first sergeant course; then we have all the battle staff; and I've got all those E-9s over teaching battle staff. And so you got all of these guys there and then you bring in on occasions the nominative Sergeant Major that comes in to teach the nominative classes -- and so, again, you noticed I gave cite about two jobs, one with being a drill sergeant; and now this one.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That's a lot of Sergeant Majors. (Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And now this one (laughter). So I get down there -- sometimes if you

use a technique you've got to stay with it because it's working for you -- it don't matter who you're talking to. So I get down there and I said -- my wife and I were talking about it by now -- I said I couldn't sleep; I said I don't know what to say to these people when they get them all in the auditorium. I said I don't know how to be with them, or anything. If you want to know any more stories about me, ask Davenport.

So I said I'm just going to do it. So anyway I said I want everybody that's permanently employed at the Sergeant Major Academy that Friday evening, I had just got there; I'd been on a few days running around; I said I want everybody to go into the auditorium; I want everybody in their (inaudible).

MR. WATERHOUSE: So this was like the first week you were there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; the first week I was there. I was different now. I wasn't the commandant. They had a colonel that was the commandant. So I told Colonel DeWitt -- I said sir, I'm going to go in there



and talk to everybody, but I want you in there; I want you in the room. This ain't no me talking to all the enlisted guys. I want you in the room; and I said I don't want you to say nothing; I just want you in the room.

DeWitt and I had met two days in a row for a half a day just talking philosophizing and having a lunch, getting to feel each other; and I had told him what my approach would be with them and how I would go about it to get buy-ins; so I knew that he wasn't going to give me any problems. That he was going to let me have free range to do the things I knew I needed to do. Now everybody's in the room. So the first thing that comes to my mind is you've just got to talk to them. You just got to tell them just what's on your mind, and I just told them.

I said look, what you've got to understand is, I say, it takes time to know people. I've got to get to know you; you've got to get to know me. And I said I'm different than the last guy, he's different than the last guy. Let me tell you who I am. I said

I'm the kind of guy that I'm going to come around and I'm going to visit you all the time. I'm the kind of guy that -- I believe in fairness; I believe that you're given these guys and women a chance down here - - you're not down here trying to fail them out of class. I said we're going to hold the standards for PT, weight control.

MR. WATERHOUSE: How long was the Sergeant Major course back then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant major course for me when I was there was six months as a student; but when I was down there with that class it was nine months -- it's what is now.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Inaudible) nine months, yeah?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I'm down there -- when I get assigned down there in May, Class 51 is in session. I get there in May and they graduated right after I got there. So when I got there, and Tilley inserted me there as a Sergeant Major, Colonel DeWitt, the actual Colonel Commandant at the time, he already

had the idea of, he don't do nothing. He just kind of sit back -- and that's all DeWitt ever did. DeWitt didn't go in talking to the students; he didn't run nothing; he just signed all the papers; and he did all the paperwork kind of stuff. He allowed me to run the Sergeant Major's Academy.

And it was a good idea; it was really good. So, anyway, when I get everybody in the room and I talk to them and I kind of told them I say I believe in fairness, I believe in (inaudible); so I believe in fairness. This is the kind of the way we're going to do it. I said, and then I'm going to come by and visit you; don't feel uncomfortable that I'm coming around and visit you. I tried to give them the normal load kind of thing, straight up.

So what I would do during the daytime, every day, morning and evening, you see me going in and out of the group rooms. When I started doing that, you would have thought the world had come to an end. It was just like somebody was on a damn walkie-talkie calling down the hallway telling them that he's

coming, he's coming.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) He's coming to your room next?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So they started making me feel uncomfortable and I used to go in there -- one day, later on, after they did that with Class 51, we had the summer break and then 52 shows up and that's the class that Davenport's in. So I brought all the instructors in there, all the cabinet back in there again; and I said look you've got to learn to get comfortable with this because this is how I do it. I'm going to go inside a group room and I'm going to sit in the back of the room, and just sit there for 10 minutes and watch what's going on. What I don't want is the battalion commander sitting over there behind me, the company commander, the chief instructor, the senior instructor -- so I'm going down the hallway and about five E-9s walking down the hallway with clipboards trying to figure out what the hell I'm going to change.

I said I didn't want all of that. That

ain't the way life is. I want these guys to feel comfortable about this. And I did not know that the guy said well, Sergeant Major, you're the first one that ever done that. Most of the Sergeant Majors over there that run over at the headquarters they didn't come down and do the group room thing. That's what we barely even seen the battalion commander come down and do all that kind of stuff. So the philosophy changed.

Then I did something very elementary with Davenport's class. It was very, very corny, and it was something that was corny that turned into a rally thing that you can ask anybody out of that class that they'd never forget. So I had a habit of every time that they brought all the students to the auditorium - - I don't care what it was for; I don't give a damn what it was -- I went to the auditorium. Because it was the first time that where we had them all in one room at one time. And I would let the battalion commander do what he was doing. They were talking about flu shots; and doing all of the stuff that they do; and every time a guest speaker comes in and he

came in to speak to the class, they would rehearse and they'd do all this other stuff; and then whenever I walk in the room everybody automatically stand up and they get all up -- and I'd say don't worry about it, just take a seat; and then I'd sit down. And sometimes I'd sit in there and I'll listen to what the guys on the stage are telling the students; the students asking a bunch of questions; and they're doing a lot of administrative stuff; and I'd just sit there.

So I remember when I was sitting in that audience out there, how I used to look up on the stage and think about how people were -- and the Academy to me was getting to be a little boring, and they really wasn't doing much. They had just got in processed; and I'd say, okay, I've got to find a way to get these guys together. I said, let's have a run. All Sergeant Majors wanted to have a run. So I got them out that morning and we had a run. I show up out there that morning, I had my two little knee braces and everybody looked at me like hell no; oh, no. How

in the hell is he going to come out here and run and he's got all of these knee braces on? Can he run -- everybody like -- can he run? So, I had to go prove to them that I could run. So we went on a long 6-mile run like that.

But I still -- they just wasn't motivated -- it just wasn't really kind of clicking. So the next time they brought them to the auditorium, I told the battalion commander, I said, I've got to talk to them. All right; what you going to talk to them about, Sergeant Major. Everybody wanted to know what the hell -- I said nothing. I've got to find out something to talk to them about and kind of get them motivated -- everybody saying that they ain't motivated.

So we came in -- on your feet -- Sergeant Major stood up; I come on the stage. I said everybody take a seat; and I'd say -- I used to always use the analogy -- and Davenport will tell you -- I said I was sleeping last night and I had a dream. And then when I said that everybody thought, ah, shit, there he go -

- what he going to dream about. I said I had a dream last night and I said you guys just don't seem like y'all motivated enough; I said so, I think we ought to come up with a rally cry, or song, or something. Everybody go ah, no.

MR. WATERHOUSE: A motto.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; a motto or something. And everybody in there was saying ah, no, no; we don't need any of that.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Like you're treating us like we're kids or something?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You got all these special ops guys in there; you've got women -- you know how the Academy is -- 500 and something guys in there and they're like don't treat us like no kid, we don't want to hear that. You can come up with something better than that. I said, okay, I'm going to come with something; and I'll be back tomorrow; and I'll tell y'all what it is. They were ah, hell, we don't want to hear that.



So the next day I came back in -- I came and I'd say it just came to me -- I said I've got this one I used as a drill sergeant and I want y'all to recite it. Everybody was like, oh shit. I said stand up; everybody stood up. I brought all the instructors in. I said okay, here it go. This is what I want y'all to say it. Every time y'all come up and y'all stand up, I want y'all to say motivated, motivated, damn right motivated; motivated, motivated damn right motivated; you check us out, you check us out. And they just started cracking up. What the hell, you want us to say that. Oh, no; oh, no, we ain't going to say that. They were like oh. Some people said yeah, I think it sounds pretty good; it's kind of corny; but it kind a grow on you, yeah, yeah, yeah.

I said okay, all right, we're going to work on it. I said all right everybody stand up again, and I said let's say it. And they screwed it all up. They didn't want to say it; they messed around with it; I said, ah, okay. I'll come back.

That evening they had a guest speaker, and

the guest speaker came and he finished; they got up and they did the same old thing. Thank you for all you coming in; gave the guest speaker a little plague, guest speaker left; and as soon as he left, I popped in and everybody stood up; I came in and I said okay, we're going to practice that motto again. Ah, hell, if we want to hear that again.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, anyway, I made them stand up and say it again; and this time it kind of sounded a little bit better; at least, they chimed in because they're trying to appease me to get me to shut up to leave.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you can leave  
(laughter).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then the next time I come in, I did it again; the next day; and the next week; and all of a sudden it just grew on them. I'm walking down the damn hallway one time --

MR. WATERHOUSE: So now they're looking forward to it.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. And I see some guys

down the hallway down there just standing down there saying it to themselves, I knew I had them. So we did the nominative conference and all of the SMAs came in; and I was down there with the nominative conference over in the Biggs Auditorium. They know when Williams walks into the auditorium, no matter what you're doing, all the students stand up. So I said I'm not going to walk in because if I walk in they'll probably stand up because all of the SMAs were on the stage in their little panel -- I mean all of them -- lined up there to do their little panel thing -- and then the battalion commander was in there as the facilitator -- you know, you got the question for Jack Tilley; you got the question for this guy?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I was over at the nominative conference part of it, over there -- I was going back and forth checking. So I came into the auditorium and they knew when I get on the stage, there cue was to stand up and say that motto. So I was like okay -- but I walk in the room, I had the

door closed -- I said I hope if I walk in the room, they won't say this and interrupt the panel that's going on.

Sergeant Major, I walked in the door and opened up the door and walked in, every student in there jumped to their feet and yelled this motto out; and everybody was standing there looking at me like who in the hell is this guy and what he got them doing. Right in the middle of all of the panel thing, they stopped talking to all of the Sergeant Majors and looked at me and yelled that motto out; and that stuck with them. When I got ready to leave the Academy -- so this happened -- see, I left in November; Davenport's class went into effect in August -- September, October, November -- I was with those guys for about three months. When I left from down there, they were motivated as crap.

When I came in the day to do my little farewell thing with them, I did all I could to keep from crying on stage because I was just that close to them and they had really gotten so used to me that I

really didn't want to go; and it was really hard on me to do that. And I'll never forget the day I left the Academy, I was driving my car away from El Paso and my wife was driving, and I'm sitting there looking in the rear-view mirror with tears in my eyes. And that's how motivated and connected I was to that institution.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, when you got there -- I think you've covered all this. I don't know if you want to highlight any specific -- cause you had all those different courses too, so -- what did you see as your role and responsibilities in the other courses besides the Sergeant Major course?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The key thing is -- so let's say the first sergeant course -- when the first sergeant course's going on, let's just say it's going on in three or four different group rooms. Remember, they've got their structure too.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They've got their battalion commander, first sergeant, and senior instructor, chief instructors -- so they've got all

the help and mentorship they can get. So, me, what I would do is I'd come over to those classrooms -- and then I'd already sneak into the back and I'd just have a seat in the back of the classroom.

I'm learning, I'm listening to these guys talk around the table -- everything from duty roster; to working with a new captain; to PT -- and I'm listening to all this and the instructor up there teaching -- I'm just sitting there listening; and I'm looking for an opportunity not to get in the way of the instructor but to insert a little bit of my experience or elaborate on a point that a student makes and cover that; and that's kind of how I did those.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you just come in like a senior facilitator, real quick, or a (inaudible)?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Just kind of sit in the back of the room and kind of fill in.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Let them ask you some questions and then you go to the next one?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the end of that, just

like at the end of the CSMD class -- I did the same thing for CSMD. You've got a nominative Sergeant Major come from out of town; he's a facilitator; you've got all these guys around the room, about four classrooms of CSMDs down there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: These are the guys that were selected to be Command Sergeant Majors?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Be Command Sergeant Majors. And I sat in the back of the room; kind of give a few points here and there; but the points that I made mostly was at the end of the course. When every class shows up what I would do is go meet them in the auditorium; and when they're getting their orientation; then I would say welcome to the Academy; this is who I am; this is our philosophy down here; stay out of trouble; don't get no DUI; don't get in trouble; don't embarrass yourself; this could be a career-ending kind of thing; learn from each over; just go on down the basic, you know, housekeeping kind of stuff. And when I get through that, I'd say at the end when we're done of this course, there's going to

be a wrap-up; we'll be able to come back in; you guys are going to fill out some sheets with some customer-comment kind of sheets -- that's where I get my feedback on the curriculum and instructions, and things like that -- and I said the last thing that I will do is I do a Q&A session with every class.

They go through; they finish; whether you're first sergeant or CSMD course, when they're done, they're back in the auditorium, the last day of the three weeks or whatever they've been there. I kick all the instructors out; just the students in the room; and I say okay, this is not a session where you're telling on your instructor; this is a session where you tell me -- first of old, let's talk curriculum.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Is this stuff that we're teaching you something that you knew already and we're reinforcing it; did you not know it; did you learn something?

MR. WATERHOUSE: After action report?



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So we talk curriculum first. Then we start talking about what's on their mind; what their fears are. When you go back to work with a young captain do you want me to give you some techniques about it? Have you burned bridges already -- some guys came out of a first sergeant position and came to the Academy while they had just taken over the battery company; and they were just going to go back home and go back to work; and they may have already made some mistakes with their captain already, and we wanted to talk through some of those kind of things. Dealing with females -- I mean we talked about all kind of stuff -- and then last, if they had some things they wanted to give me feedback about any of the faculty, then I would take that in. But I never put that on the table first because then I didn't want them thinking I'm on a witch hunt trying to find out something for my own team.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you were looking to improve the course, (inaudible).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I want to improve the

course first, then give them some tools that they can work with; and then if they had something to tell me - - if this guy's an asshole and he's up there threatening you; and he's just really not a good deliverer, he's a good -- one of my instructors when I was down there as a student, he was a good person, but he wasn't a good instructor. He couldn't present the material in a good way.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, during your time there at the Academy, what kind of guidance, or word, or mentorship, or whatever did you get from the TRADOC, or the Training and Doctrine Command Sergeant Major? How often did you talk to him?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I talked to John Beck a lot; didn't get a lot of guidance from him. Beck wasn't the kind of guy that gives out a lot of guidance. Beck knew that the SMA was deeply engaged into that position. He picked me to go down there; and Beck knew that whatever I bounced off of him at TRADOC, that I had to make sure that we all -- both, collectively -- kind of bounced the same thing off the

SMA. So, Beck didn't give me no issues at all.

Now, Tilley called me more than the TRADOC Sergeant Major. Obviously, he put you down there, so he's going call you.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah. So Sergeant Major, looking back at your time there at the Academy, I know you mentioned you're trying to improve like the student's participation, and morale, and get them up; what were some of the other challenges you faced there. I know you didn't get to spend a whole lot of time there, but what were some of the things that you faced there that you tried to change the outcome of?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Everybody have a different philosophy about training and how they get people's attention, so at the Academy when I was down there, the current process was you go in; you take the instructions; and you come out of the instructions and you take an A-examination. If you fail the A-test, there was some retraining that's done and therein they would give you what they call a B-level test. The B-test wasn't easier than the A-test; the B-test was

just another test.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Different version of the same?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Different version of the same information, it just wasn't necessarily the same questions. Some of them may have been; some of them may not have been. If you failed the B-test, you then would dis-enroll. Now, this gets into philosophy because a lot of people have a philosophy that if you don't put teeth in something why have it because you don't have any teeth in it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: If you don't have some kind of evaluation of why would a person even come to class; if you don't have something in it, why would they even participate?

MR. WATERHOUSE: No repercussion for failing?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. So I totally agree with the philosophy of something has to be in there. But I also am of the mindset that you ought to build a

curriculum around making these guys successful, not successful test takers. So a lot of E-9s have difficulty speaking -- guest speaker; in front of a formation; whatever -- because if they don't use 10 times of profanity; or use the wrong kind of words that people don't totally understand what they're saying -- their communication skills are not as good.

When you're dealing with an O-6, a brigade-level commander or higher -- I go that way because these guys are war-college graduates; they are smart; they got masters degrees. They don't need an ignorant E-9; not educated; can't express themselves; talking to them, or a soldier; they want you to be able to have good communication skills.

I think it's really important that a E-9 has to be physically fit -- I mean physically fit -- you've got to be able to run; do PT; you've got to be physically fit. I believe it's important that you must be able to write effectively. You've got to be able to write it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You've got to be able to put something on paper, or in an e-mail, that's in such a way that you can express yourself in writing; just like you can speak clearly. I think an E-9 has to be not overweight. I think your weight control; your military appearance says volumes of you before you open your mouth.

So given all that -- weight control; your physical appearance; your communication skills, writing and all that kind of stuff -- you put all those things together and you build a curriculum around all of those. Those are some serious tools that you put together. So now we have taken a guy who's gone from ANOC to BNOC, and now he goes down to the Sergeant Major Academy -- he's a first sergeant going down to the Sergeant Major Academy. He goes down to the Sergeant Major Academy; and goes down there and he ends up taking an A-test. Here is a Sergeant Major or a master sergeant who now have 21 years in the Army. He shows up to USASMA; he goes in there; if you ask the battery that he just came from,

they think he's the best damn first sergeant on post.

He goes down to Sergeant Major Academy and he's an Anthony Williams kind of guy. He goes down there and he don't do good on speed reading; he goes down there and he don't do very good on his aptitude; and he fails the A-test, because his technique is off, or whatever. Next thing you know you give him a B-test and he fails the B-test, whether its two, three days later, or whatever. Now he's 22 years in the Army, and you know what you do -- you send him home. I'm going to tell you what you do. You send him home -- that's what you do -- you send him home. So he goes home; his career's ended; he's embarrassed and he goes home.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Because at that point he'd have to get out at whatever the time limit is for an E-8.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right; because he failed a written examination. I didn't say he failed weight control; I didn't say he wasn't a good warfighter; I didn't none of that. I said he failed a written

examination. So I'd say for us to put that much value on an A and a B test, we ought to put that much value on retraining. So my philosophy with him is I'm not going to come down and change the rule; I'm not going to say if he fails the A, and then you go to B, and they fail the B, I'm not going to say, we will not dis-USASMA Sergeant Major.

But what I'm going to say is this -- and I've got all the instructors in there -- so what I'm going to say is this -- you'd better be able to tell me everything you've done when he got to the B-test to make sure that he was strong enough to pass that B-test. You've got to be able to tell me. The chief instructor, the senior instructor better be able to tell me, that Sergeant Major we done sat him down.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So they had a responsibility to retrain?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely. You done retrained them. I mean you done went over all this -- if you tell me that you've done all of that, then there may be a problem of comprehension that the



individual has, and that we may need to find out if that's really the issue; and if that's the issue, I want to know one thing -- do I have authority to give him a C-test. When I said that to them guys in that auditorium -- now think about it, I'm talking to instructors.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They looked at me like I had a third eye. Like, why would you give him now a C-test, you really watering it down? I said well, maybe the C-test is not the answer but if you tell me, and we're after the end of the B-test when I do my assessment and that E-9 brought an appeal packet in and it's on my desk; and he's got an appeal in front of me; and he says that I don't think I was adequately trained. You've got to come in and prove to me that he was adequately trained. I said if I get any indication that I don't think he was adequately trained, he's going to get a C-test. And that's what I told them.

So when I told them that -- you know what

that mean -- we never got to a C-test.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That means they were going full (inaudible) and getting them ready for that B-test.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: First of all, my instructor don't want to look stupid because he's got to bring it in there with me and justify it. The chief instructor don't want to come there and say well, I think we trained them. But at the same time, I don't want to take all the responsibility off the student; I don't want to do that because then that becomes no standard.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I think you have to have a standard.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, while you were there, 9/11 happened, September 11, 2001, the terrorist attack. Did that have any effect on the Academy, and how did you address it, I guess, with the

students?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Standing in my kitchen, in my quarters, on Fort Bliss watching the TV and I watched the plane fly into the building. I've got to tell you, I thought it was like a movie when we were looking at it. I was on my way out; I had gotten dressed that morning; I was headed out. And the CNN, or somebody was covering it, and that's when I realized how bad it was. I walked out the door and by the time I left out of the door and drove from Fort Bliss proper, over to Biggs Field, the other two planes had hit the second building and the Philadelphia area; and everybody was in a panic at the Academy.

I was wondering what was going on. We had this TV in the foyer and everybody was glued to it. And Colonel DeWitt was asking me did I know what was going on; that's when I knew how serious it was. But then he was telling me about some other staff that I was unaware of about the other two incidences, and that's when I got updated. Effect, yeah, it had a big

effect on us. I mean we felt like we were going to war. A lot of guys did not know if they were going to be able to finish the class; are they going to cancel class send everybody back to the unit; it's going to be an all-out war. We didn't really know what was going on. At the same time that happened, in September the 11th, I was -- I think I had already been, or about to be identified to go to TRADOC. I went to TRADOC in November, by the way --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- and so it was either they had already told me I was going or I was close to be going. I do remember how a lot of people were stranded because they couldn't catch flights; all the flights were cancelled. I think we had a quality control certification team that was on the road going around certifying NCO Academies, and I think they were stranded.

I never forget my wife and I were concerned about how we were going to get out. I think it had an effect on the students because nobody knew what to do.

This was something that had never happened on U.S. soil before; and they didn't know how they were going to react with that.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, looking back at your time as the Command Sergeant Major at the Sergeant Major Academy, what would you say were your lessons learned that you took with you; and what did you pass on to your successor there at the Academy?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Sergeant Major West was my successor. Sergeant Major Cliff West came out of the 101st. West was a different person than me. He and I both were post Sergeant Majors in our lives, so we had run installations. So we had that kind of background. The difference -- I came off of a TRADOC post as a post Sergeant Major; West came from a division, he was a division Sergeant Major. He had a warfighting position, whereas I had a TRADOC position at the two-star.

West was more focused on the emphasis of warfighting, as he should as a division Sergeant Major; and I was more focused on training. When West

came in, he was focused on building a tower, such as an air-assault kind of tower, and having Sergeant Majors climb up ropes and do things like that where he came out of a division; he had an air-assault school there; that's what they did. They climbed ropes; they did things; that was just different.

In my opinion, it didn't fit that institution that he did it in, but neither did me standing up there telling them to recite a motto that I gave a bunch of privates as a drill sergeant. That didn't fit either. So who am I to question that? I did question West's methodology about that only in the form of if anybody got hurt.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Because it wasn't part of the curriculum. Now if you hurt somebody and they got to the point where they couldn't do the PT text, there was a curriculum requirement to get out of the Academy; now you've got him in a position now where he's got to get a waiver; then he's got to come back, and all that other stuff. So that was the only thing

I was concerned about with that part is it a motivator -- yeah, get a bunch guys out there climbing ropes and doing things -- yeah, it's a motivator; but you don't want to get him hurt because once you get him hurt -- the other thing was -- and it ain't a bad thing -- we had National Guard and Reserve Sergeant Majors in our class. They didn't doing that stuff every day. I had a lot of guys down there that were going in there -- I hate to say it -- from the National Guard that was overweight. They weren't doing PT every day. I mean they would come down and get a profile so they wouldn't do PT.

So West now is going to try to have them climb a rope, a 50-foot rope with knots in it; and then go over a banister. These guys couldn't hardly pull their weight up the first knot. I didn't see that as being something that was really going to help the entire class.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Because I thought if he got somebody hurt, now he's got to give them a waiver.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So what would you say your personal -- you going back to lessons learned that you had from that experience as the Academy Sergeant Major? Because I know you're passionate about it, so (inaudible),

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Part of who I am -- when we first started talking about me going down to the Academy, we skipped over a point I was going to make and I'll make it now. I go down to take the speed reading requirement test as a first sergeant here before I go down to the Sergeant Major Academy as a student -- and this is the world coming full circle. I go down there and I didn't score well on my scores; and I go down to the Academy and we're in the auditorium, and as you filed into the auditorium -- you go through those two doors --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- they had set up all these agencies in that little area there -- education center was there, and everybody else -- and we all were filing through with our paperwork and going



through, and they were logging us all in; looking at us; and then they were signing us up for taking those civilian education classes. Remember now, at the time I had no college.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So Mr. Stewart -- I don't know if you ever met this guy or not -- Mr. Stewart is an education advisor, or something like that, over at the education center and he was there in line -- he's a tall, black guy. Sitting there behind the chair -- I come up there with my paperwork; hand in my paperwork; and Mr. Stewart -- now, there's a line right there; a bunch of guys in that line behind that table; bunch of a lot of guys in that line behind that table -- people behind me, so everybody is getting to hear what everybody says.

So Stewart's going through my paperwork and he looks at my paperwork, and clear as day he says to me, one of the most demotivating things that ever happened. He says to me oh, looking at your scores, I don't know how you got here.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right in front of everybody?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right in front -- and then he says, you know, I don't know how you're going to be able to improve this because your reading level is low; it says you're reading at a 10th grade level; you may struggle here because there's a lot of reading here. That's what he's saying to me in front of all my peers, right there; and I say okay, well the Army sent me here and I'm here and I'm going to do the best I can. All right, okay; next. So remember that.

Another thing I did when I was down there as a student -- I used to always complain why is it that every time I turn around there's no place to park down here and all of the students -- nobody can part on the inner circle? I'm a student now, I'm a master sergeant.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's the way is; that's the way it's always been; and it ain't going to change. All right; so I'm in the auditorium. So now

I'm going to get back to what you just said. I show up now, years late, and Tilley sends me down to the Academy and I go down to the Sergeant Majors Academy; and we went over there on post one day -- on a social event -- who do I see, Mr. Stewart.

So think about it now, I am now the USASMA sergeant Major, and the world's done went full circle; I'm the guy that got embarrassed by this guy and then I says to him, I say, Mr. Stewart how you doing. Oh you're the new guy over there; yeah. You don't remember me do you? He says, no, you look familiar. I said well I'm the guy that you told that I was least not to succeed at the Academy because my score was bad. He said oh, I said that? He said well, it must have motivated you, because look at you now. So the only fallback he has was to try to say --

MR. WATERHOUSE: That he motivated you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- to clean it up a little bit. And the other one on the parking thing -- when I was complaining about it, so now I'm down there now as a Sergeant Major -- fast forward a year later -- I

said tell everybody in the auditorium all the instructors, I say I think we're going to change the rules and we're going to allow some of the students to park on the inner circle. You would have thought that I was cussing their mama out or something.

They were like -- here you go now, you come down where changing all these rules -- because, see, what you draw from is you draw from what happened to you -- remember when I was down there, they didn't allow students to do certain things and now I'm running things, I'm going to let the students do it. Mr. Stewart you embarrass me, I'm going to rub in your face; I'm going to show you that I can do it.

So what I believe life is about is if you're going to move somewhere, you've got to make it better. You've got to fix some stuff, you know Stewart embarrassed me and motivated me at the same time -- but he's trying to take credit for it too, though.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter). But you were looking at more of the students -- say what we're doing here is for the students, not for the faculty,

so why not?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. Another thing is all those department positions weren't being filled.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in November, that year, 2001, you went to Fort Monroe, Virginia where you served as a Training and Doctrine Command Sergeant Major -- or TRADOC as we say for short -- and you did that for a little over four years, so do you remember when you found out and how much a shock was that after just being in the Academy for a little bit and now you're being ask to go fill a four-star level nominate position?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The SMA didn't really feel too good with that. First of all, I did not apply for the job; I wasn't slated for the job or nothing like that. I'm down in USASMA and General Shinseki has a senior-level meeting at Fort Bragg, all two-star and three-star and above General officers and their Sergeant Majors had to meet him at Fort Bragg and there was a two-day meeting, with a social event, and all that -- huge room, we're all up there. And two of

the commanders got up prior to the chief to comment on certain things. One was General Abrams, TRADOC Commander at the time, who was a FORSCOM Commander, they were briefing. Chief of Staff (inaudible) sitting there and they were briefing something.

And so General Abrams was up talking; I'm just sitting there in the audience -- I'm USASMA at the time.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: General Beck was TRADOC; he's sitting over there next to General Abrams. I'm three rows back or wherever they had be buried back there -- and General Abrams was the kind of guy when he talks, you know like most speakers they'd pick out a couple of people out of the audience and they kind of focus on them -- some speakers think it's easier to do that than to be looking at everybody because it makes you nervous -- whatever technique everybody (inaudible). So General Abrams was looking at me; and I was like oh shit.

MR. WATERHOUSE: He's going to call me.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. I was thinking, I hope he don't ask me anything because I am the USASMA guy. And then he would talk, talk, and then he'd look at me, and talk, talk. And I was just like, wow; okay. I'm sitting there nervous, hoping he doesn't say anything. We went on a break, and John Beck -- we were standing out in the hallway on the break -- so John Beck walks up to me. Remember I was assigned to the Academy on Memorial Day weekend -- this is in May.

MR. WATERHOUSE: May; yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So that's already the end of the month right there. S look, so I was at the Academy June, July, August, September, October, and I left on Thanksgiving. So I'm going to say I was at USASMA for a total of six months.

So anyway, after all that Tilley's got to do to get me down there; I had been in the job about 2-1/2 months and then I went to this thing that Shinseki had, at Bragg. So anyway, on the break, John Beck comes down to me -- on the break -- and says General Abrams is going to be talking to you. That's all he

said. He didn't say General Abrams wants to send you tomorrow; he just walked over there and said --

MR. WATERHOUSE: He didn't say what it was about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He didn't say what it was about. He said General Abrams is going to be talking to you. So the first thing hit my mind was he'd been looking at me this whole time we were sitting in there and he up there giving his briefing; and I'm thinking what's going on. I got on the phone, called back down to the Academy and tried to get the -- the battalion commander down there I had working, it was Sergeant Major Falstaff . I said look, what's going on; is anything going on down here I need to know about? He said no, Sergeant Major; he said why you call and asking that? I said I don't know. Sergeant Major Beck said the TRADOC Commander wanted to talk to me; I said did we lose anybody? I'm thinking somebody had died or got hurt -- one of the students had got hurt. And he said no, ain't nothing going on. I said give me a call back; check around; talk to all the company



commanders; go talk to Colonel DeWitt; call me back on my next break or leave me a message.

He called me back -- ain't nothing going on. I still don't know what the hell is going on. Anyway, we left Fort Bragg, the two days were up, we left. John Beck still ain't talked to me; and I flew back to El Paso; went back to work and everything.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You think he knew what it was about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, Beck knew; but Abrams probably told him not to say anything. So this is how it happened. I go back to El Paso, and I go back to work -- and I think it was the next week or so -- Beck called me up and says that the CG (inaudible), the CG is considering you to be the next TRADOC Sergeant Major. General Beck hadn't even told me he was retiring. I said what? I said you retiring? He kept it close to him; he says yes, I'm retiring. I'm going to go back to San Antonio and probably be a school teacher. I said when is this going to happen. He said probably going to happen in another month or

so; he said but General Abrams wants to interview you.

Now remember now, I'd only been down the Academy those three --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Do you know how long Sergeant Major Beck had been there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Beck had been there for a while. Remember, Beck was at TRADOC when I was a post Sergeant Major at Fort Sill.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So he was probably coming up on the end of his time anyway?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; he was. So anyway, soon as Beck got off the phone telling me this, I immediately called SMA, called Tilley's phone. I said look -- I think he was in Germany, somewhere --I said look, did John Beck talk to you and tell you about General Abrams wanting to interview me to be the TRADOC Sergeant Major? So the SMA says to do what? He said no. I knew Beck was talking about leaving, but I didn't know that he was leaving -- he said who told you that? I said well, Beck just called me and told me. I said look you probably need to go and let

General Abrams know that -- Sergeant Major, I just got down there. I'm honored to do that but --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- Tilley says don't worry; I'm going to take care of it. I said good; I hung the phone up, didn't think nothing of it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you thought you were staying at the Academy? (Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I thought I was good-to-go. So Tilley calls up and talks to Beck and then they end up eventually talking to General Abrams. Tilley called me back the next day or so. He says don't worry about it, ain't going to happen. I already talked to General Abrams; told him how importance this is; it ain't going to happen. I said okay.

Finally, another day goes by and General Abrams' aide called me. Sergeant Major, I know you heard that we're going to interview you for the position and we just want to set up a time for your interview with the TRADOC Commander and we want to

know if Thursday, next week, is okay with you. I said well, sir, I thought the SMAs had solved that. He said no, as of right now, you're still on the list and my job is to organize the times. I said okay. As of right now, just put me down for Thursday next week. I said I'll figure out how to get a flight out (inaudible), but standby I'm going to call the SMA and get this cleared up.

So I picked up the phone, called Tilley back in; and Tilley says all right, don't worry about it. I tell you what, you can go on and do the interview, but you ain't going to get selected because I already done talked to him; it's just a formality. I said why you want me to fly all the way to Virginia just to go through formalities, knowing I'm not going to get the job? He said don't worry; it's just something you're go through; it ain't going to happen. So I said okay. Get on the phone called Beck up and told Beck what Tilley just told me. Beck said don't worry about it; just come over for the interview.

I get on a phone that next Wednesday and fly

up to TRADOC. My appointment was that Thursday morning at 8 o'clock in the morning; knocked on the door; they brought me in. Soon as General Abrams opened the door and he seen me standing there, he said come on in, when can you go to work. That's what he says to me.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That was your interview?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. That's what he says to me standing in the door. I say well, sir, I'm still thinking in my mind that Tilley done fixed this, but I said well, okay; well, sir, I can probably go to work at any time, but I wasn't sure that I was even going to be considered for this. He closed the door and sat me down -- and I didn't tell him Tilley's been telling me that he's going to get with you; and I didn't throw the SMA under the bus or none of that stuff; I just kind of listened to Abrams talk, assuming we were just doing some formality stuff and I actually wasn't going to get it, that we were kind of talking.

But Abrams' conversation wasn't going down

that path. He was going down the path of this is what I want and this is what you're going to be doing when you get here kind of thing. Interview last about 40 minutes; got on a plane; left; couldn't reach the SMA until I got back to El Paso; told him about the interview. I said look to me it's like it could go either way; he said don't worry about it.

It wasn't even the next day, I think, and General Abrams' aide called me back and told me that I had the job. The thing that hurt me so bad about it was -- I'm not going to say it hurt me, I will say the timing was kind of rough.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The USASMA Sergeant Major have traditionally had an older set of quarters on Biggs Field before they built that new sets of quarters that they have over there now that you've seen; and the Sergeant Major has traditionally stayed in those quarters. Those quarters over there were being renovated or torn down because they were in such bad repair.

So the guy that was in there, Kennery came out so they could do all that work. So when I get ready to show up in May, first thing I'm thinking about is where's my quarters going to be at. So when I show up down there, they say you don't have any right now because they're being renovated or being slated to be torn down. I said well, I'm bringing my family with me. I've got to have a place to stay right now. So I told the SMA about it. He said well, I'm going to get General Green to give you set of them 0-6 quarters over there on Main post, Fort Bliss. I said okay. So he called him up; worked out a (inaudible) deal with him to give me some quarters; but the quarters they were giving me was occupied; and that colonel had to leave. He was going to be leaving in about two months.

I shows up at the El Paso in May and they had to put me inside of some apartments downtown; and my furniture stayed in storage -- this is May. June, July -- July that colonel moves; I bring all of my stuff out of storage; put it inside of some quarters

in July; and then get on a plane to go to Shinseki's meeting just to be told by Beck that the TRADOC Commander wants to talk to me; just for me to come back -- I only been in these quarters one month -- Tilley and General Green went through a battle of trying to get me those quarters; because Green was mad because it was earmarked for one of this brigade commanders, now the Sergeant Major of the Army is telling him to give it to one of his Sergeant Majors; and that was some bad blood. And all the stuff we went through to get me settled; to get my family down there; to get everything started, all got uprooted in four months. And I went down and got totally connected to that class thinking that this was going to be my retirement job and here it is on Thanksgiving, I'm in El Paso sitting behind Becks desk; and all of that happened in six months.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You mean at Monroe?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Monroe.

MR. WATERHOUSE: By Thanksgiving?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Beck was gone.



MR. WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: He came back; he and I talked for a few hours; I moved into his quarters and the rest is history.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, during your tenure as the Training and Doctrine Command or TRADOC Command Sergeant Major, you led the transformation of the Noncommissioned Officer Education System, or NCOES for short; and on the United States Army Sergeant Major Academy website today, your biography is on there and the author of the biography on that webpage, it says the following: Sergeant Major Williams chaired the NCOES study group at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for the task of total redesign of the noncommissioned officer education system. This included removing all technical tasks from the events, noncommissioned officer course, or ANOC, and moving them to the basic noncommissioned officer course, or BNOC. Under the guidance of the Sergeant Major of the Army, Jack Tilley, Command Sergeant Major Williams led the total redesign of the primary leadership

development course ensuring that the tasks being taught were relevant and met the needs of the Army. He was also instrumental in the redesign of the Sergeant Majors course, again ensuring that the tasks were relevant and properly prepared master sergeants and Sergeant Majors for future assignments of increased responsibility.

So Sergeant Major, obviously, you led a lot of change during your tenure as a TRADOC Sergeant Major. How did the decision to revamp, or change, the Noncommissioned Officer Education System, or NCOES, all come about? In other words, why were those changes to PLDC, BNOC, ANOC deemed necessary; or why change in other words?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I'm of the philosophy that you don't change for the sake of change. One of the things people will always hear me say, and I've used the term in the Army, some of the things we used to do is still good to do today. You don't have to just change it. I don't believe that every man or woman that goes into a job ought to leave a mark or legacy

by changing things so they can receive credit for changing those things because those things sometimes can be costly and painful for people to do it. Sometimes it causes people to grow jobs, lose jobs; so my opening comment is I'm not a change for the sake of change.

I would preface that and start with then PLDC.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So go down to the Sergeant Major Academy and, as you know, Sergeant Major Academy is responsible for the core curriculum for primary leadership development course. Institutions are responsible for the curriculum inside of their BNOCs and ANOCs, we called them then.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Common core is USASMA's responsibility and then Sergeant Major course is USASMA responsibility, but the technical tasks inside of ANOC and BNOC, as we called them then -- schoolhouse driven. So when I get down there, Jack

Tilley says -- of course, when I get to TRADOC, I'm coming out of a September 11th thing that just happened; I get down there now, it's November. I get into the seat; we go into the Christmas holidays; everybody's talking war with Iraq, all that's going on. Units are being formed; the Army is thinking about how they're going to task, organize, and do (inaudible) stuff to fight; and the training everybody's got to have in order to do all this stuff -- and Tilley says we probably got to change how we teach NCOs. Anthony you're responsible for the core curriculum for PLDC and the core for BNOC and ANOC. Let's look at those three and change them.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Core as being your non-MOS related?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Non-MOS related stuff. Start PLDC. All right; so what do you want me to do? What are the parameters?

MR. WATERHOUSE: So this actually started with your time; not before?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. So PLDC was

already, obviously, in position; curriculum was ready in position. Tilley wants us to change it; he wants to update it. Now war breaking out, what do we need to put in there -- a warfighting task; what did we need to take out that's no longer good; now that the war is going on this is a good time to do it. So that was my mission.

Where's the money at; TTY travel; how is this going to affect the Reserve, National Guard; all of these were questions. Oh, by the way, we're having a nominative conference at Fort Sill. I want you to get together and bring that in and brief them on what the concept is, or what your thoughts are, but first you've got to brief me. So that was kind of like the guidance.

So let's start with PLDC -- what do you want to change in PLDC? Is it still going to be 3 weeks; is it going to still be 21-day long POI; what's the box side? Okay, let us keep it at 21 days; got it. Are you going to change and cut that if you're going to discontinue any of the NCO academies (inaudible)?

Are we going to still keep all of the brick-and-mortar? Yeah; as far as I know, you're still going to keep those. Are you still going to make -- and it's in priority number one to give the instructors a fill all? Yeah, it is.

So now we got all the game rules, now we've got to find out what are people saying about the class that you already have? I mean you just don't start changing things from the TRADOC perspective without listening to a bunch of instructors and a bunch of other folks telling you why. Have you ever been to a class and somebody say why in the hell did they take (d) and (c) out of that; why did they take PT out of that -- because in a curriculum, we're looking for hours.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's what we're looking for. If you tell me you can't expand the POI past 21 days, then I'm still in the same box. In order to put something in, you have to take something out. So my thought to him is if I can go and put what I want, but

you've got to tell me what everybody else thinks.

Now comes a Leavenworth thing. Best thing to do if you want to gather data, send out a net call and tell the world you're collecting data and you want people to bring it in to you at a certain point; block out a whole week just to collect the data; put a bunch of folks in the room and talk about it. So I told Tilley that's what we're going to do. We had the meeting at Leavenworth. I'm, bringing in NCO Captain Commandants, post Sergeant Majors, Sgt. First Class Instructors of the Year; Drill Sergeants of the Year; we're bringing in a whole bunch of folks trying to figure out what it is we don't know; what should we take out; why we don't take it out -- that's what we have to do. That's a painful task when you're trying to do it because there's someone who has a good argument on drill and ceremonies.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But the main thing driving that change was the war footing that we were going?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the war did drive it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That wasn't the only thing; but that was probably part of it.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it was -- I'm trying to remember all of the driving reasons why the SMA explained to me why he wanted to do it, but we gathered all these people in Leavenworth, and we did all this data search, data gathering; and then we've got to figure out -- the National Guard is a whole different world. I mean -- here I am -- I didn't even know really what an RTI was.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Regional Training Institute.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; I didn't even know what those guys were. I did not know that the National Guard is taking a 21-day POI that we come up with at TRADOC, and they're breaking it down over weekends. I mean I didn't know all of this. So here I am -- I'm trying to figure out -- I didn't know that you go to places like Fort McCoy, and places that they've got these training centers set up where they're bringing in all these guys doing MOSQ training



and all that. So here I am -- I was like I've got to get on my bicycle and go around and figure out what's going on.

I'm over in Germany; I'm in Korea; I'm at Fort McCoy; I'm out at Las Vegas visiting the RTIs; in North Carolina, Fort Bragg. I'm living out of my suitcase trying to gather enough data to figure out what it is that's broke -- if anything's broke at all. Everybody at the same time said no, take that out; put more fighting tasking. We are looking at PLDC taking out DNC and counseling; and we're inserting convoy live fire. What; convoy live fire? Yeah, we've got to give these guys some time to be on the back of a (inaudible) with some cutout windows in it, going down the road shooting out the windows, and how critical task that is; and we've got to embed this in there. Are we're going to relax the weight-control standard? Well, we're kind of sort a allowing guys to go to war fat, but we can't be kicking them out of PLDC because the fat -- but we're letting them go fat -- so we're dealing with all this stuff.

So you put all these variables together and you put a bunch of guys in a room for a week at Leavenworth to come up with a new curriculum, you get a whole bunch of stuff. And then I want to muddy the water because I'm a big believer in bringing in gray-beard guys because you don't know what you don't know.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So this was 2002 when this conference?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I forgot what year it was. I went to the TRADOC in 2000, I think it was 2002.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Afghanistan is already rolling?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's rolling; and we're changing things; and I don't remember the total outcome of how we did it, but there was a back brief. SMA said he didn't think we had the resources we needed; we need to get some more emphasis. Sergeant Major Pritchett -- Cynthia Pritchett -- myself, and General Riley then was the CAT Commander -- went up to the Pentagon and went in to brief the Secretary of the Army. Secretary of the Army White -- never forget.

We had set up a meeting with him; we went in his office -- General Riley actually did a desk-side briefing with about five slides and he briefed the Secretary of the Army and Pritchett and I sitting in the chairs across from the Secretary of the Army, we were giving our input about the importance of making these changes and that we had vetted it through the Guard, and all that stuff. And he was asking us questions about, you know, the war going on; are we putting war tasks in; all this kind of stuff. We went to him for money; we went to him for resources. You just don't go in and brief the Secretary of the Army about NCOES changes, that's not in his lane; but we went to him to let him know that we were doing some great things but we needed resources.

So we came out of that and the USASMA-changing part was started when I went down there as a Sergeant Major. But I couldn't fix that because I wasn't there long enough. I wasn't at the Academy long enough --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- to fix anything. I was just there to identify what I knew what was wrong. When I got to TRADOC, Tilley wanted me to change NCOES and the Academy is a part of that, but the Academy in itself, that's a whole different animal.

MR. WATERHOUSE: For the sergeant's major's course, you just identified hey we need to fix these things?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, when you figured out some of these changes you wanted to make, do you have any key individuals or units, or organizations? I know you mentioned some of them, but, or kind of (inaudible); did you have like a redesign and development team for each one of these changes?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So the staffing element for change has to do with guys like the ones out of TRADOC, (inaudible). You've got the staff agency that do that. The staff agency for the Sergeant Major Academy that do it is all those guys back in the

training development section back in the back in those big old pool of cubicles back there, they're the ones that write all the lessons; they're the ones who do all the lesson redesigns; and get it up to our QA folks who qualifies it, and certifies it. Then we run pilot tests and pilot courses, and we do all these kinds of things before it actually becomes in the curriculum.

So the answer to that is when you go to something like PLDC that we own common core for, that's on us at TRADOC.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Or else at the Sergeant Major Academy, we'll sit down and we'll go through that. The feeder for that is it's coming from the combatant commanders. You don't change something in an institution unless there is a reason to change that in the institution. Where are you getting your feedback? The guys out in the fields, your warfighters, they're telling you man, we're getting a bunch of soldiers coming over here who don't how to do

this or they're doing that wrong. That's the feedback we're getting. Funding and resources are coming from somebody like TRADOC -- the big guys in the sky with the money. They're giving us the funding. The feedback coming from the field.

SMA is a feedback mechanism. As he travels, he's gathering; as I'm, traveling, I'm, gathering. That panel that we put together at Fort Leavenworth, those are panels that's gathering the stuff. Once we gather all the information we need and we put it into a draft form, we now sends it out to people across the Army for them to look at it; to feel it; to give it the feedback. The SMA, during that time -- and I know they still have it in place now. Tilley did it a little bit different than the SMA Daley's doing it now -- we had what we called the board of directors, the BOD, you've probably heard of those guys. In my day, the BOD with the SMA only included the four-star Sergeant Majors. They only had two or three-star Sergeant Majors -- three in the room. Cynthia Pritchett, because she had Command Arm Center,

Sergeant Major that was in charge of special ops -- the special ops Sergeant Major.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major Pritchett Command Arm Center?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Command Arm Center.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And all the four-star Sergeant Majors in the Army be it PAYCON, SITCON, KOREA, all of your combatant commands, they were always in the room; and the BOD consisted of them. So now I'm explaining to them -- me and Pritchett -- how we are looking at changing the common core within each one of these levels -- PLDC, BNOC, AND ANOC -- yeah, them three -- and the Sergeant Major Academy.

And then we were saying to them that the institutions -- the centers of excellence -- has to change their own technical part.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So if the window for ANOC is six weeks, and the Army is not going to give you more than six weeks, they're going to look at me and

say how much common core you got in there of them six weeks? I say two weeks of that is common core, and the other four weeks of that are technical (inaudible) directly from the center of excellence. Then, okay, if the box doesn't get any bigger or doesn't get any smaller, we know that's what we're working with.

But now we take all this feedback we're getting from the Army saying these warfighting tasks need to be placed in there, common core probably going to stay okay. Technical tasks now may get a little bit smaller. You're going to start throwing more warfighting tasks in there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So the Army is built on common core. Now if the common core is counseling, and drills, and ceremonies, well now if you start pulling that out because somebody's going to say why do we need that when we need to be putting warfighting tasks in?

MR. WATERHOUSE: But these warfighting tasks they want to put into the common core side?



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. That's what I'm, saying. The idea was when you ask somebody like the TRADOC Sergeant Major or the USASMA Sergeant Major to get together and revamp NCOES, that's a team thing. That's all these centers of excellence; they've got a dog in that fight. TRADOC can't just say change a signal school to do this without input from the signal school.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, specifically looking at these courses, for the primary leadership development course -- or PLDC back then -- what were some of those changes that were made that you remember?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We were looking at how important is it still to give a soldier a PT test when he just took one in his unit. Why should we give him a weight and tape test to go to a class that's only 21 days? He's in a weight control program in his unit -- that's where the command authority is -- he comes over to me non-commandant for 21 days -- you're not going to put him out of the Army; you'll send him back home

to his unit; his unit would then -- if he wasn't in the weight control program -- would probably put him in; and he'll still go through the normal soldier evaluation part of getting out of it. So they were saying that's a waste of time.

The other part was DNC. We still got DNC in there? Remember, we had DNC in there because we had soldiers that turned in the NCO that can't march; that don't even know 22-5; they don't know how to teach a guy how to do right-face, left-face. I mean we go out there in the morning -- there are some core things. I never forget when I went to Germany as that E-7, I was telling you when I was working over there, every morning, we used to go over there -- and I started this in Charlie Battery -- I say I'm coming off the drill sergeant duty.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Why are we -- I don't want to tell the first sergeant how to do his job but -- why we not inspecting soldiers every morning? And he looked at me like you just come off of drill sergeant

duty. You come over to the (inaudible) unit, a lance battalion in the middle of Germany and you want to know why we're not seeing open range march and actually looking at everybody. I'm under the mindset that an NCO what he's supposed to do is look at his soldiers.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: What's the best place to do this? They're lining up out there, look at them. So to me that's a core thing. So when you go there, the PLDC, and you ask me with my background, if we need to take drilling ceremonies out, I'm thinking that you're going to be pulling all that stuff out that now is a big piece of teaching me how to be a sergeant.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I'm scared. If you tell me you're going to take counseling out you're going to scare me because I'm thinking, you know, how you going to look a guy in the eye and tell him or her that they're doing good or bad? You're going to wait

until they get an NCOER and surprise them? How are you going to teach a guy skills to do these kind of things? I'm scared; I don't want you to take counseling out.

So that's the kind of stuff that I'm trying to protect. But then I got two guys over here saying I just came out of Iraq; this is the problem we're having; need to put this in, need to put that in; and he's got the justification. He just came out of the fight. So when he's saying he wants it in there, you make guys like me give in and say okay, I'll tell you what, instead of four hours of counseling, we're going to break it down to two hours; instead of six hours of DNC on there; we're going to take it down to four hours; and that's how we negotiate.

That's what we were doing Sergeant Major; we were going through doing that. When I left I don't know if all that disappeared because more pressure was coming from the combat guys and got us where we are now. We came up in an era where the guy says let's go do a TA-50 inspection. We came up in an era and there

was value in that. We came up in an era when a guy said let's go down to the motor pool and lay out all of your equipment. I'm going see if your shovel, and your pick, and your axe, not only are they there, but they're serviceable and they're clean -- that's a part of discipline.

We came up in an era when the guy had a (inaudible) with a shadow board with all the equipment up there so you could easily inventory it; see if it was serviceable; because I came out of a Nuke Surety Unit, and if your equipment was faulty, you could fail an inspection.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So now you're getting to now a guy's got all that stuff off the shadow board and just thrown in the toolbox. Now you come from an era now where guys are no longer doing TA-50 inspections; we're now giving them all this equipment at a certain time and make them responsible for it; and sometimes we don't ask them about it until one day we realize he doesn't have a (inaudible) and we're

about to deploy.

So we take counseling and writing out of PLDC and BNOC until we realize that when the guy gets ready to give something at NCOER, he can't even write a good, adequate bullet to describe the effectiveness of this guy's performance. So you get a guy like me out of the TRADOC, I'm trying to defend those things; and somebody else said we need to take all that out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So not all the changes actually came to fruition during your time there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They did not.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Some of them came later on? Do you remember -- your personal opinions, I guess, on how these changes are going to make PLDC, BNOC, ANOC better? Do you remember any of those examples of what the team was looking at, I guess?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think that when I was leaving and then we were doing those changes, making it better was not necessarily what we were trying to do. We were trying to capture the warfighting piece of that. Because remember I'm five, six months in

USASMA, inundated with just USASMA stuff it's a whole world. Until Jack Tilley telling me soon as I walk into TRADOC to change things, at the same time a war is breaking out.

So people are thinking war task; and I'm coming out thinking garrison tasks; I'm thinking more DNC; more NCOER writing; more of this, more of that; more bed inspections; open up your wall locker; inspect your wall locker; teach you discipline; accountability. I'm still thinking that way; that's the Army I grew up in. I grew up in a peace time army; so I'm thinking peace time. But I was acceptable to the fact that when these warfighting guys were telling me to put all these warfighting things in there and they told me how important it was, I said okay, let's do it. I was willing to give up all this other stuff to put that in there; and that's kind of where the compromise went.

MR. WATERHOUSE: It kind of goes, and this wasn't the last time, you know; we're constantly changing the Army; we're constantly changing, we're

doing it right now, right. Education -- we're changing the courses and a lot of it is outside. What do our soldiers need right now?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah; it may not have been what you saw as the optimal course, but what is it the force needs. And a lot of guys don't want a change anyway, regardless.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I'm going to give you a small example of something that happened to us and it has to do with tattoos. So I'm at TRADOC now and General Cabin the Army Accessions Command Commander, we stood up a three-star command under TRADOC called Army Section Command. General Cabin was the first Commanding General, Army Section Command; SMA Tilley, SMA -- I'm now at TRADOC. Sitting there and we were going through the war and trying to get people in. And you know when the war's going on the recruiters are working twice as hard trying to bring folks in; and then we -- somewhere in the recruiting command, the word kind of settles around that the Army needs to



relook at some of its policies on things that allow people to enter the army; and tattoos was one of those -- just like felony records and all that other stuff.

So General Cabin was brought to the attention that the mirror of society in a lot of cases were guys with tattoos, and if we alienate that population of people from entering the Army, we will lose a big base of people that's qualified to join the Army. Good argument.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Otherwise crawling the line?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So he comes in to us and he says we have to ensure that we open the door a little bit on the tattoo thing. Now you're dealing with Tilley, and you're dealing with me; and we, at the time, we have no tattoos; so you're dealing with us. I got a tattoo now.

So we're dealing with us and Tilley says nope, ain't going to do it. Ain't really no leeway there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Is this 2003, 4, or

somewhere in there?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So the SMA was saying we're going to stay with it. So General Cabin came to my office one time and he was -- he had to go in and brief the TRADOC Commander; and most of those guys who's smart -- they'll stop by my office and bounce it off of me first; and he knows that I had been involved in a conversation with him, General Cabin, and his Sergeant Major, and the SMA. The four of us had a round-robin discussion about tattoos; and Cabin knew that the SMA and I at the time were on the same sheet of music about no tattoos; and that him and his Sergeant Major -- Sergeant Major Roberts -- they wanted tattoos.

So now the compromise was, where is the compromise? So General Cabin came over to me one morning to talk to me prior to going in and talking to the TRADOC Commander and brief him, because I had to be in the room for that briefing; and he wanted to let me know that he was going to tell my boss that he needed his boss -- he needed the TRADOC Commander to

make a decision to open the door a little bit wider on tattoos. And he gave an illustration of what he was going to tell him. He said well, right now there's a large number of the population my recruiters are looking at, and guys got tattoos on their hand.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Large population out there; the guys got -- very few of them had tattoos on their face; we found out a lot of them got tattoos on their neck; and that violates the rule. I'm going to go in, he says, and talk to the commander and ask him to allow us to get pass the one on your hand part and see if the one on the neck, if not excessive, that we can allow people in on certain occasions. And I said well, you know that's contrary to what the SMA want guidance.

So anyway, he goes in; talks to him; General Burns did not make a decision that day; but that was when we first put the first gauntlet on the table for discussion. Later on, I see that we went to a point where we did allow a lot more tattoos in the Army; and

I've seen the Army since I've been retired where they're now paying people to have certain tattoos removed.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah; it was for a while there, you could have them on your neck as long as it was covered up by your Class A shirt, and you didn't see it when you were in your dress uniform. But, yeah, stuff has changed. Earrings -- you know, you used to not be able to come in with the big plugs -- well you still can't; you've got to close them up.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But, at least, the recruiter is not kicking them out the door. You've got to get them things closed up. So Sergeant Major, besides the changes that you led there and the team for the revamp and the revitalization, whatever, of the Noncommissioned Officer Education System and some of those changes you led; what were some of the other key challenges you faced during your time as a TRADOC Command Sergeant Major, and how did you overcome or deal with those particular challenges?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I want to talk a little bit about recruiting command, and a little bit about Junior ROTC. When it comes to recruiters I kind of felt like I was a fish out of water; simply because they were everywhere. There were so many recruiters in so many places, it's impossible to ever see them. The only thing you can do with recruiters is have a philosophy that whenever you're in a town visiting a post like Fort Sill, that you'll make an effort to try to see the recruiters outside the gate because you're already there anyway; or you tell the recruiting Command Sergeant Major to let those guys know that you are on Fort Sill, and for their recruiting first sergeant to come find you and make yourself known; and kind of do a little telling you what's going on. Maybe bring some of his guys in; some kind of way -- you've got to find a way to kind of do things.

Davenport was telling me the other day how schedule-driven he is. We're schedule-driven at the senior level because you try to do so much. You've got a family. You know, the TRADOC job is a good job

for a single man.

I'm serious. If you're a single man and you can just see the world, and hit everybody times twice, but if you've got a family -- any kind of family life -- it's hard. So when it comes to recruiters -- I went to see some recruiters outside of Fort Bragg and I learned something. And this guy showed me a book; he had a handbook -- and I don't know what y'all guys used to call it -- and this book he had was like a smart book, if you will, they called them back in the day. All the information in it about populations, and generation of people, and the city; and he could tell you how many Hispanics, and blacks, and whites you've got in this community; he could tell you the education levels.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Demographic information.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, demographics. He knew his population that he had to go and recruit from. This guy had it down like that. He knew the rules if a guy failed the ASVAP test; when he could take it again; if you're hot on the piss test; I mean

I was impressed; that's what I was impressed about. And I said these are the kind of guys that we need to have out there doing what they do. If you don't have it down to a science like that, then you're probably not going to be effective.

And I know filling the ranks in the Army is not just on the recruiting command, it's also on the commanders to retain people.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The mission of the Army, to fill the Army, is not just on recruiting; it's also on retention.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So when a guy or girl get into the Army, we as leaders in the Army have just as much responsibility to retain them, we just can't keep beating the bush and tell a recruiter out there, you've got to keep beating them and keep bringing me more, because you have to retain some as well.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Or you have to have leaders that stay in. You can't just be new kids on the

block.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So I have a lot of respect for those guys. Unfortunately, I didn't spend as much time with them as I should have, or I needed to; but, yeah, I knew exactly what they did.

For ROTC, I think I did a little bit more with ROTC than I did with recruiting because I ended up going to a lot of different universities, either talking to cadet lieutenants or talking to NCOs and PMS's at some of these universities.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Professors of Military Science?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So I even went to some of the high schools. That's when I was telling you the college down the street from the War College. That one you said is like a private college.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Dickenson College.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I went down there and talked to those cadets that were down there. I've been to Norwich University; I been to the Citadel; I've been to Norfolk University; Hampton University;



Cameron University. I've been to Virginia Tech; been to -- I can't name them all. So I've been to a lot of universities and high schools talking to Junior ROTC and ROTCs.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And what kind of stuff would you share with those guys?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: With the lieutenants, I went there in my capacity as an artillery guy here at Fort Sill. At the Core Artillery one-star and the two-star level, I was in there talking to a bunch them about branch transferring to be an artilleryman. These cadets -- these lieutenants -- get to a certain point in their life when they are about to choose. When I was here, we were going around -- when lieutenants get to the point where they are about to make a selection of what branch they want to be a part of?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We were going around trying to convince them to branch for field artillery because we were trying to recruit them.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So what about as TRADOC?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: As TRADOC, we were talking about -- now I'm more in the general terms guy now at TRADOC --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I'm not talking for artillery; so I'm not there talking when you going to meeting your first platoon sergeant; or some of the things you ought to be requiring of him; some things he's going to require of you; how do you meet your battery commander; your battery commander telling you one thing, and then your platoon sergeant telling you something else; how do you deal with that; the importance of being in shape as a lieutenant. Working with NCOs -- he don't know you; you don't know him. So we're talking philosophy about leadership, mostly those kinds of things.

At the Junior ROTC, most of the problems that's in the Junior ROTC was that they were not all the time getting the resources they need. Every high school don't have an Army program; some of them got an

Air Force Program; some of them got a Navy program; so I was focused on the one that had the Army program for ROTC.

When I left TRADOC, one of the last things I did before I left is I went online and I got myself certified to be an ROTC instructor because I thought one of the things may end up with me to do is I may end up getting a job as a civilian job as that if what I was looking for didn't work out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in looking back at your time as the TRADOC Command Sergeant Major, what were some of things that you learned positive and/or negative that you passed on to your successor; and that maybe since your time in the Army that you still kind of reflect on or maybe helped to develop you?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The think I liked about TRADOC is TRADOC is a command that touches everybody - touches the Army. So wherever I did go there was always somebody there that was part of the command. All these cities that had recruiters in it; all these

high schools around America that had an Army Junior ROTC program; every university had an Army ROTC program. All of the TRADOC installations around the world -- signal, artillery, infantry, armor, you just name it. TRADOC owns the airborne school; pathfinder's school; ranger school; all of the institutions of learning for all NCOs; institution of learning for all officers; pre-command course. So TRADOC is so diverse until everywhere you go, there's somebody there you can touch.

FORSCOM is a forces provider that provide combat forces to combatant commanders who fight the war.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: TRADOC is the one that trains them; TRADOC is the one that makes the curriculum; TRADOC is the one that makes the rules that they get promoted by.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Also is the one that finds them.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Finds them, recruits them;

we do all the initial training. We're the drill sergeants; we're the bullick instructors. So it doesn't matter if FORSCOM owns fighting forces that they give the SITCOMs and all those to fight the war, you'd never get there without TRADOC. So that shows you the foundation of the Army is TRADOC, and how important that is.

So you will need a guy, or a woman, that's in that job that's able to connect with that; that's able to go around and -- I always tell everybody, and I don't know whether I was going to tell you this at -- but I used to tell at the Sergeant Major Academy when I went down to talk to them -- it's more to being a Command Sergeant Major, especially at the nominative level, than going around shaking hands and passing out coins. I tell them that all the time. I used to say that at the Academy and I used to tell them that because when you around a Sergeant Major is an accessor.

You go into a room, you're looking.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You're assessing; you're looking at how people are dressed; how disciplined they are; are they being respectful; are the soldiers smart enough; are they wearing their uniforms correctly; have they all been going to school; are they following the Army rules; are they overweight; have they been to PLDC. So a Sergeant Major when he enters a room, that's what's going through his mind. You shouldn't be in there, walking in a door, just for some first sergeant to drag a guy in front of you and say this guy just passed the PT test; he got 300. Okay, here's the coin, shake his hand. Well, this guy just did this; and then you get on the plane; you leave; and that's it.

You go back home and you go around, you be like so, what the hell did I do? I went down to Fort Benning; I passed out some coins; I shook some hands; and I left. What you should have did when you went down to Fort Benning, somebody should have been telling you that when you go to basic training, they don't have the money they need. Because we went to

one place, and the guy was using pupil (phonetics) sticks and they're all worn out. I came to find out why is that the case.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) Is that a broomstick?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. What I found out, it's kind of like I was telling you about the guys with the Gore-Tex jackets -- that's what Sergeant Majors do. You go down there, you want to find out that they ain't getting the resources they need to buy all that stuff. You want to go down to Benning you want to find out why is your attrition rate so high in airborne school; why you kicking so many guys out? You want to know that so you can fix that. That's an army issue. When there's a problem with the assignment of people like you don't have the adequate number of drill sergeants in a battery, and you're supposed to have 12, but you're only running with 8 or 9, that's an issue.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You think well, if you got

9, you supposed to have 12, that's only missing 3 -- but if you think about it drill sergeants are busy all the time. So they've got marriage problems; and the more time you got them guys running around and you don't have the full allocation of help out there, they're going to get short tempered; they going to start doing stupid stuff; they're going to start getting themselves in trouble; they're going to be away from home longer; they've got marriage problems; and them extra 3 guys that they should have is going to make a lot of difference.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So when you're running around Fort Sill, rather than passing out some coins, you ought to identify the fact that they need some NCOs; you ought to be beating HRC up to figure out how you can get some more. That's what Sergeant Majors do. They don't just run around -- we're not just celebrating; and I don't like a lazy E-9.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in looking back at your time as the TRADOC Commander



Sergeant Major, what are you most proud of and why?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Wow.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Tough question. (Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I'm proud that I was at Fort Hood one day, and I was in the HEB Store and a guy walked out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That's H-E-B?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's like a Walmart grocery store.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: One of the guys walked out and said hey Sergeant Major. I said, hey, how you doing? And he explained to me who he was. This is five hours down the road at Fort Hood. A few years ago, I was in Atlanta -- my wife and I went down to -- her best friend had a birthday party. We were inside of Sam's buying some food for the party. A guy came up to me and said hey, Sergeant Major, you don't remember me. I used to be one of the first sergeants over here, blah, blah, blah.

When you go around the Army -- I was down in

Fort Benning a few weeks ago and we had a Sergeant Major breakfast; and we're in this Sergeant Major breakfast and Sergeant Major Davenport is standing up addressing all of the Sergeant Majors from Fort Benning and they had four of us, retirees, in the room -- me, the former Sergeant Major Christiansen from FORSCOM, George DeSerio, Sergeant Major over the armor and Sergeant Major Roberts from Search and Command; and we're in the room and Sergeant Major Davenport is telling these guys about me. It's the impact that you make. You can get on a plane and you can travel. Davenport was one of those guys in the room saying this corny motto that I made him say at the Academy; and Davenport is the guy I can hit the email button right now and within five minutes he'll answer my e-mail. It's the guy who

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So the legacy that we leave is one that we want it to be where -- when people come up to me sometimes, I don't even know how to react. They'll say Sergeant Major you don't know

me but -- and the first thing I say to myself is I sure hope this is going to be a good encounter. Because you don't know.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) You don't know -- was it when you were a drill sergeant?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So you don't know; but I think the thing for me is -- the impact for me, that is, you run around the world and you try to make a difference in changing things and making things better for the Army and you hope. Hope is not a method but you sure hope that you're getting it right because some places you're only going to hit them one time. You hope that first impression is a lasting impression because some people, your first impression is the only one they're going to ever get of you.

You know, I used to be a picture on the chain of command board and I used to go places and wonder do people even know who the hell I am -- if it ever make any difference -- but I always have the philosophy that I was born and raised in a little small town in Mississippi that was very, very racially

divided and I didn't like the way I felt when I was treated that way. I was raised in an environment where I always believed that I just wanted people to be fair with me. If you give me an equal chance, I think I'll be alright. So I was hoping that my legacy in TRADOC or in the Army would be one where when people hear my name or remember me it'll be because of something that I did that had a positive impact on them in some kind of way.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I don't know if there're some out there that may have a different feeling, but I bet if you travel around the Army you'll find more people say more positive about me than you ever will anybody saying anything negative; and that ain't because I tried to kiss their butt; it's because that's how I carry myself; and if that's the way I am, it's just going to be a natural reaction.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, up to now we've been talking about all the assignments you had and duty positions you held over your 32-year Army

career, I'd now like to switch gears or the focus and ask you your thoughts about the NCO profession and the future of the NCO Corps and the Army.

Sergeant Major, throughout your career you attended and completed all the mandatory noncommissioned officer education courses or NCOES courses, and some of these we hit along the way; but just for folks maybe just reading this part of the transcript in the future, I'd like to just get your thoughts on those institutional level domain courses we call your -- you know, back then for you it was PLDC, BNOC, ANOC, the Academy -- nowadays it's BLC, SOC, ALC. Do you believe that those schools back then prepared you, you know, well enough, or at least adequately, to fill your role as a Sergeant First Class, Master Sergeant First Class, etc.? And if not, what do you think was missing back then? And, of course, you had ability to change that later, but back when you were just a student at those courses?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think it did. We were not at war, so the question fits my era of when I went

to school, we wasn't fighting. So if you fill the curriculum up with a lot of DNC, counseling, and tell the men to go to school and get civilian education; keep your hands out of your pocket; don't wear earrings; if you had me in a garrison-type of world, the Army fit. We wasn't fighting anybody, so I grew up in a ANOC, in a BNOC that didn't have none of that. I mean we wasn't fighting so the Army's emphasis at the time was discipline -- get your hair cut; know your job, that kind of stuff.

So now you fast forward to what the Army is doing now with being in Desert Field, Desert Storm; done been in Iraq, still there; Afghanistan, still there; so I would have to believe that there is a need for some warfighting tasks in there. I think changing the PT test that the Army's going through; it's not a bad idea. I mean we have been doing that same one for a long time. I'm not saying that the three-event PT test didn't task me, but when I joined the Army we did a five-event PT test. So I thought that was hard; it was tough at some times. The Army

changed the three-event PT test; I adapted to that; they changed from three back to five, just picked something different. If I was in, I would adapt to that as well.

So at the NCO, I think, some of the things we used to do is still good to do today -- philosophy would be whatever we do, I think we still have a duty to teach sergeants professionalisms. I don't think sergeants should be doing some of the things I hear stories of that they're doing nowadays. You know, domestic abuse, messing with some drugs, and doing a lot of things that kind of disappoints us a little bit. So, I think, whether this is a NCO, DP -- professional development session with the first sergeant every Friday evening -- or is this something in institutional talk -- I don't know.

You know, we tend to believe that when there's a lacking in something in the Army, we throw it in the institution. We say we've got to put it in there and teach it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That's an argument to this

day of some of our senior Sergeant Majors in the Army is who's responsibility -- the institutional -- and what's the unit responsible for.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And there's got to be some give and take, obviously, because the schools can only do so much. You know, it's kind of analogous or similar to hey the teacher at the school should be teaching my kid this; but me as a parent, I'm going to do this. So it's kind of a similar thing. We all want to do best for the NCO Corps, but striking that balance is hard.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. And sometimes -- the other key thing is -- sometimes in the institution, we stove piped a lot of NCOs and put them in there as instructors and we certify them, and most of the time they're pretty good. The quality of your everyday sergeant in the motor pool that owns that soldier may not be able to teach things that he or she need because they may not necessarily have that skill set. So sometimes the institution can be a better



place to teach certain things because, you know -- look at basic training. Oh yeah -- you can go over there right now and get five staff sergeants and two sergeants out of any unit on post.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Over here at Fort Sill?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; just pick them and bring them over here to Fort Sill and then bring a whole bunch of guys off the bus and give them to these five NCOs of different ranks over here and say go train them; and they'll look at you like you're stupid. Because that's not their skill; they ain't been trained to do that. But over here we got five brand new drill sergeants who have been to an institution; who have been trained; who is in the best of shape; who is all of these things; and now you tell them to train them; now they have the toolsets to do it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, therefore, sometimes people believe that the institution is the best place to train them because in the unit they don't have -- I

hate to say we don't have the quality -- but in the unit, they may not have the guy with the skill sets to do what the institution can do.

MR. WATERHOUSE: The tools, in other words.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in your opinion -- now this is for, you know, future soldiers and some current soldiers now -- so in your opinion, what are some of the key things a senior NCO must do to be an effective leader of his or her NCOs below him or her, and soldiers?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Got to know your craft; got to know your job; whatever your job is -- infantry, armor, artillery, whatever it is -- you've got to know your job. I think you can look good, but if you don't know your job -- so, I think, the first thing I'll put on the table is he or she has to know their job. You a Medic, you've got to be the best Medic; you're an artillery man, you've got to be really good at it -- whatever your job is, you've got to know your job. Knowing your job gets you a lot of

respect from your soldier and your leadership. You've got to know your job.

I think it's important that you're really good at your ability to communicate, be it verbally or writing.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You can know your job; now you've got to be able to teach it or express it; then you've got to look like a soldier. I mean your appearance is everything. A guy shows up in front of a soldier, a squad, platoon, or whatever it is, he or she has to look the part. You've got to look like a soldier. Those things make you effective. How many times you've gone to a place and a guy standing up in front of you and he's teaching you something; and the whole time, you're standing there looking at him saying that he needs to get a haircut; why is his gut so big; I mean you're missing the information.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You're distracted.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. He's giving you good information; he knows his job; he can teach it

really well; but you can't get past the fact that what he looks like as he's delivering the information. So looking the part as a soldier is also critical.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, kind of in the same vein, another thing that NCOs do is they're advisors --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: -- for their officers; so, in your opinion, what are some of the key things -- I say senior NCO because that's like a platoon sergeant -- so, you know, your E-8s, your E-9s, your E-7s -- what would you say are some key things that those guys and gals must do to be an effective advisor, you know, or battle buddy to his or her platoon leader, company commander, or staff officer?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Got to have courage. I mean I always say that sometimes the way you start out is kind of like the way you end up. I have a philosophy that when you first start out and you're building a relationship with your new lieutenant, or your captain, or your battalion commander, you've got

to be very blunt and straight up from the beginning and kind of put it all on the table. But if you come in and you're being very submissive then you're going to find out that's the impression, or the way you're probably going to have to keep going with the guy.

So, I think, you got to have courage to -- people respect you when you're courageous. People respect you. Like I would say to my commander -- I'm not the kind of guy that'll tell a guy I told you so, but I think that you have to be able to let the commander know when he don't have any clothes on, kind of philosophy; and you've got to have the open communication that he and you are allowed to talk to each other. I can't work for a guy that says come and talk to me after duty hours; I'm so busy right now, I ain't got time to stop and talk to you. I can't work with a commander that every time he talks to me, he has to be sitting behind his desk and I'm sitting over there in a chair. A good commander, especially when he's talking to like his Sergeant Major, he'll come from behind the desk; and he'll come around and he'll

sit over there; and he'll talk to you so you're not talking from a command perspective. We used to teach this down at the Sergeant Majors Academy. So, I think courage is important that a leader must have to go in and talk to his commander about whatever -- whatever it is.

You know, my (inaudible) commander at one time was in the point of giving a field grade (inaudible) to one of the sergeant first class when we were in Hawaii. It was a misunderstanding where there was an incident that happened when both him and the officer was in civilian clothes. They were up at an event on an organization day and they were at a softball field, and they had the field for x-number of hours and their time was up, or something -- they're making some noises.

Here comes a person across the field, in an authoritative kind of manner, what y'all doing; y'all don't need to be here; y'all need to leave, or whatever it is he was doing. He didn't identify himself; and the sergeant first class -- which is

another type-A personality guy just like this guy was who don't know who this guy is.

MR. WATERHOUSE: He didn't identify himself either. (Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; he didn't identify himself either. So he says to this colonel, this major, or whatever he was -- this captain -- I don't know who the hell you think you are; and they got into it. Then after they got into it, now it's heated; now the officer identifies himself. We have already gone past the road of no return by now. Disrespect came out of that; everybody pulls them apart; no physical fighting, almost, blah, blah, blah. Reported it to the company commander; reported it to his brigade commander or knows my (inaudible) commander, 206's, so he told him. Now my (inaudible) commander -- I'm the (inaudible) Sergeant Major, calls and says rally the troops. I ain't going to have none of my NCOs doing nothing like this -- bring this guy in.

So I say okay. So I got wind of it; they told me about it and they brought him in with the

chain of command; and the (inaudible) commander chews everybody out and told him how disrespectful he was, and this was probably going to result in punishment; kicks them all out. So when I get the full story, now I go in and talk to my (inaudible) commander. This is getting back to that courage thing.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I've got this guy who's a flaming, in your chest kind of (inaudible) commander, but he respects me. So I go in and I have a discussion with him and I say to him I can understand how this got out of hand; and at the same time I can also understand that once the officer identified who he was that the E-7 should have backed down. I can kind of understand that. But I'm going to tell you something else. I wasn't the guy; it wasn't me; I wasn't that E-7; I wasn't feeling what he was feeling; you understand. I didn't have his feelings.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That guy wasn't in my face. So it's easy for me to stand over here on the



side and pass judgment on what should have happened; and looking at that, it's easy for me to do it. But I tell you right now, if I take you and insert you into that situation and this guy is in your face, and your temper is up --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- sometimes you lose track of the fact that I'm an E-7. You think about I'm going to kick this guy's butt -- and that's what's going on. You have two guys in the heat of the moment.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I'm telling him that we should not punish him that way. We should give him like a counseling statement because once he found out -- yeah, he should have said, sir, okay I'll tell you what -- maybe something should have happened there, but it's like being too caught up in the moment.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My (inaudible) commander couldn't take it. He still wanted to punish the guy.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Still, he brought him back in two days later and gave him a Field Grade Article 15; and I'm in their battling with him to make sure we put it in his restricted fiche.

So a guy with no courage, one, he wouldn't have gone in there with a flaming commander knowing that he is because he was afraid that he was going to burn some bridges between the two of them; he wouldn't let it go.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You know, I've got a duty to do that; that's one of my NCOs. That guy is from another battery; he ain't my driver; he was one of my sergeants down there. That guy respected me because he knew I went in there and fought for him. He still got the Article 15, but we ended up putting in his restricted fiche. That's the only leeway I could get with this guy on one of my NCOs because if you don't have the courage to do something like that, I mean you're not going to stand up for nothing.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, how important do you believe civilian education was to your development as a noncommissioned officer during your career?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I won't call any names on this. I'll just say that the era of the Army that I grew up in was an era of the Army in the '70s, and the '80s, and early '90s, that at the time wasn't putting a lot of emphasis on getting a college degree. I wouldn't say they didn't say don't get no civilian education; there wasn't emphasis on getting a college degree.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And a lot of us that grew up in that era was trying to concentrate on just something to meet every level of promotion requirement. If you remember back in the day, you were doing correspondent courses; you were taking cleft test; I mean we were doing all --

MR. WATERHOUSE: To get promotion points.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; to get promotion

points. When you asked me that question, keep in mind that I grew up in an Army that did that kind of stuff. Now, when I told you the story about Mr. Stewart and I went down to the Academy, I had maybe two or three courses under my belt. One I took in Turkey with my detachment commander, which was my instructor. That was an English Comp 1 class. I had taken something else. When I went out to the Sergeant Major Academy as a student, I probably had two courses under my belt -- six hours -- because the era didn't call for it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: When I graduated the Academy in July of 1990, the promotion list came out and I wasn't on it. And you know how we are -- we don't know what it takes to get promoted; we just kind of -- because at that time I hadn't been on a promotion board -- so we're just guessing and we're asking everybody else. When I was asking some of my peers that got promoted about some of the things they had in their records, I found out that some of them had some college in their record, and I didn't. I

said man you need to get some college.

So what I did was I took a long set of classes through Pike Peaks Community College out of Colorado and when I was down in the Academy as a student, they made us take some classes -- as they still do. I took two classes while I was down there. So now I had the two classes I had before I went to the Academy -- six hours -- took two hours down there, that's two more classes -- then I graduated in July. I took two more classes with some instruction book kind of stuff with Pikes Peak Community College.

By the time the E-9 Board came around in 1991, and I got all of that stuff and put it in my records, I got picked up for a promotion. If you were to ask me I would then believe that's what got me promoted, but I didn't know that because I didn't know what it took to get promoted during those days. It could have been everything else that I had done because I'd been fast-tracking through the Army the whole time. I don't know why 3, 6, 9, 12, 15 hours of college would push me over the hump unless it would

just show them that I was trying to do something;  
maybe that's what they were looking for.

Anyway, I left it at that. I mean here I am now, I made Sergeant Major; I made CSM. So now I am in 517 for one year, next year, you know, I'm in Hawaii. I don't think I took no classes in Hawaii. I left Hawaii, came back -- I may have; I don't know. I came back to Sill, now I'm in Core Artillery; now I'm at post -- I think I took one class here -- I did. I went and took a class here at Cameron University, and that was it. I'm still sporadic.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: By now, I'm a nominative Sergeant Major, what do I need college for? I mean I done gone past every gate that the Army -- every time -- I used to say every time the Army had a gate that you had to go through and they made it a requirement, I had already gone past it. When the Army said you had to have BNOC, I'm already past it. When the Army said you had to have; I was already gone. So I had gotten ahead of the gated requirements in the Army to

get promoted when they said what you needed I didn't have it but I was already promoted. It didn't catch up with me until I became a civilian.

Now when I was at TRADOC -- yeah; any kind of education is going to make you better. So I ain't going to say education wouldn't have made me a better TRADOC Sergeant Major; I'm not going to ever say that. I'm not going to say it wouldn't have made me a better USASMA Sergeant Major; I ain't going to say that. Education always will make you better as a person and all that; I got it. But what I'm saying is I was able to function and do my job at the speed and at the effectiveness that I was, and I didn't have college. I could have been better if I had it; but I still made it through, and survived, and did it.

The light came on in my life even more in civilian education when I got out of the Army; and the part of that I'll tell you is when I left the Army in 2005, I walked out the door with those little 15 to 18 hours of college that I had, and I was immediately hired by the company I still work for; and by working

for those guys nobody even asked me for a transcript; nobody even asked me did I have a degree. They wanted me simply because of my background in artillery and the influence that I had here at Fort Sill opening up doors for them to get employment, to get contracts.

I came down here two years later. I'm still working and nobody in my company asked me if I needed a degree or nothing like that. My third year of working for this company -- the company went through some downsizing and they started to lay people off. That's when I realized that I am one of the guys that's only been working for the company three years, and I on the low end of the totem pole and I'm subject to be one of the first ones cut if they go through, they start cutting people in our department -- they weren't cutting them in our department.

So I said I'm going back to school. So I went out to the education center, talked to the education center advisor out there and she put me in, and enrolled me in college to get my bachelor's degree. So I went out there and I took classes at



Columbia College and I got my Associate's degree. I'm all happy; ain't never had a degree in my life; thinking that why do I need to stay now or my bachelor's, I got my associate's. Little did I know that's like nothing.

So I stayed on in; one of my friends said stay on in; so I stayed on in; and I went on and I finished my bachelor's degree. After I finished my bachelor's degree, now I'm working for the company now about six or seven years. I said okay, I'm safe. Now they laid me off; at least I've got a bachelor's, I can kind of go out and get a job. Then I failed to realize that bachelor's degree is important, but there's one step better that you can do and I realized that most of the people in the world that I worked in, in the business development world, are guys who have MBAs, master's degrees, and all that kind of stuff; and in order for me to competitive, I probably need to kind of raise my bar a little bit. I said okay; I bit the bullet, went back to school -- went to Webster University -- and I finished my Master's Degree. I

finished my Master's Degree about three years ago, and now I am 14 years into the company and I realized this is something I just should have did when I was an E-7.

I wish I could have done it when I was a E-6, E-7 -- doesn't matter because it could have benefitted me more; it probably would have given me more confidence; it probably would have given me more of a foundation; I'd probably felt more comfortable in the room when I was talking with other people that were educated. I mean it would have done a lot for me. You know, General officers that I worked for when they looked at my background probably would have given me a little bit more respect or clout behind it. There're so many benefits from civilian education.

But another reason why I went to school is because I wanted to set an example for my daughter. I was beating my daughter up all these years trying to get her to go to school and she wouldn't; I said well, the best way to do it is for me to do it myself and then show you. Kind of like that air assault thing.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And that's why I went back to school.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in your opinion, talking about the NCO Corps -- you've been out for a minute now -- but looking at now, it's still not necessarily a requirement for NCOs to have college degrees to be competitive, but in your opinion right now should a NCO's civilian education -- whether they got it before they came into the Army, because some kids come into the Army with a degree or two -- but should that -- let's say a civilian education have any bearing on his or her selection for promotion to Sergeant Major, and why or why not?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the way the Army is going and more Sergeant Majors are getting degrees -- let's just say, hypothetically, they didn't make that rule. They just say there wasn't a rule, or it wasn't a requirement; but nowadays I see so many Sergeant Majors who have a bachelor's degree or a master's degree that if you open up a portfolio on the Army Promotion Board and you have a select objective

of picking 1500 E-8s and turning them into E-9s, as you open it up you're going find that out of that 1500 window if you have to pick, you put everybody in that window and you start ranking all them people, you're going to probably find out a lot of those guys already have that.

So with that being said, I think that when the guys who don't have it see that the ones who are getting promoted do have it, it's going to make them want to get it because they want to get promoted even if the Army didn't have it as a requirement. If the Army turned around and made it a requirement, then yeah; then it becomes a forcing function that's going to make them go get it anyway.

I know down at the Sergeant Majors Academy when I was down there, we brought in those six civilian instructors down there and I was one of the guys that was on the panel that reviewed all those resumes that came across our desk, and we picked the first original six instructors under my watch down at USASMA. And one of the goals down there to do all

that was to get it accredited to a point where we could -- and still end up giving out an official degree like they do at the War College.

I know now that these guys now, commandants way ahead of me, have taken that light years forward on that. So that focus of education has already sent a message across the Army. The Army, in my opinion, don't even have to make it a requirement. By doing it in the Sergeant Majors Academy -- and a lot of guys doing it on their own -- it's kind of floating up to becoming its own requirement without the Army even doing it. I think if the Army said it is going to be a requirement, that'll just force even more guys who's dragging their feet to get it; and it'll just happen anyway.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, on the flip side, organizational training, unit training. You know we talked about this earlier where some people want the institution to do this; and the unit is responsible for this; but in your development as an NCO how important was that unit-level organizational

training?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think unit-level training is important because that's when you're putting squads together; and we're putting sections together; we're putting people together. That's when you're putting people together that's going to fight and train, and do it all together.

I went to an institution as an individual -- doesn't matter what level it was. I was individual Williams in the room, BNOC, ANOC, PLDC -- it doesn't matter what it is -- I was individual Williams in the room. I was even individual Williams at the first sergeant course; individual Williams at the Sergeant Majors Academy.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I got individual institutional training that taught me the way it supposed to be done. Yeah, I was in small group instructions; yeah, I was in there, and I interacted with other students; yeah, I learned from the other students; but I was learning and I was tested as an

individual. Even at the Academy on the A and B test, as an individual.

The unit-level training has a whole different embodiment of what the real world looks like. In the unit-level training here I am as a platoon sergeant and I have -- it's 10 of us in a platoon -- the lieutenant, me, staff sergeant, a sergeant, one, two, three, four, five, six Indians running around there in a land section -- and my job was to take these guys -- wherever they came from -- institution or wherever they were, and they came into my section. Unit-level training was to teach them how to put that missile together and pass a nuclear surety evaluation that if it's decertified because we failed, everybody from the brigade commander on down is probably going to get relieved. That's how important it was.

It was one where we went to the ASP in Crete, Greece to be evaluated by FAMSEG -- well, we had to be on our game; we had to know it; we had to mesh together. We had this one guy whose job was the

gun and we had to make him gun, gun, gun, and gun until he could get it down and do it in his sleep. So, section-level training at the unit to me is really critical because now you're putting sections together that has to do it all together to perform a warfighting task.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And is it more important than institution? I can't say it's more important. I just say they're both are important; they're just different.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, what training events -- and I know you've mentioned some of these like in Greece -- any particular training events come to mind that you believe are the most important in your development as a noncommissioned officer over your career?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I learned a lot with JRTC and NTC -- two rotations each. I mean the first time I went to JRTC and entered the box, I was in 37 in Hawaii.



MR. WATERHOUSE: Was this at Fort Polk at the time or Arkansas?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It was at Fort Polk.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They flew the whole battalion from -- whole brigade, actually -- from Hawaii to Fort Chaffee and we did our train-up, and we entered the box; and we did all that stuff that you do there -- cold, extreme weather. They shipped all the equipment in about a month before we went there and we were over there taking stuff off of the railhead. I mean that is training; that's just like, that's it.

And the other one was Fort Polk, Louisiana - - JRTC again. This time it's hot; Chaffee was cold. Two times in the NTC, both times, hell I think it was just hot and dusty. Real, I mean it was just real. You're out there with the ARC-4 , you know; you're in the middle of nowhere; it's dark; you're doing as realistic training as you can get. So I would say the NTC, JRTC were big training things for me. The Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA) in Hawaii is similar to

a training that you get out of JRTC and NTC.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But it's done there,  
locally?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But it's done there on the  
big island of Hawaii.

MR. WATERHOUSE: It was named after a town  
or something?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Pōhakuloa Training Area  
(PTA) -- I'm not sure what's it's named after.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Oh, it's the name of the  
training area? Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's a training  
area. So that was a big one that stands out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Now talking about the  
Sergeant Major course. I think you've hit most of  
this. We've hit the course, obviously.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Okay.

MR. WATERHOUSE: When you were a student and  
then when you were there as a Command Sergeant Major.  
But when you went through as a student, did you feel  
the course back then prepared you for your roles,

duties, responsibilities as a Sergeant Major -- do a pretty job of that back then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I did. I was in a six-month course. We had resource management, leadership, and ops, or something like that. Those were the three different phases that they were running at the time when I went through. They had all the students broken down into one of those three phases; and when you finished that phase in resource management, then they put you in leadership; and then when you finished that one, you went to another one; and everybody made it through all the phases. I think each one of those phases was like six weeks, or whatever the name of the phase was; and then each phase that you went through, I think we took about two exams. We took a total of eight exams while we were down there.

So a lot of times, the Academy to me kind of mirrored any other institution because it was a training test. So we were going through that. I did learn a lot of things down there. I think if the pressure of taking exams would have been a little bit

less than what it was, I could have probably focused on learning from more students than I was.

It's just like anything else right now.

When I was taking my graduate class out here at Fort Sill, I had two different instructors that really stick out in mind. Instructor No. 1 -- I had eight instructors, but these two particularly stick to mind -- Instructor No. 1 was a guy by the name of Mr. Nelson. Nelson was in academia all his life; and his philosophy was teach you, you're going to get it, or you're not going to get it; and I'm not going to stomp my feet; I'm not going to do all these extra things to tell you where to study at, the test; I'm not going to do all that. I'm going to teach it to you; and you're going to get it the hard way. We spent all day long in class highlighting, and taking notes, and listening to everything he's doing; everything from recording it; and Nelson wasn't giving us a break.

You come home; you're stressed out. I live in that little room in there; I close the door; and I find myself studying. I remember one night my wife

and I went out to Olive Garden and she's reading the menu, and I'm reading my homework.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That was Nelson.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

MR. WATERHOUSE: The other guy had a different philosophy and he made us feel very comfortable when he got in there. You know, the director wasn't in the room but he said don't worry about it; everybody's going to pass the class. And we were like okay, that's easy for you to say. Everybody's going to pass the class; it's going to be okay; and we're going to have a real good review as we get to that point; and I'm going to guide you through the lessons and kind of tell you what to highlight in your book so you'll know what to highlight; and we're going to do a real good review.

And he's teaching, going through the slides, and then at certain points he get to something he knows is going to be on test, he'll deliberately say all right, everybody get your highlighters out; I want you to highlight this because you're going to see this

again; and that's the way he did it. He really told us how to do it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you could focus on it.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right; so we could focus on it. And then we went through the book; and at the end when we did the review prior to the exam, his review was he reviewed the actual test.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Seemed totally illegal.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah (laughter).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So he reviewed the test and then he had us go through and he asked us questions, but he didn't tell us the answer; but he told us what all the answers was, but he didn't kind of thing. And what it is, this guy took all the pressure off of taking the exam. So my philosophy is when I was down at the Sergeant Major Academy, I was so focused on making sure I didn't fail a test, that I probably missed out on learning something --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Learning something?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- from somewhere else

that I could have picked up on. Because I was so focused on I can't fail this; and I think that kind of made me miss out on something.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, after you graduated and then you started doing those jobs as a Sergeant Major, looking back -- before you went back and was serving as the Academy Sergeant Major -- those other jobs, were there certain subjects you thought that may have or should have been taught back then that you would have wished you had included back then?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My background is management and leadership. That's also what my Master's Degree is in. So I'm a manager and I'm a leader. I've put more emphasis on that in the Army and I kind of thought I was pretty good at it. So managing, leading -- I remember Jack Tilley also came down to the Academy, he was talking about he wished that we could put more classes in NCOES on history because he found out that so many NCOs did not know anything about Army history. So everybody's got a bone to pick when it comes to curriculum. There are

things they think that they should put in there; and there're other drivers that make us lean left or right on that.

So, I think, that leadership, mentorship, history those kinds of things. If you listen to -- I've got a book in there I got from the Academy; and I'm sitting in there doing my little history study. I wasn't reading; I wasn't doing a lot of history stuff. You heard about the 155th Field Massachusetts all Negro Brigade. You throw it on the table, everybody like, what are you talking about? What unit is that?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: When was that ever taught? But people don't know that it's during World War II -- I think it was World War I or World War II -- they were the -- this was during the era of the time in the Army where black men wasn't allowed to fight. You ask somebody that today they find that hard to believe. What do you mean there was time in the Army where the Army was only all white, wasn't let black people fight in the Army? What do you mean by that?



Well, when it first started out during those times, remember now, we all were slaves. We wasn't considered to be equal; and one of the reasons why those types of organizations were formulated is because the philosophy of the black man in that day was he wanted to be able to contribute to the United States so we could be in history saying that we were part of helping to build this country too.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: We wanted to shed blood and do whatever it takes to do that; and we formulated these different units out there that never were used. And then all of a sudden when Patton got into a certain situation in Germany and he needed more forces, they reached back and they grabbed these all-black units -- in many cases was led by white officers -- and they grabbed them and they brought them in; they put them over there and put them in there with Patton and they helped to win the war. But the problem was they came back then from the fight, and they were doing ticket-tape parades down in New York,

and other places, and Massachusetts, but they wouldn't even allow the unit that was formed to go help fight the war even march in the parade.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So that's a part of history that black and white kids nowadays don't even know. The black kid don't know it because he can't be proud of his history because he wondering what did we contribute; and there are a lot of white kids who can't give credit to black men for doing those kind of things because they don't know about it.

So we don't read, and we don't know those kinds of things. So history inside of institution may find a time to touch on that kind of thing and make people feel proud of it. That's the way it was. Like the Navy, I think, was the last service to allow integration.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Why is that? Because they say, at the time, a lot of commanders didn't want blacks in such close quarters inside of ships with

them.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Wow.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I mean it's just weird things like that.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So history is important. I think history should be in there. I think history is important. It teaches us to respect each and learn about each other's culture and our contributions to it. When you start talking about Native Americans, the only one think is the Code Talkers, they were the only ones. They weren't the only ones that fought in the war. There were a lot of other ones. And then a lot of Native Americans actually fought in Vietnam and did a lot of historical things.

MR. WATERHOUSE: A lot of history kids know is only from movies, like the 54th Massachusetts Civil War.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Television, yeah. That's the one.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Because it was in the

movie, Glory. (Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So anyway, I think that it's a lot of things that formulated who I am and they should be taught in there. But I like management; I like leadership; I like mentorship; you know, basic foundational skill sets.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, so today, how folks are picked to be battalion level Command Sergeant Majors and brigade --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I knew you were going to bring that up.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep; are different. So in your opinion -- you know we have this command select list now -- but in your opinion, looking at the Army today because it is different than when you were coming up. The Army changes about every decade.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. You know, things happen and the Army keeps changing with the times, sort to speak. But how do you feel today senior NCOs should be chosen to fill those first battalion and brigade level Command Sergeant Major positions?

Sometimes I wrestle with the fact that there is no one good answer for that question.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I would just say that I do like that -- you know we went from select, train, promote to something like train first; then select them; then promote them. We've done kind of changed that model a lot in the Army, especially when we're looking at the Sergeant Majors Academy. When you asked me the question earlier about technical tasks inside of MOSSs, and how Tilley asked me to look at that. We were wrestling with you and leaders being trained stuff too late. They've already gone into a first sergeant job, now we're going to send them to the first sergeant course. Well, the first sergeant course then becomes one where a guy probably done learned a lot of wrong lessons before he now go to the course and realize, damn I've been doing this wrong. Yeah, I can see that.

But a lot of times an opening will come open in a unit that they need somebody right away, and they

end up putting the next available guy in there -- like I told you, they were going to put me in Peterman's job -- and sometimes that do happen and there's not a school slot for him to go to; it's going to be a while. So there are times that's going to happen. We don't necessarily, in the Army, the way we pick first sergeants we don't necessarily just go training every E-7 to be a first sergeant just in case something comes open now he's already trained; he can just fit in there. We just don't do it. We don't have the seats in the institution; everybody ain't first sergeant material; so we just ain't going to do it that way.

So we come down to Sergeant Majors, I think I was the product of going as a master sergeant; graduating as a master sergeant; and then the next year I made E-9. Did I come out all right? I did. When I came from the Academy, what did I do? I went straight back to another battery first sergeant position. Would I have loved to come out as an E-9 and graduated as an E-9, and gone into a job; yes,

anybody would love to do that. What I have to also preface this by saying remember now, the rules in the Army when I came out was different. We didn't have that way of promoting and selecting people.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right; yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, I think, that if you come out of the Academy now and you are a SGM and they put you in a staff position as a SGM, and then the next year you're qualified to be looked at to be a Command Sergeant Major, I don't see anything wrong with that; nor do I see anything wrong with Sergeant Major Jones as a SGM coming out of the Academy and going straight into a battalion. I don't see anything wrong with that either, to be honest with you, because, you know, you've got a lot of guys -- I was the first sergeant in three different units, three different types of units; I've been an acting Sergeant Major and all that kind of stuff before I went to the Academy. And then I go down to the Academy and I graduate, now I've got all the institutional training that the Academy gave me. You can insert me into a

battalion any day of a week. I don't have to go sit in an op job for another year to get operations training in a G-3 before I'm stable enough to go into a CSM position. And you've got a lot of guys out there like me that went down that path that still can go straight into a CSM position.

So I'm not the guy that say you should go to the SGM first because it's going to make you better; and I ain't the job that says there's danger in going straight in. I don't take that position because I think, individually, you can probably build a case a guy can go either way.

Now I will tell you this, and this is me on my way out of the door to include the last year I was there. When I left -- anybody that was in my era can tell you exactly that if they ask you about this, this is my position. I still stand strong on that same position. The Army was going through when I left the Army about the year before I got out, it was throwing that notion around to do what it is that we are now doing.



MR. WATERHOUSE: The centralized selection  
(inaudible)?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Centralized selection.  
And keep in mind -- there's two pieces. There's a  
nominative selection to work with a General piece.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yep.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And then there's the just  
get promoted piece.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: On the just get promoted  
part, I was in an era where our progression was you  
could take your reef off; be an SGM, if there was a  
medical, physical reason, whatever; and you could do  
that and go inside an operation position, or a desk  
option-T , or something like that and be okay; if  
that's what you want to do. Some guys are really good  
at operations and they don't really like to be hanging  
around one of the battalion commander. I think that's  
good; if that's what you want.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And you said option-T?  
What was that?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Operations and training.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Okay; yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Cause for instance --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Because battalions used to have two Sergeant Majors.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yes.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Not long ago they had two -- they had an operations and a training Sergeant Major --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yep.

MR. WATERHOUSE: -- in like a brigade; plus the CSM.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So, anyway, when I left the Army -- I'm going to try and make sure I remember this right -- the thought was we're going to start having Sergeant Majors come out of the Academy and go into an operations position prior to going to a CSM position.

MR. WATERHOUSE: For like a year, and then --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Like a year, and that was

the thought about coming out of school; and the other part was we're going to -- I ain't going to call no names -- but these two guys I know out of HRC that I worked with during the time, were very, very adamant about mirroring what officers do with what Sergeant Majors should be doing. The officer track is -- the way it is now -- you are lieutenant colonel; you go into a battalion; you do two years; you get selected first; you go in and do your two years; you come out; you go into a staff position; and you do something else, War College; then you go and get selected for brigade command; then you come out of your staff job in the brigade command; do that for two years, get that done; you come out; go back into a staff job or some joint position; wait until the GO list comes out; see if you're on that. So officers are in and out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You're a battery commander, or you're a captain on the staff; you a major, blah, blah, blah. Now you're battalion commander, you're back on the staff.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So in the Army when we were growing up in, it wasn't that way. You're a first sergeant, you're a first sergeant. Most guys got good in it; they stayed in it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Same thing even with Command Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The same thing with Command Sergeant Major.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You're all in; stay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: They got in; they got good in it; they stayed. There were times when they came out on their own. There were times when somebody pulled them out because they did something stupid; or there were times when they came out because they retired; they're times when they came out because they PCS to another battalion; and the attrition thing did happen on a natural basis. Yeah, some guys stayed in the battalion 3 years, yeah; some guys stay in a brigade job for 3-1/2 years. I was here at Fort Sill as a post Sergeant Major about two, three years or

more; I was at TRADOC over three years -- don't fit the model of today.

We were under the philosophy back then -- the other one is -- what did we say in the past -- in the past we said, man, we don't want to change the battalion commander and Sergeant Major out at the same time. Why did we say that -- too much of a shock on the unit. Remember people used to say that?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You bring in two senior leaders at the same time; man we need to stagger them; that ain't working. And then we lived by that philosophy. What are we saying now? Let's bring them both in together; let's send to PCC together; let's train them together.

MR. WATERHOUSE: At least for the 90 days, we would try to.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So now we completely changed that philosophy. Why did we believe that we didn't want to bring them in at the same time in the past? Because it was shock to the

unit, or whatever. Why do we believe we should bring them in now together today, why? Because we're trying to model in the officer system -- that's one of the things -- doing them like commanders, bringing them in and bringing them out; bringing them in; and bringing them out.

So why are doing that; why is there a need to do that? I'll give you an example. And maybe I can even use you as an example. So you put a guy in a battalion and he learns everything he can; take him out of the battalion, put in another battalion, he's even better than he was the first time because he learned all the lessons from his first battalion. Now you put him in a brigade; he gets to be a brigade Sergeant Major; one, he's probably senior than all the battalion guys; he's got a lot of respect; two battalions under his belt; the brigade commander respects him; he's got clout with the division Sergeant Major; the guy's got it going on. He's in there.

Nowadays, what we're doing with you is --

okay now you're done with that; two years are up now; so now all the experience you got; now what we're going to do with you now is we're going to find somewhere else to put you. Nominative list comes out; you're not on the nominative list; your two years are up; another guy knocking on the door saying hey man, come on give me my seat. So now you come out; what we're going do with you? We're going to try to find something laterally equivalent like a brigade-level op job somewhere else; we're also going to try to find some SCS position to put you in equivalent. We try to find something to put you in which is kind of tough nowadays when everybody else is moving laterally at the same time. And if you don't find that, now that Sergeant Major has to make a decision that he or she may decide to retire.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The downside of that is now he's lost all of that knowledge. This guy is a trained guy, there may not have been a spot for him to be picked up for a nominative Sergeant Major this

time, but another one's coming around. If we had left you stayed in that brigade, you could still have benefited the brigade. You still could have done a real good job in that brigade. I mean you're on your second brigade commander -- hell, you're still doing real good.

If we take you out of that brigade at Fort Raleigh; and now we do what with you? If we move you over to post headquarters and put into G-3, we have to put you somewhere where it looks as though you're kind of moving up a little bit.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Or at least lateral.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At least lateral because if we don't it doesn't look good to your peers, and things like that. So I was under the impression that -- I don't know -- we don't need to let them sit there forever. I think overtime they will either -- there'd be something that we could find for them other than just pushing them on. I didn't like the push-on thing.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, what



advice would you give to Sergeant Majors selected to serve in their first battalion-level Command Sergeant Major position, if you were to give them advice?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Find you a mentor; be a good listener; be upfront with your battalion commander from day one; force him to talk to you if you don't talk to you. I mean you've got to get that communication going. You can't be guessing what the guy thinks and feels. You've got to tell him -- people use these old buzz words all the time that this is my battle buddy, and me and my battalion commander we're friends -- and you use all these types of words, but what's really going on; I mean what really is there?

I don't think I should be a prima donna or nothing like that, but if my battalion commander's got the door closed and I know he's got somebody in there, unless it's a really, really hot button thing, and I'm not in there, I leave it alone. Something hot come up and I think he needs to know about it, I'm knocking on the door, coming in at the same time as I'm knocking -

- unless he's in there with his wife -- I'm going to say sir, I've got something hot I need to talk to you about; you got a minute. He can easily kick that guy out and talk to me or he can step out and talk to me. That's the relationship I got. If I knock on the door and the guy says Sergeant Major, I ain't got time right now. That ain't the kind of guy I want to work with. So that's an extreme case.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: There's also the cases of any time during the day when he's just sitting up in there by himself, he's open for me to talk to him. So communications is really key. So, I think, that the advice I would tell them is you and the commander have got to, probably, be on the same wave length when it comes to training; got to be on the same wave length when it comes down to disciplining soldiers; y'all got to be on the same wave length when it comes down to making decisions that affect the morale of the soldiers and their families. Those are key things right there.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, now looking at a higher level, so guys and gals that are getting ready to go into that first nominative level Sergeant Major or Command Sergeant Major position, what would you tell those guys?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Remember you're a Sergeant Major, and you're not the General. Remember that you are the Command Sergeant Major of the command; you're not the Command Sergeant Major just for the commander. There's a difference.

I mean you ain't the guy that just jumps from the plane with the General and fly around and pass out coins and feel important; you're the guy that's making decisions that affect the command. I mean, you know, you hate to go to a battalion, as an example, as I did when I was over there, you know, the guy don't even know why all his gun sections ain't filled and what his plan is to get more soldiers to fill the gun section. He doesn't know he's got guys that's on his books that's still on terminal leave, and he doesn't figure out how to count people.

Sergeant majors sometimes believe that it's the S-1's responsibility to do personnel accountability in the unit. That's the Sergeant Major's job. I mean how are you going to know where everybody is, even if everybody is in the unit or not in the unit. And how you're going to know if you're in an infantry squad or artillery unit whether or not all of your squads are filled with the right allocation of people that's qualified? I mean how are you going to know all that kind of stuff? So, I think, Sergeant Majors have got to stop acting like Generals for those who are, and remember that they are the Sergeant Major of the command.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, in your experience, what must a Command Sergeant Major be, know, and do to form a good command team with his commander. You already hit a lot of it --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: -- about communication. Anything else you want to highlight to be that -- because we call them command teams these days?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Do not let the commander isolate you as an enlisted person just for the enlisted soldiers. Officers need to be developed too. Ray Canton , that guy what was in 517 that brought that unit back from Germany, this is my first battalion and my first battalion commander. I don't even know him; I've only worked for him for four months.

I never forget he was having an officer professional development session; and he brought all of the officers inside of the classroom; and he brought me in -- and that was when I first got here, integrating me, introducing me -- and said Sergeant Major, this is a professional development session that I do with all the officers. Each one of the two field grades I have also do a mentor session with their battery commanders. He gave them two -- the S-3 and the S-0 -- some responsibility to oversee those battery commanders and kind of be some immediate mentors for them; but on routine times, he brings all the lieutenants, everybody in, and he serves as the

big guy to talk to them. And he says I want you to feel comfortable that if you ever want to come to any of these sessions we have, just set in the back room. We'll never talk about anything that your ears can't hear.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So he introduced me to those guys. So I began to feel like I'm the Sergeant Major for the command. I'm not just -- well we've got some problems with the enlisted guys, go fix this. Well just go take care of enlisted and then all the officers over here, I'll take care of them. So just like I said when I brought in all those guys down at USASMA and had all the instructors in the room, I brought Colonel DeWitt in and set him down because I wanted him to hear --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- what I'm telling all those instructors so he could be the guy to help to reinforce it. He also could be the guy that when we leave out of that session and we go back into the

office, he can say well, Sergeant Major, I think you shouldn't have said this or you put too much emphasis on that. I'm getting feedback; this guy really is my boss, so I really do need some feedback from him.

So every command I ever been in I don't just want to be the Sergeant Major for the enlisted soldiers; I'm the Sergeant Major for the battalion, and lieutenants and battery commanders are in our battalions. I've got an S-3 down there who's kicking and screaming because he don't like the guidance the battalion commander gave him as he's building up an op order. So he's pissing on my leg telling me all about it. He needs to be able to vent to me.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: That's how they do it; that's what you're there for; because he knows if he vents to me and it makes sense, and he gain my trust - - without the colonel knowing it -- I'm going in there and be one of the advocates for him to get the colonel to change his mind. If I was just a guy for the enlisted soldiers, that S-3 wouldn't talk to me. So

you have to be for everybody.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, as you progressed up to the different levels as a Command Sergeant Major, do you think -- I know roles have changed -- but do your basic duties and responsibilities changed as you went up?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the basic duties of a Sergeant Major don't change, you just have to adjust because at every level you're dealing with commanders with a lot of senior experience. As a first-level battalion Sergeant Major, I'm dealing with a lieutenant colonel -- younger than a four-star; only knows battalion down kind of level of thinking; resources are different; may or may not be married, whatever, whatever; fresh out of school, into his first command; ain't never worked with a Sergeant Major himself; so he don't know how to kind of deal with me. Some guys don't know how to use you; they think they're going to offend you. People think they need to move you around like you're a first sergeant.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.



CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So that guy he's on a different wave length. When I'm at the four-star level, first of all, when I come in with him, he ain't treating me like a child because he knows for me to go from where I went from to get up to him, I done gone through a lot of gates and got a lot of experience. So one, he don't talk to me like I'm a battalion Sergeant Major; he don't address me that way; he includes me more often. If he's smart enough, he'll always include me on those kind of things. And me, on the other hand, I address him different. He's got more experience than this guy down here at the battalion as a lieutenant colonel.

Because he's got so much experience and he's got so much power also I have to be very careful what I tell him so he won't overreact and do something that I don't want him to do.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, we hit on this a little bit -- some of your assignments -- but how are your relationships with your subordinate Sergeant Majors of the years in your various

organizations; and how are some of the ways you would -- you talked about how you interacted, but we always want to try to develop and mentor to folks two levels down. So how did you approach, you know, trying to develop mentorship with those Sergeant Majors?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: At the four-star level, at the brigade level, or what level?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Either one; I mean you can comment on any of them.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So at the four-star level to me it was the SMA, I got a lot stuff from him. Usually in TRADOC, FORSCOM, the SMA is on your phone every week, e-mails, so you're getting a lot of information and guidance from the Sergeant Major, generally. That's just a natural thing -- and you really want that; you really want that -- that shows that you guys are talking.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Cross fertilization -- Carl Christensen and I were a little skeptical of each other when we first started out because there's that

history, TRADOC and FORSCOM always have been in competition with each other. Carl and I were trying to balance the scales on that and make people think that there's no fight between TRADOC and FORSCOM. You hear me use these two terms because it appears like nobody else is in the whole world. There is no four-star in Korea. They make it look like there is no four-star in Europe; there is no four-star in SITCOM, and all them other commands. There are four-stars out there, but the focus of the Army when I was in has always been on what -- FORSCOM and TRADOC.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And you also have AMC.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; AMC. Now everybody knows AMC got a four-star General with a Sergeant Major; but, you know; okay, all right, that's AMC; but everything was FORSCOM and TRADOC. And it's always FORSCOM and TRADOC simply because if you noticed as I said earlier, the impact on the Army is mostly done by them.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So my peers and the guy

that I looked up to the most and did more lateral conversation with was guys like Carl Christensen. Simply because he and I was trying to prove to the world that one, there wasn't any opposition between the two major commands; and because we knew that it was that way in the past, it made us talk more.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So you're down at the brigade level you were talking about those battalion-level guys so -- you may have mentioned it before, but just in case somebody doesn't read that part -- you know, you're trying to help those guys out but they have their own commanders that you mentioned; so, you know, it's a delicate balance, but when you want to try to pass on some knowledge -- you know, you were a battalion Sergeant Major?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So if you see them doing wrong or, you know a better way to do things, how did you go about trying to mentor those guys at that level?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You have to be discreet;

you have to be private; you have to believe that they have enough respect for your position that they can take criticism if that's what it is; if they can take a little bit -- you have to believe and hope that they will say okay, this guy is senior to me by position and you hope and believe that they will respect that enough to do it. You've got to be very careful when you talk to another man about something.

If it's something simple like me and Freeman was -- hey, Sergeant Major why is it I don't never see you at PT? That's one way of starting it out; or you can start it out by saying this is the third I've come by BRAVO battery and they were out doing PT, Sergeant Major, and they're always screwing this up. Did you see them? I didn't see you out there at PT. I'm segueing into where were you without saying where were you.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So his answer to me was that he was out at every X-ray where they got like a little old aerobic, boot camp thing that some

civilians do out there, and they're also doing a little bit of Taekwondo, Hikito kind of thing. Freeman was married to a Korean lady and when he was in Korea, he was taking Taekwondo. So because he had a profile and he couldn't run with his soldiers, he wanted to do something physical but he wanted to do it away from them because he knew he couldn't run with them.

So it's like I'm not going to give up my job as a battalion Sergeant Major because I can't run, and I ain't going to be walking around out there with them and they take off running and I'm over here not running; so Freeman was under the mindset I just won't go around them at all. I'm just going to go over here and do something physical -- do some Taekwondo stuff, and do some aerobic kind of things -- at the same while his soldiers were doing PT. But here I am the (inaudible) guy, I'm walking around as I make my checks and I'm watching all these violates that his first sergeants ain't policing up on that I need him to police up on; and that's where Freeman and I was

rubbing each other the wrong way. He wasn't going to back out of his job; he wasn't going to turn his reef in; he wasn't going to turn it up; so he chose to fight me on it justifying why he was there. I ain't got to babysit these guys; and then when it finally came out that he had a profile, he went on and said basically that he had a profile and he didn't want nobody to know about it, wanted to keep it quiet. You know, about where he had a problem with his heart; and he walked around with the nitroglycerin tablet in his pocket; and he didn't want nobody to know about it because he didn't want them to Q&P him out of the Army.

So why do we have to go through days and weeks of bickering and arguing to really get down to the truth of the real reason why he wasn't out there. Because he had too much pride to come out and tell me; because he probably thought I was going to judge him behind that. So we argued about something that he could have told me a long time ago and I would have backed off and said well, okay, I got it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: But that was his defense mechanism; and that's why you have to be very careful. I mean those other two guys, I didn't have no problem with them. They were out there busting up doing PT just like I was. That's why I couldn't understand why he wasn't out there, knowing that our (inaudible) ran like a damn stallion -- he ran like a racehorse. Every time you see him, he was running. He was a big PT guy, all he wanted to know was where the Sergeant Major at; where the colonel at; where the battalion commander at. And I can't explain where Freeman was. I'm the brand new (inaudible) Sergeant Major; what do you think my (inaudible) commander want me to do; go police your own up.

So I'm over there trying to police up Freeman and he's making excuses, but he doesn't tell me the truth; and finally in his office he came down and told me what the real problem was -- after we had argued about it already.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) So Sergeant



Major, looking back over your 32-year military career in the Army, what would you say are some of the most memorable moments of that time -- more proudest moments -- however you want to say it -- those things that have stuck with you all this time?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My time as a drill sergeant, obviously; my time as a USASMA Sergeant Major, obviously; graduating from airborne school; air assault school as a E-9; oh, accomplishing that. Those are big milestones that helped my confidence. Being able to say that I maxed x-number of PT test in the Army, maybe only two or three that I never maxed; I always had a personal standard of maxing the PT test. So I was really prideful about that. When I was first selected to work for General Broadwater -- the first General officer I ever worked for -- I thought that was a proud moment. I never thought that would ever happen to me. So I didn't really know how to react to that; I didn't know -- you know being a Sergeant Major for a General you had to act a certain way; that I had to give up who I was as a person and

as a leader, and be submissive to some General just to work at that level; I didn't really know; so that was a very prideful moment to be able to say I was working for a General officer.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, you know, you were in a lot of those higher up Command Sergeant Major jobs where you could set initiatives or make big change, or lead change in your organization, of course, under your commander's approval -- but lead change and stuff like that. Are there any initiatives or programs you created or led over your career as a nominative Sergeant Major that we haven't talked about that you'd like to talk about?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Every year at the Sergeant Major Academy, the first point I'll bring up will be - - I think they're still doing it today -- called Proponency Day.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Okay.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So when I was at Fort Sill, I first learned the importance of what your Proponent Office does for your branch. We had an SGMO

there, a lieutenant colonel over there, a bunch of civilians, Army Reserve, National Guard guy representing both, and they are the ones that are like the data collectors. They collect all that data for MOS.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: What it takes to get the data to the recruiters to say what the picture of a 13 BRAVO should look like; the test scores; who should get a bonus; promotion board requirements -- they put all that together.

So I learned the important of the Proponency Office; and then when I was here at Fort Sill when I went up to HRC every three months -- for me and the two-star to go up there and brief our case -- we took the Proponency Sergeant Major and about 200 slides, and the lieutenant colonel, and that's how I learned how important they were.

So I go down to the Sergeant Major Academy now as a Sergeant Major I remember when I was down there as a student how we did those branch days when

the HRC guys came down and shadowed the Academy and putting out assignments for all the students; a lot of times a lot of things about the branch we didn't know, and I saw a need for the insertion of the proponents there.

I left the Academy to go to TRADOC. When I get up to TRADOC and I come up with this great idea that we ought to have a proponency day at the Sergeant Major Academy to have each Proponent Sergeant Major over a course of that day stand up for about 15 minutes; throw some slides up on the big screen; and talk about key things going on within the infantry; and assignments of Infantry Sergeant Majors and master sergeants, and some board results that came back from the last board for the E-9 selection; the picture of the number of people got selected in the secondary zone, primary zone; who had what, who didn't; talk a little bit about bonuses and different MOSs so they'd know all the MOSs in the infantry; what you like, mechanize , or whatever is getting bonuses.

MR. WATERHOUSE: It's a kind of state of the

branch.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's the state of the  
branch.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And I saw a need for that  
and I stood it up; and they've been doing that for  
years, so I will take credit for that; I think they're  
still doing it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, how did you  
handle the transitions from the tactical, to  
operational, to strategic level advisor, you know, for  
your commanders of those different levels; and what  
would you think was the most valuable in helping you  
prepare for those different levels as an advisor to  
your platoon leader, or whatever, all the way up to  
TRADOC's commander, for example?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's tough giving advice  
to -- I ain't going to say it's tough -- it's  
different giving advice -- much, much different -- to  
a four-star than it is like you say a battalion  
commander or lieutenant colonel. The thing is at the

battalion level, what I realized is I was younger too. My battalion commander was young, but I was also a young battalion Sergeant Major. So my way of thinking was kind of sort of along with his. If you take a person up to the top first, and then work them down, that's backwards. You take person from the bottom and work them up, there's a progression of learning that you just pick up on things as you go, knowing what to do and not to do again because you learned some hard lessons along the way. So you're working with a battalion commander, and he's a hardheaded guy and he's not a good listener and you learn how to get around that, it makes you a little bit stronger.

So now when you work with your other guy, he's a real easy guy to get along with, you can kind of relax a little bit. It's difficult working for -- every man is different because there personality is different; and you can have all the skill sets you learned at the battalion level and you can come up to the (inaudible) level, and because the guy you're working for is so difficult, or so demanding, all the

things you learned you have to really do a lot of tweaking on it because you've got to get along with this guy and you've got to be effective with him, so you have to change sometimes who you are at every level simply because the boss that you're working for is different. That's hard.

If you're working for a four-star, you really have to be very -- the best thing you can get is have a four-star boss like the two I had that you get along real well with -- or you can have one that you can't get along with. You just cannot have a boss at that level that you can't get along with because one, he ain't going to let you stay around; he's just going to get rid of you.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So it's kind of hard to advise if you don't listen (inaudible).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. General Abrams was my first one. I worked for General Abrams for eight months; and then I worked for General Burns for the next two-plus years, I'm with General Burns. General Abrams was eight months of working with him. We spent

a lot of time on the plane; and he did a lot of briefings; but Abrams was an older man, older than me; had already been a four-star for almost three years; him and John Beck -- the Sergeant Major he had prior to that had worked together before -- so he really didn't need a lot from me --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: -- as far as himself. For his guidance, and mentorship, and those kinds of things; he didn't need a lot of that. He asked me a question one time that he did, deliberately, ask for some advice from me -- that was when we stood up Army Accessions Command. So an Army Accessions Command was about to be stood up before it even got stood up, General Abrams called me in and said this is what, Sergeant Major, we're getting ready to do and I wanted to kind of get your thoughts on it. We are about to stand up a command and this command is going to be the command in charge of Army accessions. What is that; where did he get that name from kind of thing.

He said this is what they're going to do.



They are going to be responsible for recruiting, soldiers in; they're going to be responsible for training, once you get them in, they've got to train them; then we're going to also have ROTC, Junior ROTC. So one command is going to be responsible for all this and we're going to put a three-star in charge of that command. Okay; so he explained that to me; we're in his office and he's talking about it. And I say well, are you going to start up of a command, are you going to have Sergeant Major in there? I'm thinking okay, now we're fixing to get Sergeant Major. Well, I don't think so; what do you think? And I said well, if you going to call it a command, you're going to stand up a command; and he's going to be a commander, he'll probably need a Command Sergeant Major. Yeah, that does make sense, have a commander; but I do have some concerns about that. I say okay, what are the concerns then? You are going to have a Sergeant Major there. And he says well, my main concern is this guy is going to be in charge of all of this; and I'm afraid that we're putting another layer between you --

meaning me -- and IAT; and I really want you to always have your hands in the IAT world, ROTC and (telephone ringing interruption).

MR. WATERHOUSE: So IAT was your initial entry training?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. IAT was our initial entry training command and he wanted to stand it up, put all this under one commander, but he was reluctant to put a Sergeant Major in there; and when he asked me about it and as we start to talk about it, I begin to finally pull out of him the reason he didn't want a Sergeant Major in there because he still wanted his Sergeant Major -- me -- to have direct access, directly as the senior enlisted guy to touch all those three things that he was about to put underneath General Cabin . And I told him, I said well, it don't make sense if you're going to make it a command without a Sergeant Major; and I said well, don't worry about it. I said I tell you what, I said the key thing here is not whether or not you put another layer under there with a Sergeant Major; the

key thing there is we put the right guy in there that I can work with and we'll establish a rapport that we can kind keep this going. He agreed; and he said okay, well, then, get with General Cabin and kind of help him out; give him some mentorship as we go along in selecting who this is going to be. So when General Cabin was officially announced and it became the official Commander of Accessions Command, I had an office call with him and he and I started going through a slate process to put names together for him to select from.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So Sergeant Major, if you were developing a course or a lecture, a speech, or whatever to teach newly-selected nominate Sergeant Majors how to prepare for their future role as strategic level advisors, what would the topic or theme be of that conversation? Like we have the nominative leader course now; so if you were to go, for example, and speak to those students, what would be some of the advice you'd give those guys; or a particular course or class in the nominative leader

course?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: These guys, when they get to that level, automatically make so many assumptions about them; automatically assume they'd been brigade level Sergeant Majors; they're kind of seasoned; so a lot of times -- I mean everybody can give advice. So, yeah, I can give them some advice, but what I'll have to do is -- I like to be very crafty about it because I don't want to shut them down; I don't want them to think that I'm standing up there in front of them preaching to them; telling them what worked for me, and you ought to do just what I did because it worked for me. But what I will offer to them is philosophy is about how to communicate; philosophy is about how to act as a Sergeant Major and not act like you are the General. When you go around and you're working for Brigadier General Davis, don't walk into 0-6 Colonel Jones' office talking to him like you are the General or battalion commanders.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Don't throw your weight

around in that kind of capacity because that's really not who you are. You know I told people all the time I say we've got to be very careful what you're talking about because the guy you're talking today -- that senior 0-6 down there -- just because you started working for that one-star, two years from now that senior 0-6 down there is going to be a one-star; he could be your boss. Or he could know the guy you're about to work for and your reputation could be damaged to the point where they believe that you're not the right guy for the job.

I think nominative Sergeant Majors ought to learn that they ought to get a mentor, everybody needs one. I had a lot of them in the Army. I think a mentor is somebody you can call up; that don't have a dog in the fight; that you can tell things, even things that's private and feel that they ain't going to tell somebody else about it. I think a mentor is going to tell you straight up and you're going to allow a mentor to talk to you a certain way. You don't allow everybody to talk to you. So, I think,

nominative Sergeant Majors ought to have a mentor; I think they ought to understand that they are human too. I think they also ought to understand that at some point, the clock is going to run out; it runs out on all of us. You may be the Sergeant Major for two-star General Jones today, but a couple years from now, you're no longer that guy anymore. Look at all of us. I worked for two four-star Generals, did 33 years in the Army, and I'm retired too. It's going to happen to everybody. So treat people the way you want to be treated and act a certain way because people depend on you when you're in those jobs to be a certain way.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, we've talked a little bit about this along the way, but what significant changes did you see in the Army over that 32, 33 years; and what were some of the key big-picture things that you saw change; and do you think those changes in the Army were for the better, or for the worst, or a little bit of both?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: First change I think was for the best in the Army was I went through basic

training running in boots; running in uniform. Basic training was you had on your PT uniform. It wasn't PT uniforms in basic training in 1972. Your uniform was your PT.

MR. WATERHOUSE: That was it, huh?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. You took your shirt off and you had your tee shirt on, it was summer, you unbloused your boots, and you did PT. And then the wintertime, you just unbloused your boots; you kept your long sleeve on and you did PT; just put your gloves and your old hat and you just did PT. The bad part about that was (1) you tore up a lot of uniforms; (2) the guy was dirty (soon as he finished, he messed up another uniform); (3) we tore up our ankles because we were running in boots that wasn't designed to be ran in on a long distance like that; I mean all kind of things. The goodness is, we got out of that era; put them in PT uniform; started letting them run in running shoes, a good one. I think that I like the fact that the Army changed the old fatigue uniform. I was in the Army when we had khaki's; I was in the army

when we had those old green pickle-looking OD green uniforms; and we finally went to the BDU uniform with the black and green camouflage back in the '70s and '80s. I think that was a good era.

Then we went from that one into the ACU. The first ACU they went into, I didn't like it; and then we went to the next one, I did like it. So I do like the fact that we have progressively done better with uniforms, even though I think we've changed them too much now; and I think we've done better in the PT-side of the uniform where now we have an actual PT uniform that's designed to do PT in; you can stretch out more; you can get it dirty; it is designed for that.

As far as training, I wish the Army was bigger. We've got North Korea, China, Russia -- you name it -- Iran, Iraq -- you name it; and we are trying to spread the Army in places like Africa now, and a lot of other places, and I think what it is that we need more soldiers in the Army so we can do all these multiple missions. I think the Army is too



small; I think we need more soldiers in the Army.

Equipment wise, I think we gotten light years ahead of the Army I came in. We got Bradley's now; we've got a different tank now -- they just came out with a new one. Our company is putting IMVeEs on the street -- these new armored vehicles that we're putting out. We have new helicopters; new jets; and you go on and on; new lift capability. I think the equipment in the Army is good, but we've also have identified that the Russians are getting ahead of us. They've got canons that can shoot further; they've got more of them. I mean so come on, they've got tanks just as good as ours, if not better.

So, I think, that we've got to get appropriated to fund the Army not just with people to make it bigger, but with the appropriate equipment. As the Chief of Staff of the Army was saying in the *Army Times* we need to be able to get it quicker, you know, rather than going through all these long, antiquated, bureaucratic acquisition programs to get it; we need to be able to buy similar to what the

special ops guys are doing, get it to the soldier faster, and be there to have the money for it.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, you've already hit on some of this, but what do you think the Army's -- but actually, that's now -- but what do you think the Army's major challenge will be 10 years from now, 15 years from now -- just in your opinion; and do you think that the way our leaders are approaching those needs now is kind of on the right track?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I think the biggest threat is cyber. I mean the world runs off of computers; everything we do. We've got computers in our hand; computers in our cars; computers in our homes; every desk got a computer; computers are in kids' hands; we're concerned about hacking; we're concerned about people stealing our identity; we're concerned about the Russians messing with the elections through electrons. I mean there is so much electronic stuff. We balance our checkbooks with a computer. Everything now is electronic. Every combat vehicle got some kind of computer in it, and all of our different kind of

radios are high tech. We're now trying to second-guess how the enemy is going to jam our signals. It's all electrons.

So cybersecurity is there. We're now no longer running across a desert fighting in big open areas like that; we're now fighting in urban environments; the Army had to change to fight in urban. Now that we've gotten there and we figured out how to do all that, now we're being attacked with cyber. We've got IUDs on the road, and guys using detonators from distances away and blowing them up using cellphones. So, I think, the threat for us in the future is cyber.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, based on your many years of service and experience interacting with lots of Sergeant Majors serving in Command Sergeant Major positions, do you think the Army should -- this is kind of a two-part question -- so we have the actual insignia.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: With the reefs and then we

also have the title -- this is really a two-part question -- so do you think we should retain -- because there's a few bad apples like in --

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: -- everything; so there're some Command Sergeant Majors -- I think they're commanders -- but there's also a different level of responsibility as a Command Sergeant Major.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So what's your take, or what's your thought on the insignia versus a title, or both. What's your take on that? Is that's something that's okay as it is, or do you think it should change? Because we didn't used to have a Command Sergeant Major before 1967?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. I always used to say the Army put a senior enlisted person with an officer at different levels of command for a reason. The Army put a first sergeant with a captain for a reason. He is a senior guy; a seasoned guy; been through all those steps there, and now he is an

advisor; they're probably in a lot of cases on the same wave length. As a Command Sergeant Major your role has now been first sergeant in multiple jobs; been an ops sergeant, and all that; you're the seasoned guy now, and your rank is being a Command Sergeant Major gives clout to your job and your level of responsibility.

Let's just say if you're going to be a battalion commander and your name is commander, you are in charge of a command, and they give you the title as commander of an unit. So why not have your senior enlisted person with a similar title with some of that command in there because if he serves as your right hand enlisted advisor, he should have some of that command responsibility in his title. So, therefore, you put it in there. Why I want you to be my battle buddy if I don't call you battle buddy? Why do I want you to be my Command Sergeant Major if I don't call you Sergeant Major? I mean then you become just like anybody else.

So I like the rank the way it is; I like the

fact that we are called Command Sergeant Majors because we are part of a command where there's a flag, whether it's a brigade, battalion -- battalion brigade, or whatever -- it's a flag and it's a title; and I think that gives it that little extra oomph and need in order to help the command out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So to play devil's advocate -- on the other side -- so you have guys and gals now going back and forth, brigade and whatever; battalion Command Sergeant Major, now they're brigade ops -- they don't necessarily get the same respect and confidence from people that just look at that rank even though that guy might have been a battalion or maybe in the brigade Sergeant Major, but now he wears that and some of his peers, but some of the officer corps, soldiers, civilians, and CIF, they won't give that guy or gal the same respect because there's this connotation that if you're not wearing the reef then maybe you're not as good as the guy next to you who is.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So that's kind of the devil's advocate side of that is well,. if we don't have that particular insignia then it all depends on what position you're in, but there's not going to be any denigration, or so to speak. Same thing on master sergeant and first sergeant; once you take that diamond off, you get less respect.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You lose something. Let's just say we made everybody one thing; and we made everybody a Sergeant Major.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I mean would that work; yeah, it would; it would work. You just made everybody a Sergeant Major, it would work because over time -- and that command word went away, we don't even use it anymore -- 20 years go down the road and people don't even remember that ever existed. Like you said, they started the Sergeant Major rank in 1976. Most people you ask that they don't even know that.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Or in '67. Yeah, '67 it was improved, and '68 guys started wearing it.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. WATERHOUSE: The Army was around a long time before that.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; that's right. And then they survived without it. Yeah; you could take that away and call everybody a Sergeant Major; and would it work, yes. Who would it affect? It would affect everybody right now and a lot of people's opinion and thoughts probably for at least the next 10 years because the sergeant first class in the Army right now who's reaching to be one of them one day, he knows what it looks like right now; and all of a sudden you take that away from him, now he's going to be a first sergeant; then he says okay.

Then when he goes from first sergeant, he's going to be a Sergeant Major; but he'll never forget that he probably could have been a Command Sergeant Major; and then now we out at the VFW; we're all retired, one day and a bunch of guys sitting around the table; and one of the guys is going to say to the other guy oh, yeah, I was a Sergeant Major of the 1st



to the 12th. Well, hell, I was a Command Sergeant Major. So you hear what I'm saying?

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So it's kind of weird. It was just kind of like -- and I know I'm getting into another lane here, and I won't get too deep on it -- but I read in the *Army Times* about how we were starting talking about E-10, E-11, and E-12 ranks and all that kind of stuff.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah; six months (inaudible).

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; so I had some thoughts about that too, but a lot of my colleagues around here as we were talking in the sauna and different places about that, nobody likes that. None of the retirees like that. Here's a guy who went all the way to the grade an E-9, became a Sergeant Major, a Command Sergeant Major as an E-9. That's the highest rank you could ever get in the Army enlisted is a E-9.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Fast forward. 15 years from now, let's just say he did go to an E-11, 12, and 13 rank. Okay; I got it. 15 years go by, now I'm sitting in that same sauna and the guy says oh, I just retired. Yeah, what you doing? I'm an E-13. Then the other guy say yeah, what grade were you? I was an E-9. He automatically thinks --

MR. WATERHOUSE: I'm better than you.

(Laughter)

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I'm better than you. He was at the same level as you; he was in the same battalion --

MR. WATERHOUSE: Same organization.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Same organization, but because his number was higher, he automatically thinks that. And I'm going to tell you something else I told everybody a long time ago when I was there. This is a quote from me. Just like I said the other one was some of the things we used to do that's still good to do today; and the other quote is it's easy to make a rule if you don't have to abide by it yourself. It's

easy for Congress to tell us what to do and shut down the government, but they're still getting paid.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Yeah.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: It's easy for people to make rules that they don't even have to abide by. I can sit here all day long and make the rules and say y'all need to do this, do this; but it ain't costing me no money; my family ain't affected by it; it's not going to affect my retirement check; none of that. It's easy for me to do that. So, I think, that when people make rules, and they make regulations, and they do things like that, they've got to exchange and put themselves in a situation and say how would I like for somebody to do that with me.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So just kind of think about it. Yeah, we'll get over it. It ain't going to affect my pay if you made E-13s, and I retired as an E-9. No I won't like it; my money is still the same; and yeah, that same guy in the sauna that says he's the 13 and I am a 9, yeah; I can explain to him that

the levels are still the same; but numbers still stick in people's mind.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Right. So Sergeant Major, in 2005, you retired from the Army with 32-plus years of active federal service. What led to your decision to get out at that point?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So how do I explain it in a positive way? I think the Army is a place that I probably could have stayed another five or six years longer. I would not would have wanted to stay in TRADOC the whole time because I did a lot of road time and it probably would have kind of burned me out.

MR. WATERHOUSE: You were there almost four years too.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So that job was very demanding. So, this is what happened. So one of the guys that Jack Tilley -- when Tilley got ready to retire, he asked me are you going to compete for my job as SMA? I said I'm thinking about it. I'd like to get some mentorship from you and let you tell me about it; and I did pass some thoughts and concerns

about it.

So I did consider doing that and that was something I was thinking about but I had a little bit apprehension about it. So, anyway, time comes around and he asked me officially was I going to do it, and I had to give an answer. I said yeah, I would. I don't know if you remember what happened during 2004 when that went down but -- I wanted to break that picture out and show it to you; and I feel bad that I didn't -- so they sent out the notices to the SMAs -- he knew who all he wanted to have on that slate. I think it was like 12 of us.

All of the four-star Sergeant Majors I think with the exception of maybe one was on there and we had two, three-star Sergeant Majors on there; and that was Sergeant Major -- actually there were three -- Sparks, Ken Preston, and that Sergeant Major out of the Special Ops, I can't think of his name.

MR. WATERHOUSE: At the three-star level?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Right. Anyway, long story short -- so we all did a background check; we all came

out clean; and then they pulled all our records and they set up a date for the Board. We go to Crystal City, Virginia, and we all go up there and it was designed to be a two-day Board. It was designed to do a Board that last for two days and narrow it down to five people that actually goes into actually get the interview. That was a standard process; has been that way for years. So that meant that eight guys had to be cut.

So rather than running the Board over a two-day period, General Lovelace which was the president of the Board, decided to squeeze it all into one day because they were busy and they wanted to get it done. So they ran a Board that morning from about 8 o'clock in the morning; it went all the way to like 9:30 at night. It was a murder Board; and they did us in alphabetical order; and it was like five or six General officers on the board and then there was the SMA. I don't know if the SMA was a voting member. I think he was like an advisor.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So they had all these GOs in there, and we were all sitting down in the lobby at the Marriott Hotel; and General Lovelace, the president of the Board came out and talked to us. And he said look one thing I can tell you is I can't tell E-9s about a Board all you guys are senior level Sergeant Majors, you know how Boards are ran. He said there's nothing you could do to prepare for this Board; we're going to ask you a bunch of opinion questions; and we're going to evaluate your answers.

All right, A to Z; and then what we're going to do is when we finish asking you questions, we're going to have you go back up to your room. The adjutant then when we get done will call you room and let you know if you are one of the five selected down size or not -- that's the process. Alphabetic order, I'm being Williams that did tell you I'm going to be last. So I had left went back up to my room, hung around until about 12, 1 o'clock; come back down; they're still going at it; I knew they hadn't got to me; and after that I got down there that afternoon. Finally

my time came; I went in and did my little thing on the Board; I think I did very well; came back up to the room; and the adjutant called me told me that I made the cut and I was good to go; meet in the lobby the next morning.

I was happy; I called my wife; hey, I made the cut; I'm good to go. The next morning I come down stairs and the SMA says well, there was a tie on two of you, so instead of putting five people in to see the chief, we're going to send six in.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So he didn't tell who was in the tie; it didn't matter. So now everybody else was dismissed and they went home. So Tilley took all of us over to the Pentagon; we go over to the Pentagon. At 2 o'clock that afternoon, General Schoomaker , the Chief came in and when he came in he came in the conference room, sat down like you are; all of us around the table; told us about how important it is what he is about to do, blah, blah, blah; all of that kind of stuff; and said I'm going to



bring you guys in one at a time and talk to you. He said I want you to take off your coat and tie; just get down to your class b's and we were going to talk. Alphabetical order again; I'm Williams. So he calls everybody in one at a time; and he didn't start until about 2:30 or so in the afternoon.

MR. WATERHOUSE: And you're just sitting around and waiting.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And he didn't get to me until like 7 or 8 o'clock or longer. It was late. I was sitting there, and they finally got to me. So you're sitting on pins and needles in there all day long. Everybody -- you want some coffee, whatever; anyway, I got done. I went on in to see him; he brought me in and sat me down; he was comfortable; I was comfortable; he offered me some water; I sat there in the recliner and he and I started to talk.

So of the five guys before me that went in the room, we were kind of getting a judgment of how long they were in there; and most of those guys were in there about 20, 25 minutes, maybe 30 minutes; and I

think the longest person was in there may be like 40 minutes.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: When I went in, the Chief had me in there about an hour. I was in there longer than anybody. And we had some good conversations; and I got a real good feeling about this; come out; Tilley out there waiting and asked me how'd I do? I told him. The same thing he did with all the other guys who came out and we, individually, got in our cars and left and went back home. So I left. If you had asked me that night was I going to get selected and be the guy, I would have said, yes I was.

I got in the car, feeling good. Went to the airport; caught a plane; flew back to Virginia; then I'm back home. I was home for about three or four days, I think. He went through the process and made his decision. Next thing I know, his XO called me on the phone and said standby, the Chief of Staff of the Army wants to talk to you. He called me on the phone and said hey, Sergeant Major, we had a good

conversation. I had some real good guys to choose from -- blah, blah, blah. Went on explaining himself, and his rationale, and thoughts; he say but I decided to go in a different direction. I didn't select you, but I would like for you to stay around and not retire on us because I see you've got a lot of benefit to the Army, blah, blah, blah. Sir, thank you, good to go.

Went downstairs; told General Burns, the TRADOC Commander about my phone call; called my wife, told her; went back up to the office; got back behind the desk; started on e-mails. Just like nothing had never happened.

It took me until that night for it to sink in. So I was sitting at home that night and I was thinking about it and I was thinking; I said you can't feel bad about this. You know, we've got guys retiring everyday as a staff sergeant, you know; some of them missing limbs and stuff; and here you are brooding a little bit over the fact that you didn't get selected to be the Sergeant Major of the Army; and for the last 3-plus years you've been sitting here at

the four-star level, and you have accomplished things that a many people just dream of and never ever get a chance to do. You ought to feel good about this; suck it up and move on out. And that's exactly what I did. Got a good strong drink; everything was happy; my wife still proud of me, and I just went back to work the next day like nothing ever happened.

Two days later, Ken Preston called me on the phone. He and I knew each other prior to that -- even before that; and he asked me, he said Anthony what are you going to do? He said I'm calling you because I don't want you to leave the Army because you didn't get selected. I would love to have you work with me because you've been doing a lot of good things at TRADOC, blah, blah, blah, and all the good stuff. I said Ken, I tell you what, you don't have to worry about it; I'm going to be good to go. Right now I have no aspirations to get out of the Army; but I will tell you that if the right opportunity come around later on, because I've been here now over three years; I said I'll probably seize the right opportunity.

He was in Germany; Tilley's up at the Pentagon; I'm down at Fort Monroe; Tilley's getting ready to transition out; Preston ain't made it from Germany to the Pentagon yet; Tilley asked me to be the stand-in guy; and I was kind of like, went to a couple of meetings in the Pentagon for Tilley because he was trying to process out. I wasn't officially told by the whole world that Williams is the acting SMA, but in Tilley's mind I was doing all the stuff that he didn't want to do as he was transitioning out until Preston showed up.

Preston shows up; goes to work; and in October of that year -- I forgot what time it was when they had the Board -- but October of that year, I was at AUSA; and we were at an AUSA convention. My old two-star commander here, General Baxter, seen me there and he said I heard a rumor that you didn't make the SMA job. He said what are you going to do now; you going to retire? I said I don't know; I'm kind of thinking about whatever the next opportunity come around; and I said I may do that. And he said I've

got a guy you ought to go talk to. He said they're looking for a person to go work for this particular company in Oklahoma and I think you're the right guy for it. I said oh, okay; just give it to me.

Anyway, he gave me a card; I called the guy. The guy that I called was already at AUSA as well -- and to make a long story short -- he called me in and said we would like to interview you for a position and know if you're interested in leaving the Army and going to work for us. And I said well, let me talk to my wife; tell me a little bit more about it; how much it pay; what are we doing; so he did that. And then two days later, they asked me to fly to D.C. from Virginia; and to actually be officially interviewed.

So I told my TRADOC commander, sir, what was going on. He said that sounds like a good idea; but he wasn't under the impression that I would be leaving any time soon.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I go down and did the interview; and once I got the interview done, the guy

that interviewed me said he wanted me to go to work right away.

MR. WATERHOUSE: (Laughter) -- wait a minute.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. So now they wanted to go right away; but this was one of my opportunities that I was afraid if I didn't say yes, I would lose it because they were offering me a real good salary. So my answer is I now call Preston up on the phone and say, I know I just told you that I was going to stay around, but I just got a good opportunity. I probably want to go; I've got to see if my commander is okay with it because it's a short notice kind of thing.

So I go in and talk to General Burns; and General Burns is like hair on fire kind of thing. He was like well, you can't leave that quick -- because this was like they told me in October; I think I was interviewed somewhere like November time frame; but they wanted me to report in March. They wanted me in four months; and Burns was like no way; that can't happen. We haven't had a chance to even run the slate

to get nobody in to do all that. So, anyway, when I called the guy up that offered me the job and told him I'm having some difficulty, this particular guy -- I won't call his name -- is also a retired, very powerful person, used to be in the Army who knows my boss at TRADOC. He calls him directly and says look, I've got this great opportunity for Williams; I ask that you let him go; he may not have another opportunity like this; you've got to let him go, blah, blah, blah. He finally softened up and said okay, I'll let him go.

So I left the Army after not being selected for the SMA job not because of that, but because I got an opportunity to get a job that was one of those opportunities you just didn't want to turn down. And the key thing to that is 14 years later I'm still working for that company. So, I think, it was a good decision.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, looking back at your Army career, what do you believe was your most significant accomplishment or accomplishments --



like all of us we have things that we maybe started and didn't get to finish; or things we wanted to do or try to get done that we didn't?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I like to believe that some significance that I done was the impact on people. That's a general answer. I didn't say when I changed NCOES; or did a new curriculum for drill sergeant school; or convinced the Army to buy new uniforms -- I don't look at that as being like a legacy kind of item for me. I look at it like I went through the Army hoping that I touched the lives of people in such a way that it changed them a little bit. It changed them and made them better; it changed them in a way that it made them want to be like me; things like that; that's what I'm hoping that it did.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Another way you can say it is how do you want be remembered?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I want to be remembered like the guy who cared; the guy who took time to talk to you; the guy who was a disciplinarian when he needed to be, but that wasn't the thing that I carried

around on my collar. I come from a racial environment but found a good way in the Army to work with people of different nationalities; didn't carry a chip on my shoulder about that because I was treated wrong coming up. And everybody today I think they still believe that same thing about me.

MR. WATERHOUSE: So talking about leaving the military, starting your civilian career, how has that transition -- because everybody has a different transition. Some people have more time -- now we try to look at two years out you want to start looking, you can always get two years.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yep.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But how was your transition to civilian life and what do you think were the greatest challenges in that process?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: My transition into civilian life was easy because of the fact that I went straight to work for a company and there wasn't any delay in the middle. I didn't have to lay around on terminal leave for six months and think about the

decision to retire that I had made before I went to work. I didn't have any withdrawal symptoms of not being around soldiers because I went from Fort Monroe straight to Fort Sill home of the artillery where I grew up at, around soldiers with uniforms on every day; working for a defense company that makes equipment for those soldiers.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So I felt like I was still connected.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Still part of the family.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah; and I came back to a place where everybody still remembered me; that my legacy was here and they still remember me. So my transition was easy in that regard.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Sergeant Major, last question. Is there anything that you would like to discuss, something that I have not asked you or something we have not addressed?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: No. I would say one comment I will make. I don't call this a regret; I

don't call it that; I call it a missed opportunity. I did 32-1/2 years in the Army; went to the highest level I could go to, and I never been to the fight.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So one of the things I feel like a missed opportunity is I didn't go to Desert Shield; I didn't go to Iraq; and I didn't go to Afghanistan. I didn't go to Desert Shield, Desert Storm because when they did that, I was a first sergeant in 322 over in the training side.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: The Army was just now putting together all these units to go over to Iraq for Desert Shield, Desert Storm; and the Army was trying to figure out what they needed. They were trying to figure out was this going to be a long, bloody, Vietnam kind of war; and we're going to have a lot of casualties; or are we just massing forces and we're not going to need them all.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: So the Army was sending

people over but they wasn't grabbing everybody. They wasn't shutting down training batteries and all that stuff; so I'm over there as a battery first Sergeant Major, they just like okay, so you're over there. If I had been over here on the tactical side in III Corps Artillery, I'd been in one of them brigades and I would have been gone.

I missed that opportunity simply because I was in the wrong unit.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm-hmm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: And over time, they still start bringing people in, but by that time I was in the Sergeant Majors Academy -- no, I'm sorry -- yeah I was an E-9 then. They were bringing guys out of Desert Storms, so I couldn't go.

Next opportunity, Iraq. When did Iraq happen --after September 11th? Where was I at? I was going to TRADOC. In September 11th, when that happened, and now in November, two months later, I'm now the TRADOC Sergeant Major. TRADOC Sergeant Majors don't go to war. None of the four-star guys go to

war.

MR. WATERHOUSE: When Afghanistan kicked off?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. When Afghanistan kicked in, hell, I was already in the middle of TRADOC, and retiring. Every -- the three opportunities of three fights during the time I was on active duty, I missed all three opportunities to do all three of them -- simply because I was in a job that did not require or would not allow me to go.

The reason why it sticks in my heart the most is simply because I have had two brothers that went over there. One, two times; and I had a daughter that went to Iraq -- my child went to Iraq.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Mm.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: She served in there as a sergeant and a staff sergeant. She got out of the Army; she married another soldier. So I've got a child been to Iraq; two brothers been over there, one's been twice; my daughter's husband -- the one who went to Iraq -- she married a E-7, he went five times.

He's been to Egypt once; two times in Iraq; and two times in Afghanistan -- in the fight. He can talk about something that I can't talk about. All of them been, and here I am, you know, haven't been. So I don't look at it as a regret; I don't call it that; I look at it as a missed opportunity because I know if they had rung my bell, I'd been on that train like anybody else, and been proud of it.

But I'll tell my wife and I'd tell my mother all the time, we were talking about it -- I'd say, you know, God had a plan for me. I just didn't know what it was. I didn't go to Iraq for a reason. I could have been the one that never came back. There's a reason why I didn't go; and I didn't go.

So that was the only thing that sticks with me. For me it's like a certification; it's a badge of honor; it's showing that all those years of training came to good use. I'm out there yelling at privates as the drill sergeant; and over in Germany as a platoon sergeant and first sergeant; teaching and training; NTC, JRTC, getting myself ready; training

people to be ready; and all of a sudden when it goes down, I don't even go.

MR. WATERHOUSE: But a lot of your soldiers that you trained?

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: Yeah. And that was the only thing that kind of rubbed me wrong.

MR. WATERHOUSE: Well, Sergeant Major, I really thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: I know it was long, and I apologize.

MR. WATERHOUSE: No; this is great; and I really appreciate it and I think the NCO Corps will definitely benefit from your story and your experience. Thank you.

CSM(R) WILLIAMS: You too.

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## CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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