

Maj. Gen. John Norton



Inducted October 24, 1994

"Father of Project MASSTER"
Fort Hood, Texas
October 1969 - October 1970

Project MASSTER was a unique organization designed to serve as the test bed for the material and combat systems that would comprise the Army of the future. The organization was to have the capability to quickly test and evaluate a wide variety of sensor technology from the soldier's point of view.

While the appointed Director of MASSTER was the III Corps and Fort Hood Commander, then Lt. Gen. Beverley E. Powell, Maj. Gen. John Norton was assigned as the Deputy Commander and responsible for organizing MASSTER and the day-to-day operation. He started with only a handful of people with a small office in the back of the III Corps Conference Room.

Within a few weeks, the group moved to West Fort Hood, a sub-installation previously scheduled for closure.

According to Sgt. Maj. Walter W. Krueger, "suddenly the days got longer--0700 to 2200-- Saturdays too, not to mention six-hour staff meetings on Sunday."

In spite of the shortage of office equipment, vehicles, and people, by 1 July 1970, Project MASSTER was to run some 19 material tests and a major systems field test.

There was a very high level of interest in the mission of MASSTER, and the performance was constantly under the magnifying glass of the Pentagon. Maj. Gen. Norton had set the standard, and through his undaunted leadership ensured the success of Project MASSTER that gave the organization a solid base to continue into the future as the Army's premier operational test organization.