



"De Oppresso Liber"

# SPECIAL FORCES

"A Special Breed of Man"

Volume 1 Issue 3

May 2009



SFA National delegated to Chapter 31 the honor of presenting to Jeffrey and Camille Hornbeck a presentation knife in memory of their son Master Sergeant Kelly Hornbeck. MSG Hornbeck was KIA in Iraq in January 2004 by an IED.

Mr. and Mrs. Hornbeck were very gracious during our entire visit and expressed their thanks as the knife was presented with our heartfelt condolences. They were especially glad that we (his fellow SF brothers) would take the time on a beautiful Saturday afternoon to remember and honor him. We told them of our empathy and high regards for the sacrifice that they had laid on the altar of freedom that parents have laid over the numerous wars to preserve our freedoms. A brief history of MSG Hornbeck's Special Forces career follows.



**Hometown:** Fort Worth, Texas

**Unit:** 10th Special Forces Group

**Died:** Jan. 19, 2004, from injuries suffered by an explosive device that hit his vehicle near Samarra, Iraq.

**Age:** 36

Kelly L. Hornbeck was an ardent outdoorsman who loved children and had a creative side.

Born in Selma, Ala., the son of an Air Force officer, he traveled around the world until his family moved to Fort Worth in 1983. He graduated from Paschal High School in 1985 and spent a year at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas.

He played football in high school and college.

After joining the Army, Hornbeck was selected for the prestigious "Old Guard," working at Arlington National Cemetery and the White House. He later volunteered for Special Forces and became a combat diver, parachutist and jump master. Kelly always loved



Billy M Smith  
Chapter

## Contents

MSG Hornbeck  
pp 1-6

CSM Vigil  
pp 7-17

Enlisted Insignia  
of Rank  
pp 18-22

Chapter Calendar  
p22

**President's Corner**  
p 23

Chapter Officers  
p23

## MSG Hornbeck Continued

rock climbing, ice climbing, cross-country skiing and downhill skiing. He was a target and black-powder marksman and liked to participate in competitions. "That was one reason he wanted to be stationed at Fort Carson. Camille Hornbeck said her son also was a gifted woodworker and welder. "He once made me a wooden box from the burl of a Monkey Pod tree," she said. "It has a lot of small compartments, like an old printer's drawer, and he cut and fit the pieces together without using any nails. He made artistic pieces, as well as functional items." Before Iraq, Hornbeck served a tour of duty in Afghanistan. "He loved the Afghan, Iraqi and Kurdish children," his mother said. "They always waved and smiled at him, and he loved to take their pictures and send them home to us. He asked us to send school supplies he could give to the children." Besides his parents, Camille and Jeffrey, Hornbeck is survived by two daughters, Jacqueline McCall and Tyler Hornbeck.

*Mike Patty*

Rocky Mountain News



RELEASE NUMBER: 040121-01

DATE POSTED: JANUARY 21, 2004

**PRESS RELEASE: Special Forces Soldier killed in Iraq**

U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (USASOC News Service, Jan. 21, 2004) — An Army Special Forces Soldier died Jan. 18 in Iraq from wounds sustained two days earlier when an improvised explosive device detonated during a combat patrol near Baghdad.

Master Sgt. Kelly L. Hornbeck, a Special Forces senior sergeant assigned to 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Carson, Colo., sustained the fatal wounds when the IED exploded in the vicinity of his unit during the Jan. 16 patrol.

Hornbeck, a 36-year-old native of Fort Worth, Texas, later died of his injuries after being medically evacuated to a combat support hospital near Baghdad.

Coalition officials characterized the explosion as a hostile attack by enemy forces. The combat patrol was conducted as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

## MSG Hornbeck Continued

Master Sgt. Hornbeck enlisted in the Army in 1987 and first trained as an Infantryman at Fort Benning, Ga., where he would later serve as a drill sergeant. His initial assignment was with the 3rd Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard," at Fort Myer, Va. Following his initial enlistment, Hornbeck volunteered for duty with the U.S. Army Special Forces in 1990.

After training as a Special Forces weapons sergeant, Hornbeck went on to serve in the 7th and 10th Special Forces Groups (Airborne). During his career as a special operations Soldier, Hornbeck served as a combat diver, a military free fall parachutist and a jumpmaster, among many other duties. Hornbeck was also a graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger Course.

Master Sgt. Hornbeck's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, the Military Free Fall Parachutist Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Combat Diver Badge, the Ranger tab and the Special Forces tab.

By John Gutierrez-Mier and Paul Bourgeois  
Star-Telegram staff writers  
24 Jan 2004

FORT WORTH - They came to mourn a father, a son, a friend and a hero.

Family and friends of Army Master Sgt. Kelly L. Hornbeck poured into Travis Avenue Baptist Church Saturday afternoon for a final salute to the special forces soldier from Fort Worth who died last week in a hospital in Baghdad.

Among them were a few soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group from Fort Carson, Colo., the unit in which Hornbeck served.

With his flag-draped casket sitting near the pulpit, hundreds of people sat quietly as an organist filled the sanctuary with patriotic songs.

But it wasn't until the somber sound from a single bagpipe player began to fill the church that the tears began to fall.

Led by the kilt-clad bagpipe player, a military honor guard made its way to the front of the church as those sitting in the pews stood to pay their respects.

## MSG Hornbeck Continued

"As we come together today, we're grateful to all who have come to honor Kelly Hornbeck," said the Rev. Michael Dean, senior pastor at the church, just a few blocks from Paschal High School where Hornbeck graduated in 1985.

"We're here today to bring a word of hope and encouragement."

Hornbeck, 36, a career military man, was wounded when an explosive device hit his vehicle near Samarra, Iraq, authorities said. He died two days later.

The hour-and-a-half funeral service included a mix of patriotic songs, and tributes to Hornbeck, including a few words shared by his two daughters.

"Dad was a great friend," said daughter Jacqueline McCall, 11. "He died for his country and he was the best soldier because he was brave."

Army Capt. Terry Romine, chaplain of the 10th Special Forces Group, read remarks from daughter Tyler Hornbeck, 7, who shared the pulpit with her older sister.

"When people ask me what was my favorite memory of my dad, I say I don't know because I have so many," Tyler wrote.



Retired Command Sergeant Major Joseph Callahan said he remembers meeting Hornbeck a few years ago.

"He was a big, tall guy who was wearing a cowboy hat," said Callahan, who explained that over the years he would learn all about Texas from Hornbeck.

He recalled one of Hornbeck's missions in South America where he was assisting in the fight against drug dealers. Hornbeck, Callahan said, had a Texas flag flying at the camp.

"I asked why he was doing that," Callahan said. "He said, `When those guerrillas

## MSG Hornbeck Continued

attack I want them to know there's a Texan here.' "

Matt Price of King Salmon, Alaska, said he had fond memories of Hornbeck, his football teammate at Paschal High School, as he greeted old friends in the parking lot before the funeral.

A hunting guide, Price, who is spending the winter in Fort Worth, said he was saddened by the news that his friend had died.

"He was just as solid as they come," said Price, who graduated a year after Hornbeck.

More than 200 friends braved the cold, steady rain for a short graveside service at Greenwood Cemetery.

With Special Forces soldiers as pallbearers, the bagpiper led the procession to the gravesite. Army Chaplain Romine recited the Special Forces Prayer. The playing of 'Taps' followed a military gun salute.

Flags were presented to Sgt. Hornbeck's parents and to each of his daughters.

Next to the gravesite was a small banner with the Latin words "De Oppresso Liber." The motto of U.S. Special Forces, it translates as "To Free the Oppressed."



Harvey Cox, Mike Edwards, Jeffrey & Camille Hornbeck, Ron Piper, Bill Adair  
Sam Wylie

*Dear Ron,*

*Thank you and the other chapter members for the efforts you made to come to our house. Thank you, also, for presenting the knife to us. We are honored that the Association did this, that you men gave your Saturday to make the long trek. We feel special in knowing that others remember Kelly. Truly SF is a brotherhood. Below are the links to the Fallen*

## MSG Hornbeck Continued

*Soldier artist, Phil Taylor, and to a news article about Phil. You'll see a partially completed portrait of Kelly in the background.*



[www.TexasFallenSoldiers.com](http://www.TexasFallenSoldiers.com)

<http://www.wfaa.com/sharedcontent/dws/wfaa/latestnews/stories/>

[wfaa090219\\_mo\\_fallensoldiers.321e89ff.html](http://wfaa090219_mo_fallensoldiers.321e89ff.html)

*When you have a chance, please send me the names of the men with you. I failed to write their names down.*

*Sincerely,*

*Camille Hornbeck*



# PRESENT MILITARY

## CSM VIGIL

CSM VIGIL USASFC WAS **PRESENT FOR SSG BESSA'S FUNERAL AND** CHATTED WITH CHAPTER 31 MEMBERS. HAVING TALKED TO HIM IT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND HIS SUCCESS.

*Command Sergeant Major Mario Vigil, center, deep within Afghanistan in late 2001. Vigil was part of the initial force sent to Operation Enduring Freedom and moved on horseback with the Northern Alliance. (Army photo).*



Quite a few of you should be familiar with the CSM of US Army Special Forces Command, Mario

Vigil. If not personally, then from DS, OEF, etc. CSM Vigil assumed his current responsibilities last April.

Up in the ranks: veteran of 26 years becomes top Special Forces enlisted

By Spc. Tony Hawkins

USASOC PAO

## CSM Vigil Continued

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (USASOC News Service, Jan. 6, 2009) – Some things will never change. Young boys watch as their older brothers march off to war. With admiration in their eyes, they want to be just like those Soldiers.

Such was the case in 1968, as then-four-year-old Mario Vigil saw his older brother **leave for Vietnam with the 82nd Airborne Division. It was seeing his brother's act of service** which guided him to enlist 14 years later, eventually leading him to become a command sergeant major in Special Forces.

Now Vigil, who serves as the command sergeant major for the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne), reflects back on the road which brought him to the pinnacle of the SF non-commissioned officer ladder.

Born in Morton, Texas, in 1964, Vigil was always interested in joining the Army. After hearing stories from his brother, who was the only member of his immediate family in the military, about jumping out of airplanes, he knew it was something he wanted to do.

So in June of 1982, at the age of 18 and only eight days after graduating high school, **Vigil enlisted in the Army as a medical specialist. Following his brother's footsteps, he soon chose to join the airborne.**

"When I went to AIT, I volunteered for airborne school, which I promised my mother I wouldn't do," Vigil said. "She said, 'Whatever you do, I don't want you jumping out of airplanes.'"

After completing airborne school, Vigil had hopes of going to Fort Bragg, N.C., and the **82nd Airborne, however, those plans didn't work out.**

## CSM Vigil Continued

stationed at Noble Army Medical Center and worked there in the ambulance platoon.”

Had he not been working at the hospital there, his life could have turned out quite differently, Vigil said.

“Actually, I did not intend to make the Army a career,” he said. “My intent was to join for three years, get some money for college using the GI Bill and then go from there. As it turned out, once I was at my first duty station I came across some SF Soldiers coming through for training.”

The Soldiers he met were doing on-the-job medical training while going through the Special Forces Qualification Course. Soon, Vigil would be in their shoes, training to become a Special Forces medical sergeant.

“That was the biggest influence on me, those guys taking a personal interest in seeing me go to the Q course,” he said. “Honestly, I didn’t think I had the right stuff to make it through the course, but I thought I would give it a shot.”

Vigil put in his paperwork and arrived at Fort Bragg, N.C., in February 1984. When compared to today’s course, he said the quality of Soldiers has only improved.

“I think we’re a lot more professional now in the way we selection and train our Soldiers,” he said. “Not that we weren’t professional back then, but everything evolves.”

One of the areas Vigil said his experience differed was in physical training.

“Subject to a weeding-out process,” he said. “When it came to PT it was pretty much up to the individual instructors to set their own standards.”

## CSM Vigil Continued

As graduation day grew closer for Vigil, he learned he would be assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne).

**"I'm a native Spanish speaker," Vigil said, "but I ended up in 5th Group. As a young specialist, that didn't make sense to me. But things work out for a reason."**

After arriving at 5th SFG(A), he was sent to the Defense Language Institute in Monterrey, Calif., to learn Arabic. He was also assigned to his first team, ODA 523, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion.

At only 21 years old, one of the youngest Soldiers in his unit, Vigil found a diverse mixture of experiences on his team. Several older, experienced NCOs, many of whom were Vietnam veterans, were teaching the younger guys on his team.

**"I was one of four E-4s on the team, which you don't see now," he said. "We had a little more time to grow, plus we had those older, more experienced guys who took us under their wing."**

Despite being a specialist on a team, Vigil said he did not feel it was a drawback. With more than three years in service at that point, and on his second enlistment, Vigil said the situation actually worked to his advantage.

**"I don't think it put me at a disadvantage," he said. "There were not as many expectations. I'm not saying that in a bad way, but they just understood you were inexperienced. It let me mature, and not get thrown into things that were beyond my ability."**

Being peacetime, overseas deployments were virtually non-existent for his team. However, he did participate in a training mission to Jordan once during his first couple of years with 5th SFG (A), he said.

**"If you contrast that to what our guys are doing now, they are all over the world," he said. "It was a good time to come in. SF was just starting to take off again."**

## CSM Vigil Continued

Vigil and his teammates finally had the opportunity to put their training to use when the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait in August 1990. By the end of the month, his team was loading up to head for Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield.

**"We were working with the Saudi special forces doing border surveillance missions and making sure nothing was coming across from the Kuwait side," he said.**

Vigil soon had his first real taste of combat during Operation Desert Storm...

More, including combat in Desert Storm and Afghanistan in 2001, after the Jump.

**..."The actual mission we were tasked with during Desert Storm was a special reconnaissance mission where we infiltrated into Iraq," he said. "We watched a road network to determine if vehicles were moving down into or away from Kuwait. There were nine of us on the team, dismounted."**

Compared to the amount of intelligence teams receive in the field today, Vigil said they received very little.

**"We were given a grid coordinate on a map and some other vague intel, because we didn't have a lot of assets like we do now," he said. "Once we got on the ground, we found it was a lot different than what we expected."**

While preparing for the mission, his team had planned to dig into hide sites once in Iraq.

**"When we got in Iraq, the ground was too hard to dig in," he said. "We had to find a lay-up spot for the first night, so we found some irrigation ditches we could stretch camo nets over."**

A huge lesson brought back from the mission was the difficulty of being dismounted in the desert.

**"You can't move fast enough, and you can't carry enough water or food," he said. "We were supposed to be on the ground anywhere from seven to nine days, so we had to carry supplies for that amount of time."**

## CSM Vigil Continued

Expecting a vast open desert with no people, Vigil said his biggest surprise was seeing so many Bedouin nomads. It was a group of those who would lead Vigil and his team into action.

**"The second morning on the ground we were compromised by some Bedouins in the area," he said. "They stopped some Iraqi army vehicles that were now retreating out of Kuwait. They responded and we became involved in a fire fight for seven or eight hours before exfiltrating."**

The team had intended to be picked up by elements of the 82nd Airborne Division coming into Iraq, though Vigil said the plan was a little shaky.

**"We didn't know who's coming, what unit," he said. "I ended up taking an American flag with me. When American units were coming toward us, we were going to use it as a recognition signal. However, I didn't end up using that flag until later in Afghanistan."**

After returning from their mission, Vigil and his team had expected to be sent out again, however, by that point the war was almost over.

**"We went back into Kuwait City at the tail end just to do some security missions there, but it was very quick," he said. "I was surprised at the speed of how things happened."**

After Desert Storm, 5th SFG(A) immediately began its mission in Kuwait. Over the next few years teams from his unit began missions all over the Middle East.

It was only a matter of time that Vigil found himself back in Saudi Arabia. He became team sergeant of ODA 535, which was tasked to teach light infantry tactics to the Saudi national guard.

After returning from Saudi Arabia, the officer-in-charge of the military training team put in a request specifically for Vigil to return for a year as an advisor.

**"I resisted, to no avail," he said. "But, I ended up back over there in August of '97. I worked right outside of Medina, which is the second holiest city in Islam."**

As a non-Muslim, Vigil wasn't allowed into the city. Instead, he lived on the outskirts of the city and advised a battalion stationed there. Since he was the only American advisor for the unit,

## CSM Vigil Continued

Vigil said the opportunity allowed him to be immersed in the Arab culture unlike any other duty assignment.

**"It was a good experience," he said. "I got to use my language capabilities again. Nobody likes leaving a team, but if you have to leave, that was a good duty to do."**

After his time as an advisor, Vigil became a company sergeant major. His unit, Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, was scheduled to deploy to Kuwait for their 90-day rotation in October 2001.

**"We were training up to do that mission when September 11th happened," he said. "A couple weeks later we found out we were deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom."**

Heading into Uzbekistan, Vigil and his Soldiers became the spearhead for 5th SFG(A) in the region.

**"It was an exciting time," he said. "You really felt like you were at the tip of the spear. Guys were going to go into Afghanistan doing unconventional warfare, things we only dreamed about a few years ago."**

One of Vigil's first tasks was to set up an isolation facility, which would prepare to move teams into Afghanistan. Shortly afterward the decision was made to send in senior leadership to meet with Afghan warlords.

**"I was there when the decision was made," he said. "They needed sergeants major to go in with the commanders. Since our battalion sergeant major was still back in the States, I was chosen to go in with our commander."**

As one of the initial teams on the ground, Vigil arrived into Afghanistan early on the night of Nov. 2, 2001.

**"We rode around on horseback and called in close air support in northern Afghanistan," he said. "I was there for the fall of Mazar-i-Sharif, and for the big prisoner uprising in Qala-i-Jangi where Mike Spann was killed."**

## CSM Vigil Continued



*Vigil (left) with members of his team and members of the Northern Alliance west of Konduz Afghanistan in late 2001. (Army photo)*

Vigil said he became a part of these events by being in the right place at the right time.

**“I took the same flag into Afghanistan that I had in Iraq during the Gulf War,” he said. “When Mike Spann was killed and we recovered his body, I had the only American flag there. So we used it to cover his remains. Almost two years later that flag made it back to me through some folks at the Central Intelligence Agency.”**

With seven deployments with 5th SFG(A) under his belt from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom alone, Vigil said he considers himself lucky to have served with the unit.

**“I was fortunate enough to be in 5th group at a time when it was pushed back into prominence,” he said. “The group had done a lot during Vietnam and had a very rich legacy from that time.”**

Although he originally expected to be in 7th SFG(A), Vigil said he wouldn’t trade the last 22 years for anything.

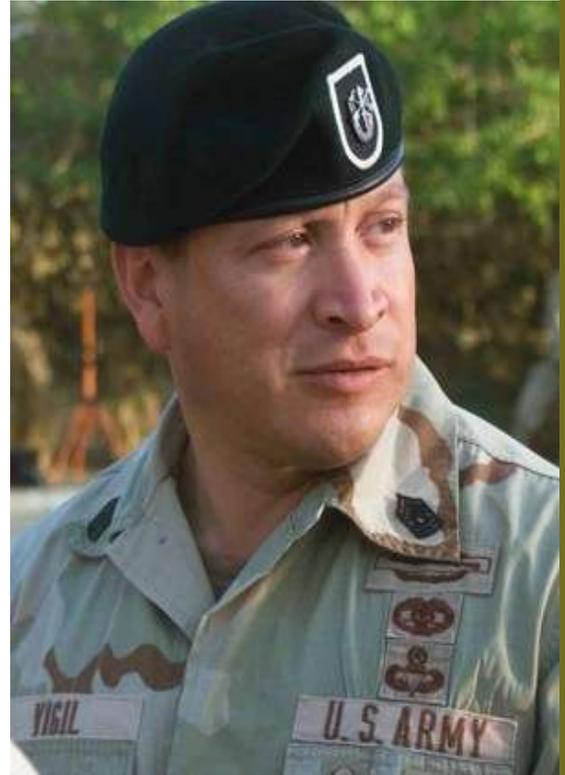
## CSM Vigil Continued

"I think my biggest accomplishment was just serving in 5th group, with a unit that has such a rich history," he said. "The group has really been able to do a lot of things in the fight. I got to serve with a lot of great folks. You look around now and a lot of our senior leaders all did 5th group time."

Vigil said moving from an operational unit to USASFC(A) has been a huge learning experience.

"It's a big change for me coming from a war fighting unit, but it's also educational," he said. "The Soldiers and civilians here do so much for the guys at the end of the spear, to resource our ODAs down there actually doing the fighting."

His position as the USASFC(A) command sergeant major has also given him more access to see what SF Soldiers do every day in more than 50 countries, he said.



*CSM Vigil (US Army Photo)*

"One-man elements, detachments, companies; they're getting the job done," he said. "We're the quiet professionals, but part of my job is getting the word out about our great Soldiers, and what they're doing for the fight and the stabilization of other countries. As you move up, you get a wider focus on what's going on across the regiment."

Vigil attributes much of the successful work ODAs are doing to the quality noncommissioned officers throughout the command.

"Contrast what we required them to do now to my experience as a young NCO and its worlds apart," he said.

## CSM Vigil Continued

The quality of SF Soldiers is directly related to the selection process, he said.

"We select the best, we train the best," he said. "[The Army] has the most professional NCO corps. That's one of the assets we have when we go to these other countries and help them stand up their armies. We hold our NCOs as role-models to what theirs should be."

Vigil said his best advice to continue building on the quality of SF Soldiers is for them to set goals.

"Ask yourself, 'Where do I want to be?' not just 20 years down the road, but a year from now, two years from now," he said. "Work towards that goal. If I didn't have people pushing me toward that goal, I may have not been able to achieve what I'm fortunate enough to have done."

Another piece of advice he had for younger Soldiers was to take advantage of educational opportunities.

"Take advantage of it because there's not a lot of time," he said. "With age comes experience. Sometimes it's your own personal experiences or seeing others do things. If I could do it all over again, I would take more advantage of the educational opportunities out there."

Vigil also said for SF Soldiers to prepare for continued increase in the force.

"No matter where the Army goes regarding force size, SF is going up," he said. "Our senior leaders realize the awesome force they have on the ground and what they can do with relatively small numbers. SF soldiers have proven their utility in the fight in the War on Terror."

With the increase in size of Special Forces, which will be adding a new battalion to each group over the next four years, will come an increase in demand, he said.

"Wherever you look, conventional commanders want more SF Soldiers," he said. "We will continue to professionalize the force even more. I don't see SF numbers or capabilities decreasing anytime soon. There's just too much demand for SF. If we sold stock, ours would be rising."

## CSM Vigil Continued

Not only will the Regiment see growth and increase in personnel, but also in the technology that is available to the Soldiers.

**“What our guys operate with on the ground, from night vision to weaponry, are things I didn’t even dream about,” he said. “It was almost unheard of 20 years ago.”**

With SF stock on the rise, the only possible obstacle Vigil could see would be the availability of that equipment.

**“I think that’s where we lack, getting that equipment into the hands of the guys who need it,” he said. “That’s not an SF problem, but an industry problem, that is, building and producing in a large enough quantity for us.”**

That’s not just for those wearing the green beret, he said.

**“Our teams aren’t doing it alone,” he said. “You’ll have a team on the ground with guys doing things they weren’t MOS trained to do, like providing security. They’re all operating together on the battlefield. We have to equip those Soldiers at the same level we’re equipping our green berets.”**

Although keeping equipment flowing down to teams will be an issue for the whole command, Vigil said he had a responsibility which is more personal.

**“My biggest challenge is portraying our force accurately; promoting our force,” he said. “Our motto is the quiet professional, and it sometimes works against us. I need to get out there and tell the story about what our men and women are doing on the ground.”**

That currently proves to be one of his biggest challenges, he said.

**“How do you roll up the accomplishments of all our folks into one story?” he said. “Every day our Soldiers are doing incredibly courageous things on the battlefield, and it’s almost down-played because they’re SF, just because that’s what we expect of them.”**

One way Vigil plans to do this is by going out and meeting with Soldiers in each group.

# PAST MILITARY

## Insignia of Rank Enlisted Personnel

### BACKGROUND

"Chevron" is an architectural term denoting the rafters of a roof meeting an angle at the upper apex. The chevron in heraldry was employed as a badge of honor to mark the main supporters of the head of the clan or "top of the house" and it came to be used in various forms as an emblem of rank for knights and men-at-arms in feudal days. One legend is that the chevron was awarded to a knight to show he had taken part in capturing a castle, town, or other building, of which the chevron resembled the roofs. It is believed from this resulted its use as an insignia of grade by the military. The lozenge or diamond used to indicate first sergeant is a mark of distinction and was used in heraldry to indicate achievement.

### METHOD OF WEARING

Chevrons were sewn on the sleeves of uniforms with the point down from approximately 1820 to 1903. They were worn with the points both up and down between 1903 and 1905 after the first reversal from "down" to "up" was authorized on 1 May 1903 in Army Regulation No. 622. This confusion period, from 1903 to 1905, was the result of the color change in the chevrons provided for in the regulation which also directed a standard color for each branch, corps, or organization and replaced the gold-colored chevrons. Because of the number of gold insignia available, troops were permitted to wear the old-type chevron until the supply became exhausted.

To assure uniformity in both color and position of the new colored chevrons, War Department Circular 61, dated 30 November 1905, stated that the points of the chevrons would be worn points upward. It also provided for the following colors as had been directed in Army Regulation No. 622, dated 1 May 1903. The colors were: Artillery-scarlet; Cavalry-yellow; Engineers-scarlet piped with orange; Hospital Corps-maroon piped with white; Infantry-light blue; Ordnance-black piped with scarlet; Post QM Sergeant-buff; Signal Corps-orange piped with white; West Point Band-light blue; and West Point Detachment-buff.

As early as 1820, chevrons were worn with the point down, although there was not an official direction of this to appear in regulations until 1821 when chevrons were authorized for both officers and enlisted men. Circular No. 65, 1821, stated that "Chevrons will designate rank (both of officers through the rank of captain and enlisted men) as follows: Captains, one on each arm, above the elbow, and subalterns, on each arm below the elbow. They will be of gold or silver lace, half an inch wide, conforming in colour to the button of their regiment or corps. The angles of the chevron to point upwards. Adjutants will be designated by an arc of gold or silver fringe, (according to the colour of their trimmings), connecting the extreme points formed by the ends of the chevron. Sergeant Majors and Quartermaster Sergeants will wear one chevron of worsted braid on each arm, above the elbow. Sergeants and senior musicians, one on each arm, below the elbow, and corporals, one on the right arm, above the elbow. They will conform in colour to the button of their regiment or corps." Before this time, an officer's rank was indicated by epaulettes worn on the shoulder. This regulation also indicated the first use of the arc as part of the chevron.

Chevrons continued to be worn points downward during the 1800's. AGO Order No. 10, dated 9 February 1833, stated "Chevrons will be worn with the point toward the cuff of the sleeves." Article 1577 of the revised United States Regulations of 1861 stated "The rank of non-commissioned Officers will be marked by chevrons upon both sleeves of the uniform coat and overcoat, above the elbow, of silk worsted binding on-half inch wide, to be the same color as the edgings of the coat, point down."

### TITLES OF GRADE

1775. A general order was issued from Headquarters at Cambridge that "Sergeants may be distinguished by an Epaulette or stripe of red cloth, sewed upon the right shoulder; the Corporals by one of green." The organizational charts indicated the enlisted personnel consisted mainly of sergeants, corporals, musicians, and privates.

1776. By early 1776 an approximately standard Continental Infantry Regiment had emerged consisting of a headquarters and eight companies, each company with four sergeants, four corporals, two drummers or fifers and 76 privates. According to the Journals of the Continental Congress, later in that year all battalions were given a non-commissioned headquarters element consisting of a sergeant-major, a quartermaster sergeant, a drum major and a fife major, all to be appointed by the regimental commander. This is the first mention of the rank of sergeant-major.

1792. During this year the military service was expanded to include sergeants-major, quartermaster sergeants, senior musicians, sergeants, corporals, farriers, artificers, saddlers, musicians, trumpeters, dragoons and privates.

1796. Senior musicians disappeared, but principal musicians apparently took their place; farriers and saddlers titles were united; sappers and miners appeared; and trumpeters disappeared.

## Insignia of Rank Enlisted Personnel

1799. Principal musicians were succeeded by chief musicians; sappers and miners disappeared; and the titles artificers, saddlers and blacksmiths were combined.

1800. Principal musicians again appeared while chief musician disappeared and the designations of farriers and saddlers, sappers and miners, and a separate title of artificers, were authorized.

1802. Enlisted men were designated sergeants-major, teachers of music, sergeants, corporals, musicians, artificers and privates.

1808. Sergeant-majors, quartermaster sergeants, principal musicians, sergeants, corporals, musicians, artificers, saddlers, farriers and privates were the titles of enlisted personnel.

1812. Blacksmiths and drivers of artillery were added to enlisted grade titles.

1815. Designations of enlisted personnel were again simplified to sergeant-major, quartermaster sergeants, principal musicians, sergeants, corporals, musicians, artificers and privates.

1832. During this year the designation "enlisted men for ordnance" appeared.

1833. The designations of chief bugler, bugler, farrier and blacksmith were additional titles during the year.

1838. The title "enlisted men for ordnance" was changed to "enlisted men of ordnance".

1847. The title of principal or chief musician, principal teamster and teamster were added to the list.

1855. The title of ordnance sergeants came into being.

1861. During the Civil War, many new designations came into being. The following is a complete list of designations: sergeant majors; quartermaster sergeants; commissary sergeants; leaders of bands; principal or chief musicians; chief buglers; medical cadets; ordnance sergeants; hospital stewards; regimental hospital stewards; battalion sergeant majors; battalion quartermaster sergeants; battalion hospital stewards; battalion saddler sergeants; battalion commissary sergeants; battalion veterinary sergeants; first sergeants; company quartermaster sergeants; sergeants; corporals; buglers; musicians; farriers and blacksmiths; artificers; saddlers; master wagoners; wagoners; privates; enlisted men of ordnance.

1866. The following titles disappeared: leaders of bands; battalion hospital stewards; chief buglers; medical cadets; battalion commissary sergeants; battalion saddler sergeants, battalion veterinary sergeants; buglers; and enlisted men of ordnance. The following new titles were established: saddler sergeants; trumpeters, chief trumpeters; privates (first class); and privates (second class).

1869. The title chief musician again appeared and a first sergeant in the corps of engineers was established.

1889. Post quartermaster sergeants, private hospital corps, general service clerks and general service messengers were established.

1899. Electrician sergeants, sergeants first class, drum majors, stable sergeants, mechanics and cooks were established.

1901. The title post commissary sergeant, regimental commissary sergeant, and color sergeant were established.

1905-1919. The designs and titles varied by branch and there were 45 different insignia descriptions in specification 760, dated 31 May 1905, with different colors for different branches. General Order No. 169 dated 14 August 1907 created a wide variety of insignia. Specific pay grades were not yet in use by the Army and their pay rate was based on title. The pay scale approved in 1908 ranged from \$13 for a private in the engineers to \$75 for a Master Signal Electrician. The system identified the job assignment of the individual, e.g., cooks, mechanics, etc. By the end of World War I, there were 128 different insignia designs in the supply system.

1919. Prior to 1919, the insignia of private first class consisted of the insignia of the branch of service without any arcs or chevrons. The Secretary of War approved "an arc of one bar" for privates first class on 22 July 1919.

1920. The number of insignia was reduced to seven and six pay grades were established. War Department Circular No. 303, dated 5 August 1920, stated the chevrons would be worn on the left sleeve, point up, and to be made of olive drab material on a background of dark blue. The designs and titles were as follows:

Master Sergeant (First Grade): Three chevrons, and an arc of three bars, the upper bar of arc forming a tie to the lower chevron.

Technical Sergeant (Second Grade): Three chevrons, and an arc of two bars, the upper bar of arc forming a tie to the lower chevron.

First Sergeant (Second Grade): Three chevrons, and an arc of two bars, the upper bar of arc forming a tie to the lower chevron. In the angle between lower chevron and upper bar a lozenge.

Staff Sergeant (Third Grade): Three chevrons and an arc of one bar, forming a tie to the lower chevron.

Sergeant (Fourth Grade): Three chevrons.

Corporal (Fifth Grade): Two chevrons.

Privates First Class (Sixth Grade): One chevron.

Specialist First Class (E-6). Two arcs above the eagle device.

## Insignia of Rank Enlisted Personnel

1942. The grades of Technician in the third, fourth and fifth grades were added by War Department Circular No. 5, dated 8 January 1942. Change 1 to AR 600-35, dated 4 September 1942, added a letter "T" to the formerly prescribed chevrons for grades three, four and five.

The first sergeant was moved from the second grade to the first grade per Change 3, AR 600-35, dated 22 September 1942. This change described the first sergeant's chevron as - - Three chevrons and arc of three bars, the upper bar of arc forming a tie to the lower chevron. In the angle between lower chevrons and upper bar, a hollow lozenge. This change also included the material as khaki chevrons, arcs, T, and lozenge on dark blue cotton background or olive-drab wool chevrons, arcs, T, and lozenge on dark blue wool backgrounds.



Master Sergeant

Grade 1



First Sergeant

Grade 1



Technical Sgt

Grade 2



Staff Sergeant

Grade 3



Tech 3d Class

Grade 3



Sergeant

Grade 4



Tech 4th Class

Grade 4



Corporal

Grade 5



Tech 5th Class

Grade 5



Private First Class

Grade 6

1948. Changes made by Department of the Army Circular No. 202, dated 7 July 1948, discontinued the Sergeant 4th grade and recruit was added as the 7th grade effective 1 August 1948. The new insignia was smaller (2 inches wide) and the colors changed. Combat insignia worn by combat personnel were gold color background with dark blue chevrons, arc and lozenge. Insignia worn by noncombat personnel were dark blue with gold color chevrons, arcs, and lozenge. The circular also deleted the Technicians effective 1 August 1948.

1951. The size of the chevrons was changed from 2 inches wide to 3 1/8 inches wide for male personnel per War Department Circular No. 9, dated 5 February 1951. The pay grades were reversed with Master Sergeant changing from pay grade 1 to pay grade E7. The insignia continued to remain two inches wide for female personnel. The insignia was authorized to be manufactured in one color: a dark blue background with olive-drab chevrons, arc, and lozenge.

1955. Army Regulation 615-15, dated 2 July 1954, announced a new grade structure effective 1 March 1955. The new titles were: E7 Master Sergeant (First Sgt was an occupational title) and Master Specialist E6 Sergeant 1st Class; Specialist 1st Class, E5 Sergeant; Specialist 2d Class, E4 Corporal; Specialist 3d Class E3 Private First Class, E2 Private E2, E1 Private E1

War Department Circular No. 670-3, dated 12 October 1955, stated the effective date for the above change was 1 July 1955. New descriptions contained in AR 670-5, dated 20 September 1956, changed the color of the background to Army Green (the color of the new uniform) or Army Blue with the chevron, arc, lozenge and eagle to be gold. There were no changes in the design for NCO and privates however, the design for specialists was an embroidered eagle device on a 2 inch wide background arched at the top and shaped like an inverted chevron on the bottom with embroidered arcs as follows: Master Specialist (E7). Three arcs above the eagle device. Specialist First Class (E-6). Two arcs above the eagle device. Specialist Second Class (E-5). One arc above the eagle device. Specialist Third Class (E-4). Eagle device only.

## Insignia of Rank Enlisted Personnel

1958. Grades E8 and E9 were added and restructuring of titles changed and was announced in DA Message 344303, June 1958. The specialist insignia was also enlarged for male personnel. The insignia remained the same size for female personnel. The new regulation, AR 670-1, dated 28 September 1959, described the insignia as follows:

Sergeant Major E9. Three chevrons above three arcs with a five pointed star between the chevrons and arcs.

Specialist Nine E9. Three arcs above the eagle device and two chevrons below.

First Sergeant E8. Three chevrons above three arcs with a lozenge between the chevrons and arcs.

Master Sergeant E8. Three chevrons above three arcs.

Specialist Eight E8. Three arcs above the eagle device and one chevron below.

Platoon Sgt or Sergeant First Class E7. Three chevrons above two arcs.

Specialist Seven E7. Three arcs above the eagle device.

Staff Sergeant E6. Three chevrons above one arc.

Specialist Six E6. Two arcs above the eagle device.

Sergeant E5. Three chevrons.

Specialist Five E5. One arc above the eagle device.

Corporal E4. Two chevrons.

Specialist Four E4. Eagle device only.

Private First Class. One chevron.



## Insignia of Rank Enlisted Personnel

Specialists were authorized to continue to wear the smaller insignia. The chevrons formerly authorized for E5, E6 and E7 were authorized for continued wear until the individual was promoted or demoted. They also continued to use the previous title.

1965. The Specialist Eight and Specialist Nine grades were discontinued.

1967. Subdued black metal insignia was authorized for wear on the collar of the work uniforms by DA Message 292128Z, December 1967.

1968. A new insignia was authorized by DA Message 865848, 28 May 1968, for Sergeants Majors assigned at the principal NCO of battalion and higher. This insignia was the same as the Sergeant Major insignia except the star was small and a wreath was placed around the star.



1968. The insignia consisting of a single chevron, which was previously authorized for private first class, was authorized for Privates E2. A new insignia was authorized for Private First Class, which consisted of one chevron above one arc per DA Message 868848, 28 May 1968.



1975. Bright shiny brass metal insignia was authorized for wear on the overcoat, raincoat, and windbreaker per DA Message 212019, February 1975.

1978. Specialist Seven was discontinued.

1979. In 1979 an insignia of grade was authorized for the Sergeant Major of the Army. The insignia had three chevrons above three arcs with two stars centered between the bottom chevron and the upper arc.



1981. The Chief of Staff approved a recommendation for shoulder marks for enlisted personnel in the grade of corporal and higher. The shoulder marks were a yellow embroidered device on a black base cloth for wear on the green shirts and black sweaters. Privates and Privates First Class continued to wear the bright metal insignia on the green shirts.

1985. The grades specialist five and specialist six were discontinued effective 1 October 1985.

1994. The insignia for Sergeant Major of the Army was changed to add the Coat of Arms of the United States between the two stars in the center of the insignia. The pin-on insignia is polished gold-plated with a black enamel background.



1996. The designation of male and female insignia was discontinued and the new designations were large and small. The large size insignia were the same as the previously designated male insignia and were 3 1/8 inches wide. The small size insignia was 2 5/8 inches wide.

From the Headquarters of the Army

## Chapter Calendar

Memorial Day function will start at 1300 on May 25th at the Dallas Vet Cemetery.

Vet-to-Vet is at VA Spinal Injury Ward 1800 on May 29th

June will see the National Convention in Las Vegas from 7-12.

July will see us participate in the 4th July parade in Plano..



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Once again, I am going to ask for the membership to help us try and bring those members that have slipped from our ranks back into the fold. If you know someone that was a member please try and get them to return. Also, we need to recruit some younger members and get them involved in this association.

We are rapidly approaching our annual Memorial Day function that starts at the Dallas Veterans Cemetery and then continues at Ben Lyons for barbecue. More info and times will be forth coming. I hope we will have a great turnout to remember those that made the ultimate sacrifice and those that have preceded us to the big Team house in the sky.

Again, I will ask those that can assist your fund raising committee, (Phil Stone, Jerry Jochum and Linda Weston) please let them know. Look for an update from Phil in next months newsletter.

June will find me attending the National convention in Las Vegas and once again, if you have a question, concern or idea that needs to be presented out there, let me know. Remember this is your organization and it is only as good as you make it.

Well, that is about it for this month. I will have more info for you next month, until then, please stay safe out there.

De Oppresso Liber Ron

### CHAPTER OFFICERS

- President: Ron Piper  
817-488-5651  
scuba.folk@verizon.net
- Sr VP: Jerry Jochum  
972-882-5436  
Jerry.jochum@us.army.mil
- VP North Texas: Bill Adair
- VP Dallas: Phil Stone
- VP Ft. Worth: Mike Plante
- Secretary: Gene Pugh



CHAPTER XXXI (31) SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION  
2141 Branchwood Drive Grapevine Texas 76051

The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for wording and content. Those articles submitted or recommended by members shall have first precedent for publication. Constructive criticism, especially with alternatives, is greatly appreciated. Views are not necessarily those of the Special Forces Association or Chapter 31, they are those of the authors. Reproduction is by permission of Chapter Officers.

Please submit ideas for publication  
sam\_wyllie@yahoo.com,  
817 860 5349

