



THE WHITE SCARS

Numeration: The Vth Legion

Primogenitor: Jaghatai Khan

Cognomen: (Prior): Various
(e.g., Star Hunters, Blood Debt, Vanguard, Grey Ghosts)

Observed Strategic Tendencies: Shock Assault Strikes, Highly Mobile Hit and Run Campaigns and Extended Unsupported Operations within Hostile Domains.

Noteworthy Domains: Chogoris/Mundus Planus (Primary), Terra (tertiary rights), the Kolarne Cluster (multiple tributary domains)

Allegiance: Fidelitas Scindo

'There is only one unforgivable lie.

That is the lie that says, this is the end, you are the conqueror, and now all that remains is to build high walls and shelter behind them. Now, the lie says, the world is safe.

All emperors are liars.'

From The Wisdom of the Khans: Sayings and Tales of the Chogorian Legion, as recorded by Ilya Ravallion

To each of His Legions, the Emperor bestowed a genetic legacy that would mould them into a set role, making each a matchless tool for the prosecution of that role. The Vth Legion were the pathfinders of the Great Crusade, ever in uncharted territory and far from the borders of the expanding Imperium, and oft forgotten by the chroniclers that followed in conquest's wake. Organised into small, mobile units, the Vth Legion ran before the armies of the Emperor during the final conquests on Terra, and then across the stars, sowing confusion and death in their wake. They were the swift blade that probed for weakness before a sudden and deadly strike, not the sledgehammer that some of their brother Legions had become. A subtle and deadly weapon in the hands of a master strategist, the Great Khan, Jaghatai, would come to forge those outcasts of the Legiones Astartes into a force that would overturn the scales of destiny itself.

As the dark days of the Horus Heresy unfolded, these unpredictable warriors were doubted by many, their loyalty questioned by those who should have been allies and assumed by those who would become enemies. Often the first Legion into the wilds at the edge of those few star charts to survive the Long Night, the White Scars had ever operated without the support of their brethren and rarely acted in concert with the other Legions. Where their brother Legions built legacies of trust and accumulated interlinked webs of treaties and oaths of support between them, the White Scars remained separate. What had at first been a matter of strategy soon became a tradition, one that saw the Vth Legion become a solitary and reclusive force, renowned for their independence and wilful nature even among the Legiones Astartes. Such was their reputation at the outset of the Horus Heresy, that those who sought to rule the Imperium, be they emperor or tyrant, eyed the Legion as a prize to be won and leashed to their ambitions, a fulcrum upon which to lever Mankind's civil war in their favour.

Origins: Terra's Forgotten Sons

As with much of the old lore regarding the Vth Legion, their earliest days and first campaigns are overlooked by many, obscured by time, blood and the reticence of the Legion itself. Yet in these beginnings can be seen the shadow of the Legion's future. Even from their inception, the Vth Legion were held apart from their brothers, rarely found in massed ranks among the assembled hosts of the Unification Wars, yet they were one of the first Legions to draw blood in the name of the

Emperor. Taken first from the technomadic tribes of the Thulean Basin, whose hardy stock had traversed those icy wastes in vast mechanised crawlers throughout the long years of the Age of Strife, and later from the wider stock of Terran recruits, the warriors of the Vth Legion were the Unification's eyes and ears. While some of the earliest Legions, such as the XVIth, were committed to the frontlines of the initial conquest alongside the Emperor's Thunder Warriors, the Vth Legion was granted the solitary duty of seeking out the hidden fastnesses of the many gene-wrought demagogues and warlords that ruled the war-ravaged face of Old Earth.

In those earliest days, the Legion numbered only a few hundred warriors, and often operated in small cadres of less than a dozen. The operations to which they were assigned put the post-human physique of the Emperor's Space Marines to test in a way quite unlike the battlefield hell that awaited their fellows. Ever on the move, and far beyond the borders of the Emperor's ever-growing dominion, the Vth Legion endured the worst of the destruction wrought on Old Earth during the ravages of the Age of Strife, braving a landscape so twisted and broken by rad-phage, war and psy-plagues that mere humans could not have survived its touch. Roving far and wide, it was these warriors of the Vth Legion who charted the course of the Emperor's rise, surviving where few others could have, running ahead of the massed armies of Unification and seeking out the enemies in its path. Where they encountered mighty warlords and decadent empires that had stood against Old Night, they prowled the borders seeking the opportunity to strike, and where they encountered weakness, they left behind only corpses. By the time the main Legions of proto-Astartes and Thunder Warriors arrived, their foes were weakened and distracted by the work of the Vth Legion, made easy prey for the armies of Unification.

It was a task to which its early recruits were well-suited. The clansmen of the Thulean Basin had survived in the frozen salt-wastes of the north for centuries, fiercely independent and stoic but with a deep well of inventive cunning. Passing through the terror of Old Night by cutting themselves off amid the sub-zero wastelands of Thule in the far north, they well-understood the cruel dictates of survival. These were far more than superb killers, as their heritage as machine-smiths and expert survivors was carried across to the earliest Legion cadres. Once bent to the Emperor's will, they proved fine stock for His pathfinders, though many noted their wilful

nature, their commanders prone to ignoring any orders save those of the Emperor or another commander who had earned their respect. This is likely another example of the Emperor's grand plan in action, some element of His foresight identifying some need for that very trait, despite the protest it raised among certain of His generals and advisers. Despite the ire caused by their insular nature, few could doubt the ability of these warriors, who soon gathered a measure of acceptance within the grand armies of Unification for their fortitude and shrewd intelligence.

Yet it was a task without glory. They operated for years at a time far from the centre of the conflict. Once the Vth had finished their bloody work in drawing out the enemies of the Emperor, charting their strongholds and leaving them weak, the other Legions marched forth to bring them to battle and defeat while the Vth moved on. Few battle honours from the wars of Unification record the sacrifice of the Vth Legion, and few now living know of the Star Hunters', as the first of these companies was known, daring raid on the Albion fortress of Dubris, paving the way for the initial invasions of that land, or the 83 day battle in the black catacombs of Kadiru, a key fortress in the Yndonesic domain of Ursh. Such hidden heroics were forgotten in the face of the public conquests carried out by the other Legions. Few within the Vth Legion showed any sense of outrage at this subtle slight, even taking a quiet pride in the silent role they played, but it served to isolate them among the ranks of the Legiones Astartes. They became, by circumstance and by choice, outsiders among the Emperor's elite, more at home in the wilds, where they followed no dictate but their own than at the heart of battle, subject to the whims of generals for whom they felt little kinship.

As the Emperor consolidated His hold on Terra and the surrounding worlds, the Vth Legion was among the first of His hosts to depart the Sol system, shattered into a hundred companies, each a tiny Legion of its own. These Pioneer Companies were each dispatched to follow those warp currents that flowed strongly in the aether about Sol, seeking out the lost worlds of Mankind and charting the strongholds of alien empires. It was the Pioneer Company of Captain Kornelius Dure, following one of the few warp currents known to the infrequent travellers that ventured out from Terra, that surveyed Cthonia, with his now infamous report that the world was '*... a nest of serpents coiling in the dark that we would be better to destroy*'. Horus was known to have

later remarked upon this report with some humour, and indeed favoured Captain Dure and his company, often requesting their assignment as pathfinders for his fleet. Indeed, as with a number of other orphaned Legions, Horus, alone among the great generals of that age, made a particular point of recognising the Pioneer Companies of the Vth Legion and in return the Terran veterans of the Vth treated Horus with a respect that they granted few others.

For over half a century, the Vth Legion fought a lonely piecemeal crusade, each of its companies separated by such a distance that each fleet slowly began to lose any sense of unity with its brethren. Once again, their heroics beyond the borders of the Emperor's ever-expanding domain garnered little praise or attention amongst the lords of the Imperium. Here, in these largely forgotten years, was the basis of the White Scars' mastery of hit and run warfare established by the necessity of their mission. They were rarely more than one thousand against the dark empires beyond the edge of the maps, the brave few standing against the terrors of the outer dark far from aid and succour. They struck without warning, raiding and killing, drawing out the foe and testing its defences and tactics, always watching and learning – broadcasting the knowledge won with the blood of their brothers so that the Expeditionary fleets could bring the Emperor's wrath down upon the enemies of Mankind.

In those early days, the Legion lived by one credo: each new day is a victory. Survival against impossible odds was the challenge they faced, one they defeated with a cold pragmatism and willingness to sacrifice everything in the name of victory. Each battle cost them a little more, one more brother dead or one more war machine damaged beyond repair, and as they fought further into the outer reaches of the galaxy, they found fewer and fewer chances to recoup their losses. Slowly and surely the Vth Legion was being eroded by the pressures of war and their own stubborn dedication to prosecuting it in their own way. To the warriors of the Vth, who had always been forced to struggle in the shadow of their brother Legions, the idea of asking for aid tasted worse than the ashes of their own demise. To live and die in a manner of their own choosing seemed the better choice. Were it not for the sudden discovery of the lost Primarch of the Vth Legion, an event unlooked for after fifty years of searching, the Legion might have fought on to extinction. Instead, they were transformed.

The Khan of Khans

The tale of Jaghatai Khan's early years is well-known. It is the subject of legends and folktales on his home world of Chogoris, sometimes listed on older Imperial star charts as Mundus Planus. It is this widespread embellishment that makes much of the fact regarding his achievements difficult to identify, as such the author has opted to utilise the version of the tale recorded by Horus Lupercal, which still resides within the archives of Terra. Of particular interest are Horus' initial notes on the world of Chogoris upon its discovery, '*... rich in both material and a remarkably stable and warlike strain of Mankind. A prize and unexpected find in these hinterlands of the empire*.' This, notes the Primarch, is in stark contrast to many of those worlds upon which the other Primarchs found themselves, often having to contend with lethal environments or debased breeds of humanity's lost kin. Jaghatai, by contrast, was adopted by the chief, or Khan, of one of Chogoris' many nomadic tribes. He faced the same trials that had plagued the horse-tribes of Chogoris for centuries, unending tribal raids and wars of feud and the slave raids and hunting parties of the southern empires.

His path turned to one of conquest in the wake of one such murder-raid, the culmination of some petty slight issued generations before. A rival tribe, most often identified in historical accounts as the Kurayed, fell upon his adopted father and slew him and his Keshig, an act which in the nomad culture of Chogoris demanded retaliation. In years gone past, the son of a fallen Khan would have set out on his own murder-raid, slain some few of the rival clan's own warriors or driven off their prize horses, perpetuating the endless cycle of the feud. Jaghatai chose a different path, and in a single night of blood and slaughter he put an end to both the feud and the Kurayed, leaving not one of that kindred alive. His reputation as a warrior of surpassing cruelty and skill, but little mercy, was born from this act, spreading across the Empty Quarter, as the rugged and sparsely inhabited western plains were known.

The young Khan pursued a campaign of subjugation among his own people, attacking each tribe in turn and offering them a simple choice: death or life under his rule. Having heard of the ruin he had made of the Kurayed, there were few who chose to oppose him and, in his wisdom, Jaghatai treated those who submitted freely with honour, raising many up to his Keshig to fight at his side. Tribes under his rule were consolidated, merged together or split apart in order to foster unity and end the feuds that had kept them at each other's throats for centuries. His own Keshig and tribe he filled with men and women of talent from across the plains, promoting ability and loyalty to the whole over bloodlines and old rivalries, and within the span of a few short decades, the nomadic tribes were unified under his control, naming him Khan of Khans.

Since before any elder of the nomadic tribes could remember, one empire had ruled much of Chogoris, an empire of tall cities and proud princes that lay far to the east of the Empty Quarter. The lands of the horse nomads, barren and inhospitable as they were, had always been beneath its notice, save as a hunting ground for bored nobles seeking to slake their bloodlust. One fateful hunting expedition chose the new Khan of Khans as its target, but their ambush quickly became a massacre, with Jaghatai butchering every last one of the would-be hunters, including the son of the Palatine – the emperor of the vast nation to the east. In retaliation, the Palatine marched his army of disciplined heavy foot and armoured lancers into the Empty Quarter to finally eradicate the tribesmen. There, the Khan of Khans met him with the full muster of the tribes and destroyed his army, making full use of the mobile tactics and speed he would later use to mould the White Scars.

This victory was the first step along a path of conquest that would see Jaghatai crowned ruler of the entire world of Chogoris. He prosecuted the same strategy that he had employed among the horse tribes, but on a grander scale. To each city and nation his undefeated armies encountered he offered his choice, to serve or to die, and with each victory and submission his power grew. With cruelty in one hand and generosity in the other, both held in plain sight for all his subjects to see, the Khagan overtook the world and bent it to his whims. He ended the wars that had wracked Chogoris, keeping the peace with the threat of utter ruin for those who transgressed his simple laws. What the Khagan might have created in isolation from the embers of civilisation on Chogoris will never be known, for it was but a short while after his ascension to the throne that the Emperor of Mankind arrived to change his destiny forever.

The Pioneer Companies

In its earliest incarnation, the Vth Legion was not the singular body that many of the other proto-Legions formed. It was a Legion in name only. Instead, it was organised into autonomous companies, each of which had few links to any of their brethren and operated entirely independently. Indeed, prior to the recall that was sent after the discovery of Jaghatai Khan, many of the Pioneer Companies had no contact with any other body of the Vth Legion and developed a set of traditions and rituals unique to that company. This was especially true as the Great Crusade progressed, with each company often forced to pursue recruitment as they travelled because supply and reinforcement convoys were rarely able to keep up with their rate of advance. Oddly, this brought several of the Pioneer Companies closer to the other Legions, especially where they fought in close proximity, as the Vth Legion warriors, still lacking a Primarch to rally around, began to adopt elements of the other Legions' practises. These distinct sub-cultures would endure beyond the integration of Jaghatai's new order, with many of them being subsumed into the pre-existing Chogorian obsession with small superstitions and others among the warrior lodges that permeated the Terran branches of the White Scars.

These Pioneer Companies were composed of as few as 500 and as many as 3,000 Legionaries; with records listing perhaps 800 known companies by the year 800.M30. The sum total of the entire Vth Legion is estimated to have been around 80,000 at this point in the Great Crusade, but is rarely known to have gathered in strengths of greater than a few thousand, barring such exceptional incidents as the Battle for Thapsus in late 744.M30. Though spread thin, the Vth Legion remained a sizable force, mostly due to the opportunistic recruitment patterns practised by many of the companies of the Legion to offset the relative scarcity of reinforcements received from Terra. This practise caused no little friction between the Legions, as the warriors of the Vth had on a number of occasions encroached upon territory ceded to the more established Legions. In particular, both Ferrus Manus and Leman Russ are known to have made issue of the Legion recruiting from worlds whose populations were pledged to them, and only the direct intervention of Horus Lupercal is known to have prevented the censure of the Vth's errant warriors.

Within each company there was to be found a tremendous diversity of sub-divisions and heraldry, the most common being the old Terran standard of the Unity armies which sub-divided the larger company into groups of 100 warriors, each commanded by a Captain and one among that number acting as overall commander, a First Captain. Heraldry among the early Vth Legion was just as varied. Most Pioneer Companies maintained the numeral that marked the designation granted them by the Emperor, but also adopted a number of unofficial insignia of their own, marking the various titles granted them by both the Imperial forces they served and the enemies they hunted. A sample of these titles and heraldic devices, as found in the *Liber Armorum Terranicus*, shows a growing lack of unity between the Legion's far flung sons:

Liber Armorum Terranicus, Warrior-brotherhoods of the Legiones Astartes Vol.3, the Vth Legion (excerpt from 756.M30 edition)

Entries organised to indicate company designation, known cognomen and last commanding officer::



224th Pioneer Company
None known
Ltnt. Apion Hansa



666th Pioneer Company
'Void Devils'
Cpt. Theon Juoksa



3rd Pioneer Company
'Lions of Thapsis'
Cpt. Kornelius Dure



99th Pioneer Company
'The Enders'
Cpt. Ikem Aghur

Chogoris: The Empty Quarter

Ironically, despite their role as pathfinders and discoverers, it was not a Pioneer Company of the Vth that would discover lost Chogoris, but instead a fleet of the XVIth Legion accompanied by both Horus and the Emperor. On that long-isolated world, Jaghatai had prospered, binding together the fractured tribes of the hinterlands to conquer empires and subjugate the entire world to his will. It was an achievement to rival any of those of his brother-Primarchs

in their foundling years, and the Emperor hailed him as a true son and inheritor of the legacy He had prepared for him. The Great Khan, himself a builder of empires, was handed a destiny that saw him resigned to the role of servant and not master, bound to the ambitions of the Emperor. Such abasement did not come easily to such a conqueror as he, one who had slain kings and tyrants across the breadth of Chogoris, but still the Great Khan knelt before this Emperor.



NAME: MUNDUS PLANUS/CHOGORIS
CLASSIFICATION: LEGIONES ASTARTES HOME WORLD [FEUDAL WORLD]
SYSTEM DATA: MX/46359//M/AE
STELLAR GRID: I83-SPN/JN-32
SEGMENTUM: ULTIMA/EIGHTH QUADRANT
NOTATION: TEMPERATE, TRANS-BIOME FERTILITY, REGRESSIVE FEUDAL HABITAT, INDIGENOUS POPULATION/APPROX 1.8 BILLION ++[FIEFDOM OF THE WHITE SCARS LEGION]++

Most historical accounts lead us to believe that Jaghatai was overawed by the Emperor and submitted without question, but his own journals and writings show a more pragmatic reasoning behind the submission. Jaghatai, who had struggled long with the disunity of his adopted people, saw clearly the benefits of the Imperium and the Emperor's secular doctrine of the Imperial Truth, and in the ranks of the Luna Wolves he saw the dire cost of opposition. It was the same choice he himself had once offered to the tribes and cities of Chogoris, and even when it was cloaked in pomp and ceremony, the Khan of Khans understood what the Emperor's offer meant: to live as His vassal or perish as His rival. So the Khagan bargained for his loyalty and that of those he ruled, taking from the Emperor those guarantees he deemed fair regarding the treatment of the people of Chogoris and of his role in the future empire. He would fight once again for unity and in secret revelled in the new challenge before him, at last able to slip the bonds of duty that had kept him busy with the mundane realities of governorship on Chogoris.

Despite having already mastered the strategies of conquest in his own war against the petty empires of Chogoris, Jaghatai Khan was unfamiliar with the advanced weapons and war engines of the Imperium. With fighting across the galaxy reaching a fevered intensity, the forces of the Emperor could ill spare any Primarch for lengthy training in the etiquette of the Terran court or the intricacies of Imperial history. All were needed upon the front lines as the expanding Imperium began to encounter more and more powerful xenos realms and fallen kingdoms of Mankind hidden in the dark void. The conquest of Chogoris was, in the eyes of the Emperor and many of the Primarchs, more than proof of his skill at war. Indeed, of all of his new brothers, only Roboute Guilliman and Rogal Dorn objected to the all too brief period of induction that Jaghatai received. Both felt that to leave the new Primarch bereft of a true understanding of the Imperium's foundation and culture would leave him ill-prepared to integrate properly with its factions and politics. Despite these objections, whose foresight was to prove unfortunate, the full authority of Legion Master of the Vth was invested in Jaghatai, known among his brothers as the Khan and among his own as the Khagan, the Khan of Khans.

The Price of Freedom

Many chroniclers have often overlooked the decisions that faced many of the Emperor's Primarchs upon their reunion with their father. Most had risen to become supreme rulers, kings and even gods, for they were the apex of that lost science of the Dark Age of Technology, transcendent creatures that far exceeded the capabilities of mere humans. Yet, with the arrival of the Emperor, they suddenly found themselves subject to the will of a being even greater than they, bereft of what many might have assumed was their divine right to rule lesser creatures or guide their devoted servants. Could any mortal king have bent the knee with the equanimity shown by the Primarchs in the tales we tell now in the wake of Horus' rebellion?

Some among the scholars of the court consider it a sin to ascribe such human emotions as jealousy or the wilful fires of ambition to such figures of legend, especially in an age that needs its heroes untarnished and pure. It is, however, more of a sin, I think, to ignore the failings that made those tragic figures great. That they chose to forgo their crowns and ambitions despite their desires and in order to serve a greater cause is a greater tale than to imply that they were overcome with blind loyalty as soon as the Emperor discovered them. To those who find such an assumption hard to believe or somehow distasteful, I remind you that the Emperor once had 20 sons. What choices did the two missing Primarchs make that the Emperor found it needful to remove them from history?

Such a title, Master of the Vth Legion, held little meaning at that time in history, for the Vth was scattered to the far corners of the galaxy, absorbed in a thousand separate wars. He was master of a Legion of vagabonds, a situation that might have sat less well with others of his brethren, but was a challenge well-suited to the Great Khan's talents and history. Just as he had on the vast plains of Chogoris, the Great Khan sought to build a conquering army from insular nomadic bands, and he began in the same fashion. Recruiting from among those of his Chogorian comrades that were of an age to undergo the arduous transformative surgery and be reborn as Space Marines, the Great Khan formed a new core of warriors for his Legion. At the same time, he dispatched a grand summons, calling upon all of the disparate bands of the Vth Legion, the scattered Pioneer Companies that warred across the galaxy, to attend him. Proclaimed by astropathic signal and courier ship, Jaghatai's call would take many years to reach the furthest of his warriors. After his discovery in 865.M30, the Khagan would wait for nearly a decade for the majority of the Pioneer Companies to assemble at Chogoris, the most isolated or heavily engaged still out of contact even as late as 000.M31. The force that finally assembled in the skies above Chogoris in those early years of Jaghatai's command was not a unified Legion. Each company kept to their own, looking on those who should have been their brothers with suspicion and no little disdain, a gathering of strangers in a strange land.

When the Khagan brought them all together on the wide plains of the Empty Quarter, he beheld a thousand different heraldries on warriors of a hundred different worlds bound together only by the tenuous strands of their shared genetic legacy. The Khan of Khans wedded those genetic ties to the culture of Chogoris, making this the glue to unify his Legion. Through the rituals and traditions of the Chogorian hill tribes, they became the White Scars that day, their loyalty to the Khagan and each other secured by the trials of blood and pain they had undergone and the oaths they had sworn. The Khan of Khans gave them more than scars, encouraging the study of the 'Noble Pursuits', as they were known on Chogoris – such things as calligraphy, hunting and the telling of ancient tales. He made the ways of Chogoris the Truth of his Legion, a strange blend of practicality and superstition that was ill at ease with the strict tenets of the Imperial Truth which denied any and all brands of religion. Jaghatai's refusal in later years to amend the practises of his Legion to more closely fit the Imperial Truth were yet another source of conflict between the Great Khan and some of his brothers, notably Lorgar and Roboute Guilliman.

This was but the first part of the Khagan's strategy, for tradition alone would not suffice. In the wake of the games and ceremonies conducted on Chogoris, he led the combined ranks of the newly christened White Scars on campaign, the first battles they had fought as a unified host since leaving Terra.

The Khagan chose the lawless worlds of the Kolarne Circle for his initiation campaign. This region of space had been scouted several decades before by the 103rd Pioneer Company, the Soul Hunters, and was found to be teeming with wild outposts of renegade strains of Mankind and roaming xenos hosts. On each of the dozens of feral and hellish worlds that made up the Circle, a long and vicious struggle awaited the White Scars, with few obvious gains in terms of strategic resource or value. However, the Khagan had chosen this battleground and his strategy with care. He set his Legion against enemies that could not be overcome by any one company alone. Only by working as one Legion would they prevail. He dispersed the Keshig he had raised from Chogoris, the core of his new White Scars throughout the various companies, warriors whose names would only grow with the passing of years: Qin Xa, Yesugei, Hasik and others besides. These warriors he trusted to spread his teaching and to lead by example, to stand as his champions among the Vth Legion as it went to war in his name.

Of the 80,000 warriors that they led into the fighting, one in ten would perish in the five years of struggle to cleanse the Circle, a baptism of fire and blood that sealed the bonds between the survivors stronger than any simple oath. The Orkish hordes of Sengr Mar and Vorgheist were cut to pieces in a series of hit and run campaigns that bore the tell-tale hallmarks of the Chogorian plains-tribes' tactics. Severely outnumbered by their foe, these tactics, intimately familiar to the Chogorian initiates of Jaghatai's inner circle, were best suited to make the most of the White Scars' native ferocity and war-honed skills. Those companies assigned to the deepest systems of the Circle fought alone and unsupported for almost three years before the remainder of the Legion secured the outer regions. Here the long-honed survival skills of the Pioneer Companies were put to the test, wedded to the Chogorian recruits' savagery and talent with a blade. Where other Legions might have faltered or fallen back to regroup, losing the momentum of victory, these rugged warriors thrived, taking heart from the presence of their new lord.

In every battle in which he fought, Jaghatai led the assault. At first, the Legion simply followed him into the maelstrom but as tales of the Primarch's wild valour and consummate skill spread among the warriors of the Vth Legion, they soon began to compete to fight by his side. It was his example that

stood as their banner throughout the conflict and it was to the Khagan and each other whom they were bound, not to the distant dream of the Imperium or any one of its worlds, but only to the Khan of Khans and the savage joy he took in war and in life. In those turbulent times, such things were considered of little note, for none would countenance the idea that a Primarch sworn to the Emperor would ever forsake his vows and, as such, absolute loyalty to the Khan was considered the same as absolute loyalty to the Imperium.

With the final battle for the Kolarne Circle fought and won upon the desolate ash-fields of Kolarne itself, the many inhabited worlds fell into the Great Khan's hands. Those worlds had served to bind his Legion together in blood and war, and now they would serve to rebuild it. From the wide plains of Chogoris, the rugged wastes of Kolarne and Old Earth's many recruitment camps, the Khagan replenished the ranks of the Legion and the White Scars emerged from the Kolarne Circle campaign a Legion reborn. No longer were they a shadow that haunted the fringes of the Great Crusade – the Great Khan had brought them into the light and he intended

to stand at the forefront of the Emperor's Great Crusade, shoulder to shoulder with the other Legions.

The Laughing Killers

The Vth Legion returned to the Great Crusade not as the Pioneer Companies of old, but as the White Scars, united as a true Legion. This was the Great Crusade's apex of glory, the last century of the 30th Millennium. The nascent Imperium had pushed its borders to the very edges of the galaxy and thrown down the dragons that lurked at the margins of its ancient star charts. Now it grappled with those who would challenge its supremacy. Many terrible hosts and fel empires sought to lay claim to what was the rightful domain of Mankind and the Emperor, and it fell to the Legiones Astartes to break them utterly. The White Scars were to number among the heroes of this age, spreading across the stars to bring war and death in the name of their new master.

Though they lacked the numbers of some of their brother Legions, they were unmatched in the sheer impetuous fervour with which they made war.

The First Blooding

The gathering on Chogoris saw the first occurrence of a ritual that would grant the Vth Legion its new title, the White Scars, and seal its bond as a unified host. Adapted from the traditions of the Chogorian tribes, the Blooding, also known as the Ascension, is a simple ritual, dispensing with much of the shamanistic pageantry of the original. It comprises but two parts, a cut and a name. On the open fields of the Empty Quarter that day, more than 50,000 warriors took up blades in forms beyond count and cut a mark upon the flesh of their own faces, each gauging the depth and pattern of the wound to mark their loyalty. The scars inflicted as part of the ritual vary in size, shape and placement, and among the original tribesmen of Chogoris, this would serve to mark out different tribes and bloodlines, though among those not born of Chogoris, the significance was less important. Among later generations of the Legion, certain patterns of scarring began to identify separate Brotherhoods within the Legion, but such patterns did not begin to emerge until the last few decades of M30.

The second part of the ritual, conducted on that first day with the blood of the scarring still bright on the first White Scars' skin, was to choose new names to represent their new lives as part of the Ordu of Jaghatai, as warriors of the White Scars, discarding the lives that had gone before. Such symbolism is fairly common among the various warrior societies that make up much of the Imperium's vast armies, with many of the Legions employing similar trials for their recruits. Such ceremonies have been employed for centuries as tools to enforce solidarity and loyalty among the most brutal of warrior societies, those tasked with the most onerous of duties and the harshest of sacrifices. On Chogoris, such rituals had held the tribes together through centuries of murder-raids and slave hunts, and Jaghatai knew well its power to harden the soul and bind warriors together. The names themselves were symbolic, and no strict pattern has ever been enforced on newly marked White Scars. That first generation on the fields of Chogoris named themselves for their deeds, while the more recent levies of the Legion chose names from the world of Chogoris in honour of their Primarch.

These were heady days full of fire and conquest, the wild rush of unceasing war against enemies too numerous to count. Where other Legions sought to prosecute a war of stern discipline and careful planning, conquering with implacable might and securing those domains they seized, the White Scars descended upon the foe like a storm from clear skies. Where the enemy was weak or exposed, they enveloped and overran its positions without mercy, using speed and fury to overwhelm any defence. Where it was strong or well-emplaced they harried the enemy where it was weak, leaving it vulnerable to the Legions that followed the trail of destruction they wrought. Many tales of their exploits speak equally of their ferocious skill-at-arms and the strategic insight of their commanders, different in style to that of other Legions, wilder and more direct, but no less effective.

Some considered them little more than barbaric reavers, akin to the wild butchers of Angron's red Legion or the executioners of Russ', but the records of their campaigns suggest otherwise. They were pathfinders in both a tactical and strategic sense, amongst the keenest and most proficient breed of the Legiones Astartes created by the Emperor. Exhaustive plans and interminable preparations were not their ways, often leaving them at odds with more deliberate warriors like the sons of Dorn or Guilliman. Yet they valued learning and knowledge highly, many among them skilled as artificers, philosophers and artists. They gathered wisdom as other Legions gathered weapons, to be kept at the ready until the time came to unleash them upon the foe. They were the wind, everywhere and nowhere, insubstantial and yet forceful, and they took to the duty they were given with a passion, taking joy from the thrill of battle and the hunt across the stars. As Sanguinius is recorded to have once said of the reborn Vth Legion, '*...they smile often and they laugh when they kill.*

Unlike the brutal sons of Angron or the wild wolves of Fenris, the White Scars did not lack in discipline, and though they wore the cloak of the savage, they were not the same wild killers as those more infamous of their kin. Their nature was untamed, but still bound by the chains of duty and honour as defined by the Chogorian code. They were merciless and sometimes cruel on the attack and often seen as insolent or fractious, but such rumours were founded on misunderstanding. When the White Scars granted no mercy to their foe, they did so not for the joy of simple slaughter, but in honour of the valour shown them, they held back nothing just as had a worthy foe. When they failed to respect the policies and plans of others, it was because their own ways served them better, rarely did they make accusations of their own, allowing the results they garnered to speak for the rightness of their actions. They valued courtesy and forthright honesty over protocol and rigid adherence to rules ill-suited for the battlefield, but did not fail to punish those who transgressed the rules they set themselves.

Yet, despite these qualities they were often seen as the least among their kin, followers and not lords, a fact that sat ill with warriors of such skill and dedication. For much of the Great Crusade they remained outsiders to most of their brethren, few among the Primarchs sought the company of Jaghatai Khan and his sons, and Jaghatai did little to encourage them. Some found the strategies by which his Legion fought to be flawed, especially the inflexible sons of Dorn and Guilliman, while others looked down upon the trapping of Chogorian tradition that bound the Legion together. The Khan of Khans did little to dispel his reputation as a crude barbarian and wanton killer, keeping his own counsel and the company of those who cared to see past the veil of rumour that hid the true character of his Legion. Of all of his brothers, the Khagan found common cause with but a handful. Of these the closest

was Magnus of Prospero, for he was also an outcast in the small society of their peers and a man of integrity and brusque honesty, those few records of the two often note this friendship between two otherwise isolated Primarchs. Horus, who appreciated talent above appearances, also showed some favour to the Khagan, as did Sanguinius who had ever been a statesman and diplomat among his often quarrelsome brothers. Of the others there is little recorded, possibly as there were few occasions where the Primarchs gathered in numbers and fewer still where the Khagan was present.

Jaghatai Khan was ever to be found on the move, always where he was least expected and always at that critical locus that would decide the fate of battles and empires. Yet, as the Great Crusade moved into its final throes in the first years of M31, the White Scars found themselves called upon less and less. The Emperor's Great Crusade had eclipsed its major rivals and charted most of the fractured and changed galaxy. Where, at the beginning of the long war the maps had been blank and the enemies unknown and terrifying, they were now replete and Mankind's enemies largely known and cowed. In these final years of the conquest there were fewer wild spaces for the White Scars to make war as they liked. They were becoming obsolete, unnecessary to the empire that was to be; the Khan of Khans knew it and it made him restless. The chance to run ahead of the storm, to exult in the unknown and the sheer joy of the destruction that follows was fading, leaving only the dull work of governance. Things were becoming ordered and known – they were winning, and in a final victory the White Scars would be undone. The Khan could sense that a choice was coming, a grand choice. They would be given the chance to be again what they had once been – but in doing so they would need to betray all that they had fought for. The other choice, no less invidious, was to remain true to their oaths and bound to a slow diminishment.

Unit and Formation Structure within the Legion

As has been noted, the Vth Legion has never adhered closely to the strictures of the *Principia Bellicosa*, that great treatise that informed the basis of most of the early Legions' organisation and structure. Lacking in the numbers that allowed many of the other Legions to operate as fully-fledged

war hosts, the Vth Legion was originally organised into small Pioneer Companies, each operating as a separate and independent force. This independence of operation and command was both a necessity due to the size and mission of the early Vth Legion and a legacy of the fierce spirit of its original recruits. Each Pioneer Company operated as an augmented line company, comprising perhaps 1,000 Legionaries and a varying array of specialist detachments, with each unique in its exact configuration and total fighting strength. Over the first century of the Great Crusade, these companies continued to deviate from the standard organisational pattern of the *Principia Bellicosa*, in part due to the increasing difficulty of resupplying them. The rediscovery of Jaghatai Khan on Chogoris brought an end to this era of independent operations and saw the Legion go through a complete re-organisation.

By 865.M30, there were approximately 70,000 warriors in the Vth Legion, which would later increase to around 95,000 at the peak of the Legion's strength shortly before 007.M31. The Great Khan reformed these warriors into a number of Hordes, a formation that stood above the Brotherhood in the Legion's structure. In creating his new Legion, the Great Khan was careful to split up the old Pioneer Companies, mixing warriors of differing origins together with new recruits from his home world of Chogoris to constitute the new Hordes. Most documents dating to that time place the number of original Hordes at five, although some accounts place the number as high as seven. The exact number is difficult to ascertain due to the irregular size of these formations, as both the original Hordes and those that would follow varied wildly in size, with the smallest numbering little more than 5,000 warriors and the largest as many as 20,000. The difference in size did not appear to indicate any tactical or strategic speciality, but rather was tied to the will of the Horde's commander, known in the newly re-organised White Scars as a Noyan-khan. Indeed, the various Hordes often fluctuated wildly in size during the transition from one Noyan-khan to another, with warriors transferring between Hordes, or even splitting off to form new Hordes at the whims of either the Noyan-khan or Jaghatai himself. This process seems to have been intended to allow each individual commander to operate efficiently within the bounds of their ability and strategic preferences, rather than enforcing a strict organisational system upon them.

Whether this is the spectre of the old Pioneer Companies and their independent spirit, or part of the Great Khan's Chogorian heritage is unknown, but its effectiveness when combined with the free-spirited nature of the Vth Legion has been demonstrated in battles beyond count. It has, however, caused a number of difficulties with both their brother Legions and with the logistics and command echelons of the *Divisio Militaris*. A number of Great Crusade operations have encountered problems properly classifying White Scars detachments, both for purposes of resupply and of properly gauging the threat level of opposing forces. On Algeron VII, where two Hordes of White Scars were deployed for harrowing operations against renegade human enclaves, Great Crusade *Divisio Logisticus* supplied munitions and supplies for two standard Legiones Astartes Chapters, only to find this insufficient for the two over-sized Hordes sent by the White Scars. On Therona Secundus, an Ultramarines grand task force besieging a Fra'al stronghold requested reinforcement by a similar-sized force of the Legiones Astartes, only for *Divisio Strategists* to mistakenly assign a nearby White Scars Horde to the conflict. The Horde, numbering half the strength of the Ultramarines force, fought bravely as a part of the assault force, but its relatively low strength forced the Ultramarines to endure higher casualties than their strict protocols would allow. The warriors of Ultramar, always dubious of those who chose to disregard the logic of the *Principia Bellicosa*, saw this as a failure of the White Scars, one among a number of one-sided grudges – for the White Scars marked the Therona conflict as a great victory against adversity, and spoke highly of the Ultramarines' fortitude.

The only other main organisational unit within the White Scars was the Brotherhood, a unit roughly equivalent to the standard company. Just like the larger Hordes, each Brotherhood varies in size quite widely, with some being formed of less than a few hundred warriors and others up to several thousand. Again, this disparity is rarely directly linked to the tactical role of the Brotherhood but rather the preferences and charisma of the Khan who led it. That being true, many Brotherhoods also tended to favour a specific mode of engagement, with the majority being outfitted and trained to operate as skirmish forces and rapid strike units. These most typical Brotherhoods were almost always mechanised units, in that the entire force of the Brotherhood was either mounted on jetbikes or supplied with other forms of rapid transport. Brotherhoods

specialising in either long range combat or siege work were in a distinct minority and often among the smallest of these formations. This left the White Scars at something of a disadvantage in some combat theatres, forcing them to either rely on their own innate versatility to make do or to draft auxillia units into their line of battle to cope with specialised combat situations.

Within each Brotherhood the exact roster of units varied considerably and rarely adhered to standard company structures seen within the other Legions. Though each Brotherhood was a unique formation, most were formed of a core of jetbike-mounted troops, although these were sometimes known to fight dismounted in the style of more standard tactical units. In addition to this core of highly mobile strike troops was a number of more specialised units, of which the exact nature is highly variable. Most common among the various Brotherhoods were reconnaissance cadres or close assault specialists, roles which held particular value within the Chogorian traditions that sat at the heart of the White Scars doctrines. The inclusion of units that fall outside of these preferences, most especially static heavy weapons support units, was rarer but far from unknown. Indeed, some Brotherhoods were composed almost entirely of such units. Such specialised Brotherhoods were not pariahs among their swifter brethren, but often honoured for their role in the Legion's victories and their willingness to sacrifice the thrill of the hunt for victory. Most Brotherhoods also included what the White Scars referred to as a Keshig, which indicated a body of troops somewhere between a life guard for the Khan and an elite reserve intended to bolster both the fighting spirit and tactical firepower of line troops. Given the aggressive nature of most White Scars tactics, these units often formed the forefront of any assault, and most often contained the most skilled and experienced warriors within the Brotherhood.

Among the more extreme deviations from standard practise within the White Scars Legion were their so-called weather-witches. These were the Librarian-adepts fielded by the Legion during the earliest days of the Librarian's experiment, their training and role dictated as much by the superstitions of the Chogorian tribesmen as by the standardised training coda of the fledgling Librarian. They quickly came to fill the role of mystics and advisers to the Khans, more akin to primitive shamans to outside eyes than to the ideal of the warrior-scholar of the more

orthodox Legions. Yet beneath the veneer of their shamanistic heritage lay a surprisingly complex position, serving their brethren as counsellors and mediators as well as shields against aetheric menace, and with a deep understanding of the Warp rooted in both Chogorian mysticism and the scientific studies of the Imperium's greatest scholars.

In many ways, the studied respect these early adepts displayed for Warp phenomena showed a wiser approach than that of more secular scholars whose approach was rooted in science and often dismissive of the real threat concealed within the aether. In battle, the Stormseers stirred the Warp to aid their brethren, preferring more subtle applications of psychic power than crude bolts of power. They obscured the advance of the White Scars with fog, wind and rain, and impeded the foe with relentless flurries of hail or foul monsoons. Many of the Vth Legion's victories are founded on the cunning application of both the Stormseers' psychic power and their sage advice. Despite their abilities, the Stormseers were most often judged on their appearance, which to the more stringent adherents of the Imperial Truth harkened back to the dark days of Long Night on Terra and superstitions of religion which the Emperor Himself had condemned. Among their most vocal opponents was Mortarion, whose innate hatred of the psyker was only exacerbated by the positions of influence the Stormseers held within their Legion, but he was not alone in questioning their loyalty to the tenants of the Imperial Truth and the Great Crusade itself.

Among the various specialised units common within Legiones Astartes ranks, there were some rarely seen among the White Scars. Most prominent amongst these were the assault troops known as Destroyers, dedicated to the deployment of proscribed weaponry and the utter annihilation of the foe. The tactics employed by these cadres in other Legions were considered anathema by the White Scars, whose joy in open combat and reverence for the unspoiled wilderness of many frontier worlds was ill at ease with such wanton destruction. Destroyer cadres did exist within the Legion, but in limited numbers. Known as the Karaoghlanlar, or the Dark Sons of Death, their armour was painted a dull black and festooned with shamanic charms to ward off the evil spirits that followed in their wake. These grim warriors, often considered deranged and as omens of evil tidings by their fellows, did not serve with any single Brotherhood but were instead placed under the direct supervision

AUXILIARY ORDERS OF THE WHITE SCARS

Several bodies of warriors existed outside of the Brotherhood structure into which the vast majority of the White Scars were organised. Some of these Orders reported directly to the Great Khan, while others were truly independent and operated according to the whims of their commanders in support of other Brotherhoods or Hordes. Given the decentralised nature of the White Scars organisation and the emphasis they placed on individual initiative, many of these Orders operated without direct oversight by the Great Khan, and were to an extent laws unto themselves. A brief list of the more prominent of these organisations has been included below:

The Karaoghlanlar – The 'Dark Sons of Death', these warriors fulfilled the role of Destroyers within the White Scars and answered directly to the Council of Seers. They were deployed in combat when the utter annihilation of the enemy was required, as well as for certain ritual roles in the wake of key campaigns.

The Burgediin Sarhvu – The 'Falcon's Claws', this small Order was composed of veteran warriors who had undergone certain initiatory rites on Chogoris. On the battlefield, they served as hunters and forward scouts, experts in survival and the quiet elimination of enemy commanders, while outside of combat they acted as the keepers of those servoraptors maintained by many Brotherhoods as both symbols of their heritage and as battlefield reconnaissance assets.

The Kharash – Less a formal Order and more a temporary assembly, the 'Kharash' was assembled whenever the need for a diversionary or shock assault force arose. Formed only of volunteers, these units were both a punishment and an honour, as those who survived assignment to the Kharash were often considered to be both lucky and skilled by their comrades. The Kharash were also one of the few White Scars units to make routine use of Tactical Dreadnought Armour.

The Uhaan Solban – This Order comprised almost every one of the limited number of Dreadnoughts in service with the White Scars. Concerned primarily with guarding the gene-seed repositories of the Vth Legion on Chogoris and Terra, these dour half-dead warriors were rarely seen on the field of battle.

The Akoghlanlar – Composed entirely of those personnel inducted into the medicae corps of the Vth Legion, the 'Akoghlanlar' were the ritual opposites of the Legion's Destroyers, dedicated to the preservation of their brothers and the legacy of Jaghatai. Unlike most of the other Orders represented here, these warriors were spread across the various Brotherhoods, serving individually rather than as a single entity. It was only on rare occasions that the entire Order gathered, often in service of one of Chogoris' obscure rituals.

of the Stormseer Council, only deployed when both Khan and seer agreed they be set loose. This apparently pagan superstition appeared to serve simply as a tool to vilify the use of the extreme measures represented by the Destroyers, a choice known to have originated with the Great Khan himself, who held little respect for those who resorted to such measures too frequently.

Another notable exception within the ranks of the White Scars was the almost complete lack of any kind of position dedicated to the enforcement of military law. The White Scars never operated any kind of disciplinary corps, the officers known as consul-opsequiri in the *Principia Bellicosa*. Despite this, they also recorded one of the lowest rates of internal

dispute and other infractions under Divisio military law. Some claim that this record is due to the White Scars' insular nature and unwillingness to properly report their activities, while others note that the White Scars maintain a complex code of honour, with several units that might be described as penal units by outsiders. Of these, the most well-known is the Kharash, a temporary body of warriors filled by volunteers whenever the need for diversionary or shock assault tactics occurs. Though assigned duties considered near-suicidal by many observers, the Kharash never lacked for volunteers, with those seeking to expunge some perceived sin equally matched by those seeking advancement through the honour attached to serving with the Kharash and surviving.

Command Hierarchy

Of all of the Legions, the White Scars maintained the most decentralised command structure, rivalled only by that of the Alpha Legion. While Jaghatai Khan remained the ultimate authority, the various Noyan-khans, the commanders of the Hordes that made up the bulk of the Legion, exercised a remarkable amount of personal authority and most often operated independently of the Great Khan. Unlike many Legions, it was rare for the White Scars to assemble in forces numbering more than one or two Hordes – indeed, it was far more common for forces as small as one or more Brotherhoods to operate alone within any given war zone. Far more common was the attachment of smaller White Scars forces to the fleets of other Legions, though even in these situations the Khans of those gathered Brotherhoods retained independent command of their forces.

As a consequence of this style of leadership, the White Scars Legion had relatively few formal titles of rank in use. Authority flowed from the Great Khan, whose official title was Khagan, to the Noyan-khans that commanded the Hordes and from there to the individual Khans of each Brotherhood, with these three ranks forming the core of the Legion's command structure on the battlefield. In actuality, each Khan, regardless of his rank, was surrounded by a web of advisers and lieutenants to whom a measure of authority was invested, for the officers retained their posts due to the respect held for them by their followers as much as due to any official appointment. Among this circle of advisers, the chief position was often taken by one of the infamous Stormseers, upon whose prognostication much weight was placed by both the Khan and his warriors.

The Uhaan Solban

Many outsiders have made the claim that the White Scars did not use Dreadnoughts. This is not true. Those they maintained were rarely seen in battle and were few in number, but they did exist and held a strange position within the Legion. As a warrior society uniquely bound to the fierce joys of battle and the simple pleasures of a physical existence, the eternity of silence and separation endured by those incarcerated within a Dreadnought chassis held a particular horror for the White Scars. Despite this revulsion, to be assigned to live on in a Dreadnought shell is seen as neither punishment, nor as an honour, but rather somewhere in between.

Dreadnoughts among the White Scars were known as the 'Uhaan Solban', the Guardians of the Morning and Evening Stars in the Chogorian tongue. This poetic title is typical of the Legion's tendencies, and hid a rather more practical purpose. The Uhaan Solban served as guardians of the Legion's gene-seed repositories on Chogoris and Terra, eternal wardens that served in place of their lesser brethren. They shouldered the burden of an endless watch so that their brothers that still walked fully in the realm of the living might hunt the stars alongside the Great Khan, a sacrifice that saw them treated with equal parts awe and fear by the rest of the Legion. They remained a cruel reminder of the true cost of duty, avoided by most who have reason to enter the silent repository halls where they rest, and were honoured from afar with propitiatory rites. It is only the Akoghlanlar, the Apothecaries, and the Iron Khans of the armoury who sought them out, both to perform maintenance and for ritual reasons tied to their own obscure creeds.

On rare occasions, one of the Uhaan Solban would take to the field of battle alongside the rest of the Legion, drawn to battle by the fragmented memories and urges that still lived in their half-dreams. They made such demands only rarely, and only where they felt that their presence was required by those omens observed in the feverish dreams of the near-death they endured during their watch, interpreted for them by Stormseers, and there were few Khans who would deny the request of one of these ill-omened heroes to stalk the battlefield once more. Those battles to which the Uhaan Solban felt drawn were almost always bound to live in infamy, dire challenges that saw the Legion pitted against near-insurmountable odds or hidden tragedy. Here the Uhaan Solban sought their final demise, to stand as a bulwark against defeat and to laugh bitterly in death's face one last time. The Chondax campaign was to see an unprecedented number of the Uhaan Solban return to the field of battle, an ill-omen that would not be realised until the end of the fighting and the arrival of the Alpha Legion.

Most Khans also nominated one among their Brotherhood as first officer, and heir to command should he fall. A position technically titled Kavkhan, though this was only rarely used in the field, the counsel of this first officer also weighed heavily in the command of the Brotherhood. Other officers of more specialised nature, such as the Tenri-khan that captained many of the void craft of the White Scars fleet or the Gan-khan that presided over the Legion's armouries, as well as veterans of established skill and honour, also held much sway with a wise Khan, and when included as a part of his Brotherhood or larger force, would be key to shaping his decisions.

War Disposition

The White Scars were never considered to be among the larger of the Legiones Astartes, partly due to the tendency of its separate detachments to operate individually and the relatively low level of recruitment conducted by the Legion. In its early years, before the rediscovery of Jaghatai Khan, the Legion numbered around 80,000 warriors. By the later years of the Great Crusade, after the return of Jaghatai Khan, this number had risen to around 95,000 warriors. This left the Legion as one of the smallest of the Legiones Astartes, although slightly larger than Corax's Raven Guard and Vulkan's Salamanders, as well as one of the most widely spread on a

strategic level. Of all of the Legions, only the Iron Warriors had more of its number attached to fleets and garrison posts than the White Scars. During the Great Crusade, and for much of the Horus Heresy, the exact size of the Vth Legion was often difficult to ascertain, due to the lax attitude many of its commanders held towards the filing of accurate and regular reports with the Divisio Militaris. Those numbers available to us in these latter years are mainly drawn from the personal journals of various Khans and other officers of the Legion, and were not generally known in those last few years before Horus declared war on his father. As such, many of the Imperium's commanders

often believed the White Scars to be a much larger force than it actually was, a fiction mostly attributed to the tendency of the Legion's various detachments to move from war zone to war zone as they willed, and the often confusing heraldry used by many of the Brotherhoods.

During the final stages of the Great Crusade, in the years just before the Istvan massacres, the White Scars were spread across the galaxy in several dozen war zones, often in detachments of only a few Brotherhoods. At Ullanor, Horus called upon the Great Khan and his warriors, gathering several full Hordes of the Vth Legion and their Primarch

to his side – the largest concentration of the Legion at a single war zone since the Kolarne Circle campaign. Following the fighting at Ullanor, those Hordes that had been present, along with several others previously assigned to fighting in the southern fringes of the Great Crusade, were committed to the Chondax Cleansing and were later involved in the Alpha Legion's treacherous assault against the White Scars. This left at least three Hordes unaccounted for in the first years of the Horus Heresy, most assigned to fleets along the north-eastern edge of the Great Crusade and far removed from contact with their Primarch. It appears that most of the Traitor detachments in this

region were under orders to avoid engaging remnant White Scars forces, and in at least one incident, a Legiones Astartes force in White Scars colours is known to have fought alongside a Sons of Horus battle force in campaigns targeting Blood Angels' and Ultramarines' holdouts along the Eastern Fringe. Following the Chondax Engagement, there are few concrete facts regarding the main body of the White Scars and their movements are little known in the years that preceded the Battle for Terra.





WHITE SCARS TACTICAL LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY YEKE NIDUN, QARA VACHIR'S TACTICAL SQUAD, BROTHERHOOD OF THE GOLDEN STAR

Legionary Nidun bears a common example of the later White Scars heraldry pattern, as typified by the absence of more standard identification markings other than the Legion emblem on his pauldron. Instead of the approved *Divisio Militaris* icons, the White Scars made use of a complex set of glyphs and icons of their own, mostly derived from the culture of Chogoris and largely indecipherable to their allies. As an example, the right greave of Legionary Nidun's newly issued MkVI power armour bears the emblem of his Brotherhood, a formation roughly analogous to the more standard company, as well as marks indicating his rank, specialisation and commanding officer. These are mostly recorded in the complex glyphs of Chogoris, though other icons are simply modified versions of more standard icons, such as the altered Tactical symbol on the left greave.

As noted by the glyphs adorning his forearm and pauldron, Legionary Nidun is a veteran of a number of campaigns, having fought with the Golden Star for 27 years prior to the fighting at Chondax. Of these campaigns the most infamous is the disastrous drop assault of Anthalmax, where the Golden Star and its Khan won renown holding the landing grounds alone for six hours as the Iron Warriors fought to establish beachhead fortifications. Nidun himself claimed 18 confirmed kills over the course of the engagement, receiving honours from both his Khan and the Iron Warriors commander in the field.

WHITE SCARS HERALDRY

Brotherhood banner of the Brotherhood of the Golden Star – Note the style of banner pole and curved design which differs from the standard Legion banners. The Chogorian symbols shown on the lower section list the most renowned battle honours of the Brotherhood, later modified to include the names Chondax and Byfrust.



Brotherhood banner of the Brotherhood of the Black Axe – Shown here prior to the fighting in the Chondax system where this banner was captured by the Alpha Legion. Here the Chogorian inscription along the trim lists the various Khans of the Brotherhood.



This MkIII pauldron shows a variant of the Tactical insignia worn by line infantry units within the White Scars.



Another variation on the Tactical insignia, this time shown on a MkIV pauldron.



Light recon plate displaying the icon of the Falcon's Claws, a specialised formation within the ranks of the White Scars.



A pauldron from the ceremonial armour of the Karaoghlanlar, as the Destroyer Corps of the White Scars was known.



Shown here is one of several common honour markings, this example denoting Veteran status within the Legion.



Honour marking, incorporating elements of the Imperial Aquila and worn by veterans of the Unification War.



MkII pauldron displaying a ritual marking linked to the Stormseer Council.



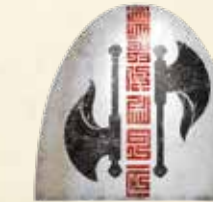
'Standard' pattern of heraldry to be applied to newly issued MkVI armour. In practise this was rarely adhered to.



On this pauldron, the standard pattern Legion icon has been replaced with the Brotherhood of the Gold Star emblem.



This MkIV pauldron bears the mark of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf, as well as a brief passage in Chogorian script.



MkVI armour issued to the White Scars prior to their departure for Chondax, emblazoned with Black Axe.



Assault doctrine emblem and insignia of the Brotherhood of the Blue Hawk.



WHITE SCARS VETERAN LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY ALEKH DAUMAS, 2ND STALKER CADRE, 731ST PIONEER COMPANY

Known informally as the Grey Ghosts, the 731st Pioneer Company primarily saw service as outriders and forward scout elements for the 98th Expeditionary Fleet, alongside the warriors of Primarch Rogal Dorn's Imperial Fists Legion. They were tasked with identifying potential targets ahead of the fleet's main advance and assessing the threat of each, either withdrawing in the face of overwhelming opposition or staging a campaign of disruption and subtle murder where they discovered weakness. They served to arrange the grand battles and campaigns which the Imperial Fists prosecuted, moving on when the warriors of Dorn arrived in orbit to secure the victory with pomp and fanfare. The *Cold Shroud* and *Sorrow Vector*, the two cruisers attached to the 731st Pioneer Company, were ever on the move, perpetually steered from one desolate war zone to another by the advance of the Great Crusade.

Legionary Daumas fought as one of the so-called 'Stalker' cadres for which the Grey Ghosts were renowned. Armed with old-pattern anti-materiel rifles converted for use as sniper weapons and a sophisticated catalogue of camouflage techniques, these Stalkers marked priority targets for the invasion force that followed on their heels and perpetrated pinpoint strikes on those deemed vulnerable by the Pioneer Company's commanders. Legionary Daumas rose to prominence during the initial foray on Altus-coriola, where he and his cadre were responsible for destroying 34 grounded fighter craft, ensuring minimal losses in the later Imperial Fists drop assault. Later fully initiated into the reborn White Scars Legion, Daumas took the name Munokhoi to show his loyalty to the Great Khan.



WHITE SCARS TERMINATOR

LEGIONARY SURENTAI, THE EBON KESHIG, KHARASH OF THE SIEGE OF BLACK-BLIGHT

This pict shows one of the Tactical Dreadnought Armours of the Vth Legion in the field, a rare occurrence within a Legion dedicated to speed and finesse over brute force. The black heraldry denotes this armour as one of those that formed the Ebon Keshig, in this case the Cataphractii pattern armour pictured bears the title Monqara Erden, which can be roughly translated from the Chogorian tongue to read as 'Eternal dark jewel'. The majority of the Vth Legion's Terminator armour suits were assigned to the vaults of the Ebon Keshig, waiting until the Legion had need of their stolid might and then temporarily assigned to a warrior for one glorious battle before returning to the storage vaults. Many of these black-painted armour suits had accrued a long and bloody history of last stands and forlorn assaults into the teeth of the enemy's guns.

Legionary Surentai served with the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf's line infantry before the assault on Black-blight, a warrior of proven mettle but little distinction. He was one of many who volunteered to fight as one of the Ebon Keshig when the Great Khan called for the formation of a Kharash, the name by which individual iterations of the Ebon Keshig were known. Assigned the armour Monqara Erden, Surentai would claim a high tally of enemy dead and was gravely wounded in the prosecution of the assault. Lauded for his bravery by the Khan himself, Surentai returned to the ranks of his Brotherhood as Kavkhan, marked for glory by his deeds as one of the Ebon Keshig.

