

3RD SERTHMARCH HUSSAR REGIMENT

Unofficial Fan Dossier · Anvil of War

„In the Emperor's name, not one step back. In the name of the blessing, no prayer unspoken. In sweat and blood, in obedience to the end — we are the will of the Throne.“

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CORE DATA

Regiment type	Line Infantry (lasgun, four charge packs, flak armour; the backbone)
Munitorum designation	SMH-03-TSM-847.L.40M
Homeworld	Serthmarch, shrine world in the Segmentum Tempestus
Tithe grade	Decuma Prima – the baseline grade described in the compendium as "the customary tenth"
Establishment strength	4,800 personnel in five companies
Current strength	2,130 personnel in two companies (one of them a rebuild)
Allegiance	Loyal
Origin	Original regiment

The pillars

Obedience Is the Flesh of Duty

A Hussar of Serthmarch does not obey because he has understood. He obeys because obedience itself is holy—because in an Imperium that stretches across a thousand worlds, and in which every tenth order arrives after a delay of a hundred years, obedience is the only structure that does not collapse. The Church teaches it. The Colonels fortify it. A Guardsman who asks "why" is regarded as someone who does not understand the holiness of the order. This is not unusual. This is normal. But in the 3rd Serthmarch it is the pillar on which everything else rests.

Faith Is Sharper than the Lasgun

On Serthmarch the Emperor is not worshipped as a distant god, but as a present blessing—a warming, punishing, uplifting force. The regiment does not merely believe in its cause; it *feels* the Emperor's approval in every order. This makes them fearless and at the same time brittle. A Hussar who loses his faith loses not only hope, but his trust in the fact that his dying has meaning. The regiment has learned to protect this faith—by any means.

Honour Is a Promise That Must Not Be Broken

Hussars were once free riders, mercenaries with their own code. Now they are slaves of the Emperor. The contradiction runs deep. The regiment resolves it through reverence: *if* we are slaves, then we are *the most honourable* slaves. If we are obedient, then we are unshakeably obedient. This is not a virtue we possess—this is the yoke we bear to show that we are worthy of bearing it. An order that contradicts our honour is not questioned. It is carried out and then *repented*.

Xenos Are the Trial the Emperor Sends

The regiment does not fight xenos as it fights other enemies. It fights as if against daemons. Every alien is proof of the Emperor's mercy, that He grants us one last opportunity to show that we are worthy. This is the most uncomfortable pillar: it breeds a mercilessness that is alien even to other Imperial formations. A xenos prisoner is not interrogated. A xenos shrine is not examined. It is burned, and then

one prays for the ashes.

Further core facts

Fact	Value
Militarum Regimentum	Holy Hussars of the Blessing
Common Name	The 3rd Serthmarch or "Hussars of the Mercy Seat"
Origin of the Name	Inherited from a tradition of hussar mercenary horsemen on the home world; "Blessing" refers to the rite of the Ecclesiarchy at every muster
Regiment Type	Line infantry (lasgun, four power packs, flak armour)
Founding	M40.7
Tithe Grade	Regular (one tenth of military capacity)
Battle Cry	"For the Throne and the Blessing! Not one step back!"
Munitorum Designation	SMH-03-TSM-847.L.40M

RAISING, HOMEWORLD & CULTURE

Raising & Tithe

Serthmarch was already an established shrine world in M40.7, with a civilian priest-watch of nineteen thousand Ecclesiarchs. The raising of the 3rd Serthmarch Hussars was no emergency levy but part of the regular tithe: one tenth of all the world's military resources not immediately needed to protect the pilgrimage sites. The Planetary Governor, Archbishop Merethon, did not need to worry about inferior or poorly equipped troops—his reputation was at stake.

The raising itself followed the custom of Serthmarch: an open contest. Young people who wished to serve—and many who were presented by their families—came forward for ritual trials: endurance over ten hours, marksmanship, obedience under physical strain, religious steadfastness under confusion. The trials not infrequently killed candidates. The Governor sanctioned this together with the Church: whoever was weak enough to die was too weak to serve. The best survived and were chosen. This created a regiment without recruits pressed against their will—every Hussar had offered himself and had passed through fire. This made them more compliant and at the same time prouder than the levy armies of other worlds.

What the Homeworld Lost

Serthmarch lost an entire generation of marrying families: the competition selects young people of fertile age, and the civilian population depends on streams of pilgrims. Roughly eleven hundred young women and men, who would ordinarily have offset the population loss caused by pilgrim raids and wars of religion, died instead in foreign war zones. The marrying age on Serthmarch has since risen by four years—not because it became law, but because the chances of finding a suitable partner fell drastically. An entire cohort of young priestesses, who would traditionally have filled the choir in the southern sanctuary, was missing. The choir was reduced for thirty years. Only recently was it complete again.

The Homeworld

Serthmarch is a shrine world with a mild, damp climate and green, rolling landscapes. The Mediterranean-equivalent in the south moderates the temperatures. Rain is frequent but seldom destructive. The population lives in white stone settlements built on mountainsides to keep the lowlands free for pilgrim caravans. The Church is the economy: four billion pilgrims cross the region around the Sanctuary of the Blessed Throne each year. The Governor is always an Archbishop. The army consists of the priest-watch (for internal order) and of levy regiments (for foreign wars).

The population is lean and wiry—not from want, but from a culture of walking. Pilgrims on foot shape their self-image. A Hussar from Serthmarch is enduring, patient with hunger, and obeys not out of fear of the officer, but out of a deep conviction that the order is holy. He is also very religious and grows nervous when no prayer hour has been held for too long. A Serthmarch soldier does not run into the storm—he *pilgrims* into the storm, as though performing a rite.

The landscape itself leaves its mark: years-long war zones on stony plains or in forest unsettle any Serthmarch Hussar. An open field near a village is home ground. An underground cave system or an ice desert is a kind of blasphemy—too alien to be natural.

The Disadvantage They Carry

Serthmarch was under pilgrimage control for three generations—ecclesiastical architecture shapes the mind. The regiment does not despise new technology, but it does not *understand* it. A vox-set, a telescope, a repaired laspistol circuit are not simply tools—they are potentially unholy devices if they have not been consecrated by the Adeptus Mechanicus itself. Last year, at Makros III, the 3rd Serthmarch lost an entire Company because a sergeant had installed a rapid-fire upgrade on his lasgun himself. Not because it did not work—but because the NCO who saw it perceived it as witchcraft, threw the chain of command into disarray, and the Company walked into an ambush. The sergeant was afterwards executed by the Commissar. Neither side of the story was in the wrong. It was simply the price the world paid for sending its sons.

Regimental Culture

Life in the regiment follows a strict daily order: prayer at dawn, drill until noon, rations, divine service, maintenance and training until sunset, evening prayer. The rhythm seldom changes. In the barracks on Serthmarch itself the tables stand in rows, the beds are tightly made, the walls are painted white. Field camps are less orderly, but the spirit is the same: structured, calm, reverent.

The regimental marching song is a quiet hymn-equivalent, not a bouncing march tune. The words go: "We walk in blessing, our feet upon stone, the words in our mouths, the faith in our bone. For each one who falls, a new one shall rise. For each one who prays, the Throne climbs the skies." The march is slow, meditative, and becomes endless when the troops are on the move.

A superstition is deeply rooted: no soldier will change his uniform on a day a comrade has fallen. It is a commandment of mourning, not of obedience. The officers have learned to tolerate it. They cannot suppress it without provoking a mutiny.

The barracks smell of incense and lye—the Church demands daily ablutions. The latrines are separate, clean, and beside each one stands a short prayer. The garrison echoes with prayers. Soldiers sit

together and recite prayers while sorting ammunition.

With their spirit ration, Hussars do something unusual: they do not drink together. Each drinks alone and in silence, then prays. It is not a social act but a private one. This created a strange culture—little camaraderie beyond duty, but deep mutual reverence.

The Commissariat

The regiment does not fear its Commissars, because it does not perceive them as external. Three of the four current Commissars were born on Serthmarch and understand the regiment's inner theology. They are regarded as *priestly overseers*—representatives not of the Adeptus Terra, but of the Emperor Himself. Being a Commissar here is easier than elsewhere, because obedience is already rooted. The only effort lies in ensuring that no one loses his faith—not for the state, but for himself.

The senior Commissar, Lord Commissar Calth, is an exception. He is cold, unmoved, and regards the regiment's religion as a burden that diminishes efficiency. Three times he has tried to reduce the hours of prayer. The regiment obeyed, but the obedience was *empty*—there was a difference between movements that have soul and movements that are merely physical. Calth recognised this and stopped working against it.

RANKS & ORGANISATION

Ranks

Rank: Exalted Shepherd

Munitorum rank: Colonel · Form of address: "Exalted Shepherd" or "Colonel"

Rank: Shepherd of Shadows

Munitorum rank: Major · Form of address: "Shepherd" (title), or „Major“ (formal)

Rank: Sheepherd

Munitorum rank: Captain · Form of address: "Sheepherd" or "Captain"

Rank: Herdling

Munitorum rank: Lieutenant · Form of address: "Herdling" or "Lieutenant"

Rank: Warden

Munitorum rank: Sergeant · Form of address: "Warden" (lower ranks often say only "Ward'n")

Rank: Vanguardsman

Munitorum rank: Lance Corporal · Form of address: "Vanguardsman" or by rank name



Structure

At its founding, the 3rd Serthmarch had five infantry Companies of one hundred and forty heads each. Each Company had two platoon groups of three platoons each, each platoon ten soldiers plus an NCO. That is the standard structure. After the annihilation at Makros III, the regiment was reduced to two Companies, both understrength. The First Company (Exalted) currently has sixty-seven soldiers. The Second Company (Pilgrims), only just assembled from the remnants of three different regiments, has eighty-nine Guardsmen. That is not the full one hundred and forty each that is decreed, and it will take years before new levies from Serthmarch meet the quota—in the meantime the regiment fights with fewer, spread further across less dense platoons.

Special unit: a weak rifle Company with special training against air targets—four soldiers with anti-aircraft reinforcement training, distributed between the two Companies. They are overburdened and have no real command team. This is a consequence of an administrative allocation that does not correspond to reality.

Constituent regiments

1st Company—The Exalted (Colonel Merindas's Command)

Commander: Captain Kael Vertus. *A slender, muscular figure with a scarred left temple and the pale eyes of a man who has lived a very long time on a dry plateau.* Wears an inherited, non-regulation medal from the Serthmarch sanctuary in his uniform collar. Has been brought down three times and rebuilt three times. Has a reputation for carrying out orders more slowly than others, but always *perfectly*—as though speaking a prayer. His saying: *"Haste is the voice of Chaos. We march to the Emperor's beat."*

Current strength: 67 Guardsmen, 12 of them relative newcomers from the Second Founding.

2nd Company—The Pilgrims (newly formed)

Commander: Captain Iselde Carrows. *Tall, bony, with grey hair in a tight braid and a chronically angry mouth.* She originally came from the Torven Regiment (tithe world Torven), became a Captain there, and a fleet misrouting brought her to the 3rd Serthmarch in 047.M42 The Pilgrims are two-thirds her old Torven company, one-third Serthmarch survivors. The two cultures clash constantly. They will not coexist peacefully. Saying: *"We are Serthmarch now, whether we like it or not. I make the best of what the Munitorum gave me—a regiment without a soul."*

Current strength: 89 Guardsmen, heavily strained among themselves.



COMMAND STAFF

Command staff

Colonel Merindas Havaros

A man of sixty-six years with a rough chin and the pale eyes of a veteran of many worlds. His left hand trembles slightly—old nerve damage from Vrex Prime. He wears a heavy leather vambrace engraved with verses from the Codex of Blessing. Merindas is calm, almost equanimous. He makes decisions at the speed at which rivers move—slowly, inevitably, and without noise. He was a Sergeant of the old Serthmarch 2nd, was promoted to Captain during the refounding, then to Major, and received the Colonel's command five years ago. His phlegmatic nature is not weakness—it is strength that feels like weakness. A younger officer would long since have tried to bring the regiment back to full strength faster. Merindas knows that the 3rd Serthmarch needs ten years to be whole again. He plans for ten years. Saying: *"There are two kinds of orders—those the Imperium wants, and those it needs. I am employed to find the difference. That is slow work."*

Lord Commissar Calth Meredore

A thin man in his forties who sits bolt upright, in a black uniform with an unbuttoned star collar that shows his meagre chest beneath the eagle medallion. He came here three years ago, after a scandal somewhere in the Segmentum Solar—the dossier is sealed. He eats almost nothing, and the men have learned that he regards the regiment as a tool, not as a family. He gives orders that are proper, but cold. His only deviation from routine: he never attends the prayer hours. Instead he sits alone in his quarters and writes. Saying, addressed to a Sergeant who asked why prayers could not be shortened: *"Faith is an inefficiency that faith in efficiency justifies. Maintain the balance, and they will march."*

Field Surgeon Var Kolessus

A middle-aged woman with a conspicuous white scar that runs down her whole face from the left like a cleft. She came with the original regiment and has operated on all of them who could be operated on. She sleeps four hours a night and is chronically irritable. She wears a silver pendant—not religious, but a keepsake of a patient who died while she slept. She speaks little, works much, and hates Commissars. Saying, in a field hospital during a battle: *"If the Emperor does not save you, these hands will. Hold still or die."*

Attached Personnel

| Position | Number | |----------|--------| | Commissars (under Senior Commissar Calth) | 4 | | Field preachers of the Ecclesiarchy | 7 | | Field surgeons & medics | 12 | | Mental auxiliaries (labourers, porters, scribes) | 83 | | Afflicted psykers (Scholastica Psykana, under supervision) | 2 |

These specialists sit deliberately outside the regimental chain of command. The Commissars sometimes contradict the Colonel. The field preachers sometimes contradict the Commissars. The friction shows daily: when the Pilgrim Company tried to sing its old Torven hymn, a field preacher stopped them and demanded the Serthmarch hymn. The Torven soldiers obeyed, but the Serthmarch

soldiers recognised the insubordination. Merindas said nothing. The music has been quieter ever since.

The Regimental Standard

A seven-hundred-year-old canvas, white and blue-grey, stained with age, on a staff of hard Meridian wood. Atop it sits an eagle of cast silver (newer, from M39, because the old one burned on Vrex Prime). The banner bears nine embroidered battlegrounds: Vrex Prime in purple and ash, the Kaeloth Plain in blood red, Makros III in black cloth—and others whose names the younger soldiers do not know. The oldest inscription dates from M38.3 and is barely legible.

It was almost lost at Salvorn Ridge (M40.9), when an ambush party killed the standard-bearer and the standard fell. A sergeant named Strasse seized it and died in the retreat. The banner itself was saved. The story is now told every year at the Feast of Blessing—not because Strasse was a hero, but because the standard *must survive*.

THE FLAW

The flaw

The 3rd Serthmarch is **honour-bound**—obligated by a vow that runs contrary to reason.

M40.9, at the Salvorn-Ridge, under the then Colonel Daleth: the regiment was to protect a refugee caravan—ecclesiastical pilgrims carrying a holy relic back to Serthmarch. The enemy was an Ork band, primitive but numerous. Daleth ordered the regiment to position the caravan behind a ravine and to attack the Orks with open flanks in order to drive them into the caravan. It was an ambush tactic. The regiment followed the order. The caravan was slaughtered. One thousand two hundred pilgrims and thirty-one relic-bearers died. The Orks were defeated. The commissar of the day, Thence, reported the attack as "in accordance with regulations, if harsh". Daleth was later reassigned, not executed. The regiment received no criticism.

But something broke in that battle. The 3rd Serthmarch recognised that obedience had led it to kill holy people. Not out of malice—out of *orders*. It thereupon vowed to swear an additional oath: never again would an order that directly endangers pilgrims or the faithful be accepted without protest. It is a secret within the regiment. Officers and commissars know of it. They tolerate it, because the alternative scenario—a mutinous regiment—is worse. But the vow sits askew to the oath of obedience. It is a contradiction the regiment carries with it, lived.

In everyday life it shows itself thus: when an order endangers a nearby ecclesiastical structure, the order is carried out more slowly. When an officer orders fire through a sanctuary, the shot is loosed a moment too late. These are small resistances that look like clumsiness. Other regiments notice it. They say that the 3rd Serthmarch is a regiment that protects its Church before its Emperor—which is heresy. The 3rd Serthmarch says that it protects its Imperium, in which the only holy place is the Emperor, and therefore His holy places must also be protected. The sophistry is not convincing. The regiment lives with it.

A Munitorum Failure

047.M42, year of office, fleet planning: a requisition for laspistol spare parts was marked with the wrong destination world. The request was meant to go to the Serthmarch depot—instead it landed on Torven. The correct document for Torven landed at Serthmarch. The regiment received nine hundred and eighty Torven-pattern spare parts whose circuits are not compatible. The Munitorum took sixteen months to notice the error—and three more months to send the correct parts. During that time the regiment held ninety lasguns as unusable. Strength fell. The Commissar wanted to know why the quota was not met. Merindas had to report that the Munitorum had made the error. The Commissar documented this. The quota was not reset. The regiment was "compensated" with five new soldiers—from the amalgamation pool, not from a new levy. These five were not from Serthmarch. They were from Torven. They spoke differently, prayed differently, and the Serthmarch soldiers regarded them with a mixture of pity and suspicion. The Munitorum's error cost the regiment not only the weapons, but also its unity.

KNOWN CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns

Vrex Prime—Raid of the Stranded

Epoche: c. 342.M41

Theatre: Northern Tempestus, Vrex Prime system | Enemy: Xenos (creatures fused with a starship, possibly Chaos-infected) | Duration: 14 months

A space hulk—or what had once been one—materialised over Vrex Prime out of the warp. The things that came out of it were not entirely xenos, not entirely machine. A fleet squadron was dispatched. The 3rd Serthmarch was chosen as the ground force. It landed, fought through seven landing-zone concentrations and forced the creatures back into the northern continent. But the losses were apocalyptic: nine hundred and eighty-three soldiers died. The regiment disintegrated with the battle and re-formed into a shadow of itself. The reorganisation period lasted three years. The losses were never fully replaced—there are still older Serthmarch guardsmen who speak of „Vrex“ as of an amputation.

Allied regiments: Kalstrom 47th Engineer Corps (now dispersed), Blackmaw Company (mercenaries, later executed for independent negotiations with the xenos). After the battle the regiments were all pulled apart—Kalstrom to the Ferrum Sector, Blackmaw to the Inquisition, the 3rd Serthmarch to supply duties at Kaeloth. No lasting bond formed. The Kalstrom colonel survived until M41.6, when his ship was lost in the warp.

Kaeloth Plain—the Reclamation

Epoche: c. 781.M41

Theatre: Southern Borders, Kaeloth Sector | Enemy: Xenos (Ork raiding hordes, uncoordinated) | Duration: 28 months

A more stable campaign: the 3rd Serthmarch, now reinforced by Torven contingents, was to drive Ork presences from an agriculturally important world. The fighting was loud, disorderly, chaotic. The enemy

had no strategy. The regiment did. Slow advance, consolidation, field camps. After twenty-eight months Kaeloth was "clean" again. The regiment earned commendations, but lost one thousand three hundred and eighteen guardsmen—a third of its strength.

Allied regiments: Torven 9th Infantry (now under Captain Iselde Carrows, later transferred to the 3rd Serthmarch), Crimson Guard Company (withdrew from the sector after M41.8, reason unknown). The 3rd Serthmarch and the Torven 9th formed the only lasting bond—not out of inclination, but out of enforced cohabitation. They were brought together to work jointly. After Kaeloth this cooperation ceased. But the scar remained: Torven guardsmen were permanently assigned to the 3rd Serthmarch. It is a fusion under compulsion, and it sleeps every day.

Makros III—the Darkening

Epoche: M41.996–M41.997

Theatre: Central Tempestus, Makros III | Enemy: Chaos cultists + xenos mercenaries + Traitor Guard | Duration: 6 months, intense

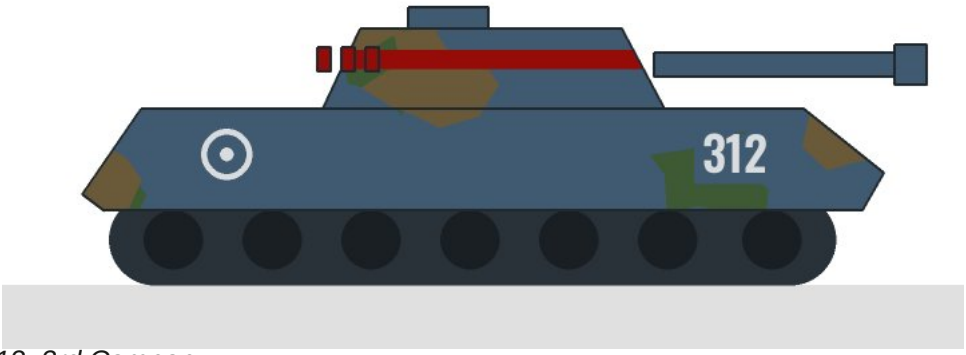
A culture world, darkened by Chaos influence. Black ships landed. The planetary governor called for aid. The Imperium sent everything available—the 3rd Serthmarch, by then back at strength, was one of the first regiments on site. But the darkening ran deeper than expected. The cult fighters were numerous and fanatical. After four months it was clear that the regiment had lost. Colonel Merindas ordered himself to hold a failing line. The 3rd Serthmarch was encircled, then surrounded. The last vox-signal was a recitation of prayer. The regiment was declared **destroyed**.

New formation: The remnants were gathered—nine hundred and eighty survivors, many wounded. They were attached to the Torven regiment. One year later, when a new Serthmarch levy arrived, the regiment was re-founded. But it now consists of survivors (2/3) and newcomers (1/3). The survivors taught the newcomers that it is important to complete a cycle of prayer before one dies. The regiment adopted this. Now every battle ends with a silence—survivors stand, the new follow, and all pray.

Allied regiments: Braun Guardsmen (destroyed), Inquisitorial Company (surviving, but disbanded afterwards), Kitharan Armoured Platoon (destroyed). The regiment had no chance to form a bond with any of these regiments, because it was itself destroyed. There is a lingering debt: there are still two surviving Inquisitors from Makros III who occasionally patrol this region, and the 3rd Serthmarch knows that these Inquisitors *see* that it "exists"—but the Inquisitors will probably never meet the regiment again. The debt is one-sided and will never be settled.

VEHICLE LIVERY





Battle tank 312, 3rd Company

Part	Colour	Citadel	Source
Theatre	Forest and grassland · Blotch camouflage		
Base colour	#405B71	The Fang	Uniform base tone
Camouflage 1	#3E5A34	Castellan Green	theatre standard
Camouflage 2	#6B5A3A	Steel Legion Drab	theatre standard
Turret band	#960C09	Mephiston Red	Theatres of war (older inscriptions, red)
Markings	#DADDDF	Stormhost Silver	Helmet stripe and rank insignia

Hull recipe: The Fang (Base) · Drakenhof Nightshade (Shade) · Russ Grey (Layer) · Fenrisian Grey (Edge)

Derived from the regimental colours; the silhouettes are our own sketches, not copies of any Games Workshop model.

ON THE CORE DATA

The third number in the designation indicates a regular levy from a world that reliably provides several regiments every decade. Serthmarch is no young world—it was already a shrine world in the seventeenth century of the thirty-ninth millennium—and its troop quotas are stable and high.

The regiment was incorporated in the founding year M40.7 and has since been completely dissolved and rebuilt four times. The second annihilation came during a warp storm at the Battle of Vrex Prime (M41.3). The third occurred under the former Colonel Varriden (M41.8), whose order to bombard a loyal population broke the regiment morally—the following three years were a creeping dissolution. The fourth and most recent annihilation took place only seventeen years ago at Makros III (M41.996). The current ranks inherit names, rank insignia and the regimental colours from people they never knew and whose deeds they either revere or suppress. A common guardsman wears a uniform that four different soldiers have already worn. This creates a strange bond—neither pride nor shame, but something of a third kind: a debt to the dead the regiment has lost.

REGIMENTAL CULTURE

Ranks

The terms derive from an old shepherds' religion that preceded the present Ecclesiarchy and still echoes in the popular piety of Serthmarch.

CAMPAIGNS

Campaign 1: Vrex Prime—Raid of the Stranded (M41.3–M41.4)

Campaign 2: Kaeloth Plain—the Retrieval (M41.7–M41.9)

Campaign 3: Makros III—the Darkening (M41.996–M41.997)

