

Blood Stripes for the Fallen

Marines are taught that the scarlet “blood strip” that runs down the seam of each trouser leg was created in honor of the Marines who fell in the Battle of Chapultepec during the Mexican War in 1847. This is a half truth.

Marine sergeants were actually wearing a dark blue stripe edged in red during the battle of Chapultepec, so it couldn't have come from there. The first true red trouser stripes for officers and noncommissioned officers were added to the uniforms in 1892, but while the change may not have been made to honor the fallen at Chapultepec, the Corps now pledges the stripe to all of its fallen – regardless of the blood stripe's origin.

The stripe on this rifles wrist has no end, signifying that may we never forget those who gave everything for this country. The “91” is in the old style standing for tradition, and is silver, covered in a pure gold wash that stands for devotion and service to country. It is tradition on the Kentucky Rifles that a silver inlay be on the wrist where it would be covered by the rifleman's hand as he would be in the act of shooting to remind him that this rifle and he were what stood for safety between his family and danger.

