

“LORE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE WARRANT OFFICER CORPS”

The Judge Advocate Warrant Officers *manage administrative aspects of the delivery of total legal services to the Department of the Army and its members. They provide technical advice and assistance to judge advocates, DA civilian attorneys, commanders and staff, and enlisted and civilian legal support personnel in all areas of legal administration.*¹ The history of the Judge Advocate Warrant Officer is marked by continual changes over the past 40 years. The origin of the Judge Advocate Warrant Officer is still unclear, but the history of the Warrant Officer Corps has been documented over the years and gives insight to the creation of the Judge Advocate Warrant Officer. This paper is an attempt to document the history of the Judge Advocate Warrant Officer from its beginning to the present. It is not an attempt to document the history of the Warrant Officer Corps. It may jump around, but it is needed to understand where the need arose to create the Legal Administrator MOS. Research was conducted at The Judge Advocate General's School Law Library and through documents obtained from our Branch Manager, CW4 Michael Lanoue. Telephonic interviews were conducted with retired Judge Advocate Warrant Officer who served on Active duty between 1940 and 1996. Their names will appear as footnotes.

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¹ DA PAM 600-11, italics added for emphasis and direct quotation.

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Warrant Officers have been around since 1918, where they served with the Army Mine Planter Service, a branch of the Coast Artillery Corps. Three grades were created, masters, first mates, and second mates. Although, the real origin of the Warrant Officer CORPS was the Act of 1920 which authorized appointment of Warrant Officer in clerical, administrative, and band leading activities, but with limited authorizations.

In June 1930, a letter was dispatch from the Office of The Judge Advocate General to all subordinate Staff Judge Advocate offices. It addressed the need for specific warrant officer's to be detailed to the Judge Advocate Department due to the incompetent clerical staff supporting such offices. One response to the letter stated, “it is my belief that, in order to have competent clerks and stenographers for the various staff judge advocates, it will be necessary to create a *special force* for the J.A.G.D., it should not only include an enlisted force, but also warrant officers.”² Another response from the Judge Advocate from Second Corps Area, who states, “In my opinion the present arrangement is indefensible, unbusiness like and unsatisfactory and I have been amazed to think that no efforts seem to have been made to correct it heretofore.”³ The concern for all Judge Avocates was the current proposal to downsize the Warrant Officer Corps.

² Letter, dated June 30, 1930, HQ, First Division, Office of the Division Judge Advocate, Fort Hamilton, New York, signed H.A. Auer, SJA. Italics added for emphasis.

³ Letter, dated July 1, 1930, HQ, Second Corps Area, Office of the Judge Advocate, Governors Island, New York, signed E. C. Abbot, Lt. Col, J.A.G.D., Judge Advocate.

On April 22, 1936, a bill to increase the authorized strength of the Warrant Officer Corps was presented to the Military Affairs Committee, House of Representatives. The War Department justified this proposal by stating, "For the future then, the grade (Warrant Officer) provides a suitable reward for outstanding noncommissioned officers, who are too old to be commissioned and who otherwise could look forward to no further advancement".⁴

The Act of 1941 was the most significant legislation since that which originally authorized the rank of Warrant Officer. Two grades, Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) and Warrant Officer Junior Grade (WOJG) were created.⁵ In 1942, a competitive examination was held and temporary appointments were effected in approximately 40 occupational areas. This was the beginning of what we know as the Warrant Officer today. Early in 1946, the 40 Warrant Officer occupational areas were incorporated into the same MOS structure as that used for commissioned officers.⁶

Beginning in 1948, in order to provide incentive for enlisted personnel in connection with the career guidance program, a series of competitive examinations were held to appoint, or select for appointment, approximately 6,000 Regular Army Warrant Officer personnel. Appointments were made in approximately 47 MOS's and in 4 special (classified) areas which were identified in alphabetical sequence. In 1949 under that same program, selections included 1500 for appointment as Unit Administrators or Administrative Technicians.

⁴ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personal Operations, 18 November 1966, p23.

⁵ id, p23

⁶ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personnel Operations, 18 November 1966, pg 25.

One of these appointees was Lieutenant Colonel retired Worth Barker. Worth was drafted during World War II and served in Germany where he attained the rank of Master Sergeant prior to being wounded in action. He was discharged, but reentered the Army in 1946 in Alaska and within a year was promoted to Sergeant Major. With no further progression in the enlisted arena, he interviewed for a Warrant Officer position at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate in Alaska. The position was for an Administrative Technician. He was accepted and from then on, he worked in the Staff Judge Advocate offices around the United States until his retirement in 1971. He was awarded the Legion of Merit (LOM) as a Chief Warrant Officer Four, but due to his Reserve Commission from World War II, he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.⁷

Even before Worth's appointment, there are documents to support that Staff Judge Advocate offices as far back as 1928 had authorized Administrative Technician. On 14 April 1942, pursuant to Article of War 50 1/2, the President of the United States, in a letter to the Secretary of War directed The Judge Advocate General to establish at such time in the future as the Secretary of War deemed advisable, a branch of his office, under an Assistant Judge Advocate General, and a Board of Review therein, with the United States Armed Forces in the British Isles.⁸ The office was created and the workload continuously increase along with the need for more personnel. On 11 June 1943, the table of organization authorized 8 additional officers and 1 warrant officer. By 1945,

⁷ Information was obtained by a telephonic interview with LTC(R) Worth Barker.

⁸ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personnel Operation, 18 November 1966, p 132.

there were two warrant officers assigned and the office had requisitioned another additional warrant officer.⁹

In Southeast Asia in 1948-49 during the Judge Advocate Conference in Tokyo, Japan, a warrant officer is listed as assigned to the General Headquarters, Far East Command.¹⁰ In 1949, two warrant officers are present during the conference.¹¹ During this period the warrant officers are assumed to be Administrative Technicians.

A book "The History of Judge Advocate's Office, U.S. Army Forces Middle Pacific and Predecessor Commands during 1941-1945", actually describes the daily routine in an administrative office:

*"From 7 December 1941 until 14 August 1943 enlisted personnel under the supervision of Chief Warrant Officer Leonard J. Farina, were responsible for the performance of a voluminous amount of clerical work and administrative detail incident to the operation of the Office of the Department Judge Advocate."*¹²

Although these documents show that warrant officers existed within the Staff Judge Advocate office, the organization of the War Department and of the Judge Advocate's General's Department in 1938 only authorized one warrant officer assigned per Infantry Division.¹³

⁹ History Branch Office of the Judge Advocate General with the US Forces European Theater 18 July 1942 - 1 November 1945, p21, 25, and Appendix 18. The Warrant Officers assigned were WOJG George W. Cherry, CWO Ernest A. Dahmen, Jr., CWO Raymond A. Gooch, WOJG Sidney I. Jacques, WOJG Julius C. Renninger, and WOJG Frank C. Wroblewski.

¹⁰ Judge Advocate Conference, Tokyo, Japan, 6-8 April 1948, Office of the Judge Advocate, General Headquarters, Far East Command, APO 500, p vi and 30. CWO S. H. Rogers.

¹¹ id 20-22 October 1949, annex b. In attendance WOJG John A. Tatar, JA Section, General Headquarters, Personnel and CWO William J. Conley, Yokomama Command.

¹² History of Judge Advocate's Office, U.S. Army Forces Middle Pacific and Predecessor Commands, 7 December 1941 - 2 September 1945, p5. Italics used for emphasis.

¹³ Army Extension Courses, Special Text No. 174, Organization of the War Department and of the Judge Advocate General's Department, 1940 Edition, p34, 36 and figure 3.

In April 1952, during the Army Judge Advocate Conference held at the Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville, Virginia, the warrant officers duties were further described, "The Warrant Officer, or Lieutenant serving in lieu thereof, is generally charged with supervision of the office, administrative and personnel matters affecting the section, and the immediate responsibility for the preparation and maintenance of records in General Courts-Martial cases. To be effective, he should not also be required or expected to do court reporting. If warrant officers are to be authorized as court reporters, they should be in addition to the present authorization."¹⁴ Also, it stated that within the Corps office, you will find five officers, one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, two majors, two captains, a warrant officer, and five enlisted men.¹⁵

During the same conference two years later, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur P. Ireland had the following to add, "In the first place, efficient records administration in a judge advocate office is best secured when you are blessed with the services of a competent legal administrative warrant officer or chief clerk¹⁶ who knows where to file paper and can find it after he has done so."¹⁷ This is the first time the term "Legal Administrative Warrant Officer" is used.

The Saturday afternoon newspaper from the Daily Progress in Charlottesville reported the "First Electronic Court Reporting Class Begun Here". It further stated, "The course will not be conducted by the regular faculty of the resident school, but instead will

¹⁴ Army Judge Advocate Conference, 21-25 April 1952, The Judge Advocate General's School, Charlottesville, Virginia, p145

¹⁵ id, p 146.

¹⁶ A Chief Clerk is considered the CLNCO, but could also pertain to the warrant officer.

¹⁷ Army Judge Advocate Conference, 1954, The Judge Advocate General's School, Charlottesville, Virginia, p200.

be taught by officers of the research and planning division of the special projects department of the school. Colonel Nathaniel B. Rieger, Director and Colonel James L. Nolan, Chief of Research will supervise the course, but Chief Warrant Officer James H. Donovan and Dominio Catino will teach the course.”¹⁸ With the court reporting school in Charlottesville, instructors would have to be authorized, assigned and rotated every few years. Between 1951 - 1961, seven CWO were assigned to the Judge Advocate General’s School, Charlottesville, Virginia.¹⁹

It was not until early 1960 that the Legal Administrative Assistant appeared and the current warrant officer grades were authorized.²⁰ On 12 April 1960, DA Circular 611-7 was published and later that year, AR 611-112 arrived. The combinations of both documents contain an introductory section that defined the warrant officer as a separate category of personnel and provided the guidance necessary to define each MOS. I believe that at this time, a transition within the Warrant Officer Corps developed and many Administrative Technicians transferred over to MOS 713A. It was the birth of what we know as the Legal Administrator today. A small corps of warrant officers that would manage Staff Judge Advocate offices around the world, and be feared by many.²¹ AR 310-32, date unknown,²² stated, “*Legal Activity*. One Warrant Officer legal

¹⁸ The Daily Progress, Charlottesville, VA, Tuesday Afternoon, January 11, 1955.

¹⁹ The Judge Advocate General’s School, 1951-1961, p 90, CWO Lee H. Baker, CWO Dominic Catino, CWO Earl S. Crawford, CWO James H. Donovan, CWO Charles M. McPherson, CWO William F. Mayer and CWO Otho F. Price.

²⁰ Authorized were grade WO1 - CW4.

²¹ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personnel Operations, 18 November 1966, p35, 36.

²² Date is to be determined to be sometime in the early 60’s.

administrative assistant position is authorized each headquarters exercising general courts-martial jurisdiction."²³

One of the unique policy that these changes made was that the control branch functions of warrant officers are the responsibility of the Chief, Office of Personnel Operations, Department of the Army, except for those warrant officers in the Judge Advocate General's Corps and Army Medical Service. This policy is still in effect today, and since then both branches have fought many battles to keep it that way.²⁴

The first major contribution to the Judge Advocate General's Corps was the "Blueprint to a Judge Advocate Office." This five volume set, by CWO Robert E. Herrick was created to assist in the daily operations within a Staff Judge Advocate Office. It detailed numerous forms and was generally a "how to" series for the judge advocate's and their support personnel. The initial idea was brought to the attention of The Judge Advocate General, Major General Brannon, who had favorable comments. The first draft was submitted to Brigadier General Laurin L. Williams, Chief, Management Division, The Comptroller of the Army, who had the following comment, "THERE IS NO DOUBT AS TO THE DESIRABILITY OF HAVING SUCH A GUIDE FOR EVERY ELEMENT OF THE ARMY".²⁵ It took many years for the idea to actually be published. In CWO Herrick's acknowledgment statement, he stated, "The idea of what now comprises the 5 Volume Set was conceived by me in 1941. However, any

²³ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personnel Operations, 18 November 1966, p 85.

²⁴ Report Army Warrant Officer Career Program, Office of Personnel Operations, 18 November 1966, p 54.

²⁵ "Blueprint to a Judge Advocate Office", Volume 4, Training Aids & Films, to 29 JAGC Activities, Copyright 1961, CWO Robert E. Herrick.

publication by me or possibility of interesting proper persons or agencies in such a book on any activity had to wait until sufficient experience in military administration had been accumulated and a suitable "sample" available."²⁶ The copyright was not until 1961, it was a project of 10 years and many spare off-duty hours in which to complete the set. The final product in 1961 was published as a 5 volume set, bound in hard cover, with annual pocket parts as is done with the Manual for Courts-Martial.²⁷

Later in 1965, ODCSPER formed a committee to study the Warrant Officer Corps and to recommend the phasing out of certain MOS's. In a memorandum, dated 25 October 1965, LTC Donald L. Shaneyfelt, Chief, Career Management Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General, defended the Legal Administrative Assistant/Technician existence. He stated in his memorandum, "The 713A Warrant Officer is vital to the functioning of a judge advocate office. It has been previously established that the technical-professional duties and activities of the 713A meets, in the strictest sense, the criteria set for in DA Circular 611-7, 12 April 1960, and Army Regulation 611-112 as changed".²⁸ The study recommended that 31 positions for MOS 713A be converted to civilian positions. According to the memorandum, the corps would be unable to provide the support to the TO&E units throughout the world. The civilians could not deploy, and over time, the Staff Judge Advocate offices would possibly lose the technician position. He concludes the memorandum by stating, "It is urged that MOS 713A be retained and

²⁶ id, Acknowledgment

²⁷ "Blueprint to a Judge Advocate Office", Volume 4, Training Aids & Films, to 29 JAGC Activities, Copyright 1961, CWO Robert E. Herrick, Preface, p v.

²⁸ Memorandum dated 25 October 1965, SUBJECT: Study Warrant Officer Requirements.

that as a minimum 57 Warrant Officer positions be authorized.”²⁹ The result of the study showed 57 positions authorized and zero adjusted authorization, again we prevailed.

Throughout 1960 and early 1970, the Legal Administrative Assistant/Technician supported operations in Vietnam. One of many technicians was CWO D. D. Danile. He served at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, 25th Infantry Division, Cu Chi, Republic of Vietnam. In March 1970, a photo was taken in front of the Staff Judge Advocate office.³⁰

Up until the early 1970's, there was no formal training for the Legal Technicians. They were mostly Chief Legal NCO's appointed as Warrant Officers. In the Commandant's Annual Report for 1969-1970, a special extension course provided the first training to the Legal Technicians. The Legal Administrative Technician Course (MOS 713A) provided training to personnel holding or preparing for the MOS of Legal Administrative Technician.³¹

The MOS 713A went through many transitions over the years. Many NCO's were appointed from within the Judge Advocate General's Corps, but there were also some who were appointed from other specialty areas. The Staff Judge Advocate offices were also changing. With no formal training, the warrant officers concentrated their skills to support their respective Staff Judge Advocate office. There was no common standards between the offices and most important, no communication between the fellow warrant officers.³²

²⁹ id, para 3.

³⁰ Photo and name provided by the TJAGSA library archives.

³¹ Commandant's Annual Report, 1969-1970, The Judge Advocate General's School, United States Army, Charlottesville, Virginia, pg 31.

³² Information was obtained through telephonic interview with CW4(R) Ray E. Rauschenberg.

In 1977, Major General Williams, The Assistant Judge Advocate General, created the Court Report/Warrant Officer Program. This program concentrated on recruiting only 71E/Court Reporters for appointment as Warrant Officers and Legal Technicians. One board was conducted and selected five qualified applicants for appointment. Their main function was to supervise enlisted court reporters. There were no additional positions created for this type of warrant officer, yet many worked for as long as three years in this capacity. As no additional positions were created, the program fell through and the five appointees transition back to becoming Legal Technicians.³³

During the 70's, the Women's Army Corps (WAC) was phased out and all soldiers were considered equal. The first woman who applied and was appointed a Legal Technician was Nila Morrison. The second woman appointed was Linda Powell, who is currently a CW3 serving on active duty in the Judge Advocate General's Corps.³⁴

The Legal Technicians went through yet another transition in 1982. There was a proposed change in the job description and to redesignate the warrant officer title from Legal Administrative Technician (713A) to Legal Administrator (550A). It also included the request for cancellation of the Warrant Officer court reporter test program mentioned earlier in a previous paragraph. A memorandum, dated 14 May 1982, stated, "this conforms the title to that in use in the civilian sector, thus providing ready recognition and understanding of an individual's functions and duties by both military personnel and civilians in and out of government service".³⁵

³³ Information obtained through personal interview with CW4 Michael Lanoue, Branch Manager, 550A.

³⁴ id. Information obtained through personal interview with CW3 Linda Powell, LAAWS Office.

³⁵ Memorandum, dated 14 May 1982, signed CW3 Frank E. Maloney, Specialty Manager, 713A

With the onset of automation in the early to mid 80's, the Legal Technician assumed an additional duty. Two warrant officers in cooperation with their Staff Judge Advocate's, requested that automation be added to the duty description as a primary duty and that newly appointed technicians receive proper MOS training. All proposals were approved, and the MOS was redesignated as Legal Administrator (MOS 550A), the MOS now corresponded with the Judge Advocate's (55A); automation was included as a primary duty; and formal training for new warrant officers would start.³⁶

One of the first training programs for the warrant officer technician was the Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in 1982. It was not until 1986-87, when the technical part of the training occurred. Fort Hood was the location for graduates of WOCS who pursued a career as a Legal Administrator. The first annual training for all Legal Administrators was conducted in April at San Rafeal, California. The program of instruction (POI) supported the need for automation training which encompassed 95% of the instruction.³⁷ There was a Legal Administrator's course every year. The first three years it was held in different locations, but in 1990, it received a home at the Judge Advocate General's School, Charlottesville, Virginia, where it has been every since.³⁸

Another war, Operation Desert Shield/Storm proved that legal activities can be supported around the world, at any time, and in any environment. Three Legal

³⁶ Information obtained through a telephonic interview with CW4(R) Joseph F. Egozcue. He and CW4 Michael P. Sebek created a POI for the first training and request the change in automation as a primary duty.

³⁷ Deskbook, 1st Legal Administrators Course, April 1987, San Rafeal, California.

³⁸ Information obtained through a personal interview with CW4 Don Hughes, Instructor, TJAGSA.

Administrators supported Staff Judge Advocate offices in the combat theater for over six months.³⁹

In 1996, a significant change occurred in the Legal Administrators initial training when the training moved from Fort Hood, to the Judge Advocate General's School. The course is six weeks in duration and finishes with the annual Legal Administrator's Course. The curriculum includes, two weeks of automation training and four weeks of office and personnel management. The instruction is given by senior Legal Administrators, selected attorney's and civilian personnel.

Over the years, the legal warrant officer has developed into a corps like no other. The bond between classmates and fellow Warrant Officers is unbreakable and everlasting. The continuous flow of information from one to the other is more valuable than the internet, even though it is used as a means to send and receive that valuable information. It is a small group of highly skilled professionals who work together as one to support the mission of The Judge Advocate General's Corps.

This paper is an ongoing project to ascertain the true origin of the Judge Advocate Warrant Officer. To conduct this research and to see where we have been, impresses upon me the strong impact we have had over the last sixty years. The expertise and professionalism shown of not only the present Legal Administrators, but the previous Administrative Technicians from the 30's and 40's, is the true sign of who we are today. Their tireless effort to support their Commanders and SJA's and to instilled in all, the need for warrant officers in the legal arena. We, as Legal Administrators should

³⁹ CW4 Charlie Poulton, CW2 Dennis Tyree and the LA at 2d Cav, Fort Hood, Tx, served as Legal Administrators in Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

appreciated the dedication and sacrifice of our predecessors. We should all be proud to serve as Legal Administrators in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, and understand our history to provide the best opportunity for our successors.

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3d WOBC, Class 1996

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