

MAGYAR FRONT



Vol. XXI, No. 4

FALL 2019



A MAGYAR FRONT EXCLUSIVE:
FRONTLINE FIGHTERS'
ASSOCIATION VEXILLOLOGY
FEATURING THE ONLY KNOWN EXAMPLE OF
THE REGULATION WARTIME FLAG

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL
HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY PRESERVATION SOCIETY
www.NewFront.ca



**MAGYAR FRONT
VOLUME XXI, ISSUE 4
FALL 2019**

Published quarterly by
Peter Czink, Editor-Designer

The New Front:
(International Hungarian Military
History Preservation Society)

*"To strive, to seek, to find,
and not to yield."*

Peter Czink
Founder/President

Lorraine Weideman
Vice-President, Webmaster

Péter v. Laborc
Vice-President, Hungary

John Keir
Vice-President, United Kingdom

George Hennessy
Vice-President, Australia

Manfred Winter
Vice-President, Austria

Dr. Gergely Pál Sallay
Historical Consultant, Correspondent

PO Box 74527 Kitsilano PO
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6K 4P4 Canada

czink@shaw.ca
www.NewFront.ca

©2019 All rights reserved

Membership in the
International Hungarian Military History
Preservation Society is \$40.00 annually,
and includes the *Magyar Front*.

The original *Magyar Front* was the
weekly newspaper of the Frontline
Fighter's Association, and was
published from the early 1930s until
the end of the Second World War.

A note from the Editor

For me, this issue of the *Magyar Front* has been one of the most challenging, and personally most poignant. Here we have a documentation of not just two rare flags – (both are from the same Frontline Fighters' Association chapter and are complete with their flag ribbons and flagpole top), the artifacts also vividly represent an significant historical and cultural aspects of number of personalities.

The way in which I was able to purchase them for my collection was convoluted, somewhat mysterious, and amusing – but that story will have to wait for my memoirs. Their condition ranged from poor to disintegrated and I spent about a year working to conserve and partially restore them. Photographing them presented a further challenge (as anyone who has tried to take print-worthy pictures of old flags will attest to), however, after a lot of hard work and experimentation Lorraine Weideman produced some stunning images.

The two flags featured on these pages are particularly significant. Chapters of the Frontline Fighters' Association were spread across Hungary, some larger than others, and with varying budgets. While the association was in its infancy, flags (one of the most important accoutrements of every chapter) were designed and produced according to local budget and fancy, and there was little standardization. The Kispest (today the XIX District of Budapest) Chapter seems to have been keen on keeping with military traditions and precedent – their first flag is quite traditional and is a design that some other chapters also adopted at that time. Their second flag, however, is the regulation type which was officially meant to standardize the organization's chapter flags. As far as known records go, this is the only design that was endorsed by the organization, and was most likely prompted as a wartime gesture of assimilation with the Hungarian armed forces.

As usual, Péter v. Laborc has helped me every step of the way, and I was privileged to receive generous guidance from Dr. Maj. Tamás Baczoni and Dr. Gergely Sallay of the Hungarian Military History Institute and Museum, as well as from the curator of the flag collection Ferenc Bálint.

P.Cz.

To Commemorate 20 Years of Publication: Our New Magyar Front Lapel Pin

Available in bright gold (left) and antique gold (right).

The bright gold version can be displayed on the ribbon of the IHMHPs
2014-2018 Commemorative Cross (middle). Shown actual size.



\$7.50



\$10.00



\$7.50

IHMHPs 2014-2018 COMMEMORATIVE BADGE
(Right) Available by donation* (any amount is appreciated).



Embroidered insignia
(Left) \$5.00* each



2008-2018 Badge
(Left) \$10.00* each

*Donations and payments can be made via Paypal (czink@shaw.ca). Postage not included.

The Flags of the Kispest Chapter of the Frontline Fighters' Association

by Peter Czink

Photography by Lorraine Weideman

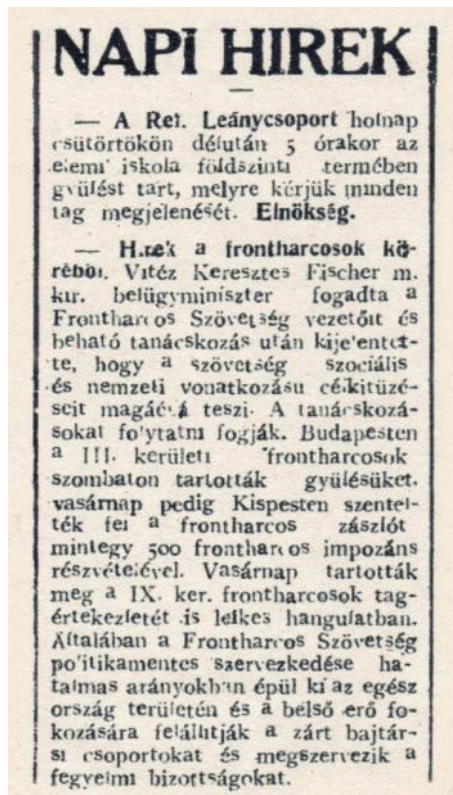
Kispest - literally "Little Pest" was a thriving village on the border of Pest, which later became the XIX District of Budapest.

The first, or pre-war flag of the Hungarian Frontline Fighters' Association's Kispest Chapter was consecrated in front of five-hundred veterans on Sunday, September 20th, 1931. Its oldest gold-bullion 18cm wide embroidered ribbon (below) features *Becsülettel a Hazáért!* (With Honour for the Homeland!) and the date of the flag's consecration. Also embroidered is the name of the widow of Kálmán Varjú (traditionally prominent ladies and other groups would present flag ribbons as a show of support). Mrs. Varjú was married to one of Kispest's most prominent citizens, and she would have most likely been the "flag mother" – a kind of godmother of the chapter's flag.

Kálmán Varjú (1860-1924) was known as "Kispest's greatest local patriot." In 1882 he joined the Imperial and Royal 13th Hussar Regiment, and later he became a restaurateur who also worked as municipal representative and treasurer over a period that spanned thirty-six years. He played a key role in the building up of Kispest and was "one of the driving forces behind the construction of the Catholic Church and Casino, as well as the Kossuth Statue." He married Terézia Szabó (1869-1938) in 1887, and they had seven children.

The flag is 60cm in height and its overall length (not including the tassel) is 85cm. Both sides are the same, made from red, white, and green silk with a linen inner lining. Embroidered in gold bullion thread in the upper red third is *Kispesti Frontharcosok* (The Frontline Fighters of Kispest), and a large Frontline Fighters' Association insignia is applied to the centre of the flag with details picked out in gold and silver bullion, coloured thread and gold soutache braid. Gold bullion fringe runs around the flag with the exception of the hoist-end which has four brass rings for attachment to the flagpole. The swallowtail fly ends in two gold bullion tassels.

Right: A clipping from the September 24th, 1931 edition of *Nyírvidék* mentioning the consecration of the Kispest Chapter flag.



CZINK
COLLECTION



CZINK
COLLECTION

The pre-war Frontline Fighters' Association Kispest Chapter flag was made in a military swallowtail style.

The red, white, and green sections are separate pieces of silk, and the gold bullion *Kispesti Fronttharcosok* is hand embroidered through a linen backing.



CZINK
COLLECTION

The insignia has a white background which was used until 1939 when the official colour was changed to green.

The helmet and cross are made from plain and patterned silks, while the rest consists of embroidered and applied elements highlighted in soutache braid.



Above: Detail of a photograph published in the 1930s Frontline Fighters' Association almanac *Frontharcos Eszme Szolgálatában* (In the Service of Frontline Fighters' Ideals).

Regent Horthy's wife ties a ribbon to a flag held by association leader Count József v. Takách-Tolvay.

In the background can be seen the same type of swallowtail tricolour flag (in this case not that of the Kispest Chapter), an indication that this was a standard design. A very curious decorative metal bracket, attached to the flagpole, holds the length of the flag outward - a design that would have been more suitable for a rectangular flag. The photo is captioned from 1932, and interestingly, none of the members (including their leader) wears what became the organization's most famous piece of headgear - the felt helmet.

The ribbon pictured at left most likely belonged to the Kispest Chapter's first flag. Hand embroidered in yellow thread is a very touching message: *A Háború Kispesti Bénái - Az Ép Hősöknek* (For the Able Bodied Heroes from the War-Disabled of Kispest). Gold bullion fringe is sewn to each end.

Right: Another early ribbon with yellow hand embroidery and gold bullion fringe was presented by the Ötvös family from Transylvania. The slogan reads: *Imádkozunk és Dolgozunk a Hazáért* (We Pray and Work for the Homeland).

CZINK
COLLECTION

CZINK
COLLECTION

Magyar Tűzharcos Szövetség helyi alakulatainak előíráss kivonulási zászlója.

A zászló alakja: Rákóczi zászló.

Alapszíne: sötétzöld.

Anyaga: lehet I/a. minőségű gyapjú merino, vagy egybeszővött ripszelyem vagy egybeszővött tiszta hernyóselyem grossrainból.

Mérete: szélessége 70 cm, felső szélhosszúsága 115 cm, alsó szélhosszúsága 100 cm, középhosszúsága a bevágásnál 73 cm, bevágás az alsószéltől 29 cm.

A zászló mindkét oldalának 3 szélén piros-fehér-zöld színű pártázatot 5 cm nagyságban. A zászló három szélén 5 cm széles aranyrojttal szegélyezve és hozzá két bojt, azonos anyagból.

A zászló egyik oldalán a közepén a magyar címer (a négy folyó, hármashalom, apostoli kereszt, szent Korona) az címer eredeti színében. Ugyanott felirat arany vagy sárga hímzéssel félkörben a címer fölött: »ISTENÉRT — HAZÁÉRT — BAJTÁRSAINKÉRT« a címer alatt: »HCSÉG-GEL — MINDHALÁLIG.«

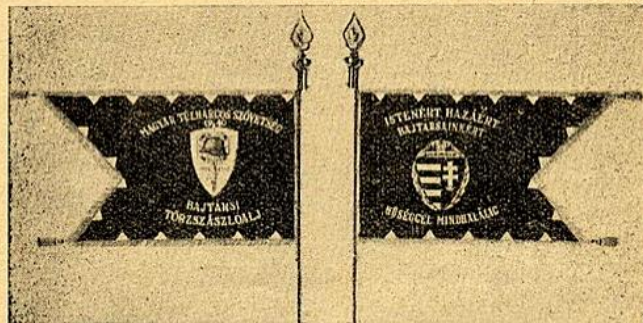
A zászló másik oldalán közepén tűzharcos jelvény eredeti színezésben hímezve vagy rávarrva. Ugyanott arany vagy sárga selyemhímzéssel felirat félkörben a jelvény fölött: »MAGYAR TŰZHARCOS SZÖVETSÉG 1940« (a megalakulás éve); a jelvény alatt felirat félkörben: (a helyi alakulat neve) »FŐCSOPORTJA« vagy »CSOPORTJA«. Például: »MAGYAR TŰZHARCOS SZÖVETSÉG 1940« KOLOZSVARI FŐCSOPORTJA.«

Zászlórúd: teljes hossza (beleértve a csücsdíszítést és az alsó rézhüvelyt) 2 méter 92 cm, melyből a csücsdísz 28 cm, az alsó réztok 10 cm. A rúd vastagsága alul 4 cm,

mely felfelé arányosan vékonyodik. A rúd színe zöld, fényezett. A csücsdíszbe a Tűzharcos Szövetségnek az e célra készített zöld, nagy, kettős zománccjelvénye helyezendő be.

Szalag: aszerint, amelyet adományoznak.

A zászlórúd sárgaréz leszenelőkészülékkel készítenendő. Viaszosvászon áthúzó tok.



Megjegyzés: Az Országos Elnökség a fent megadott előíráss méretű zászlónál nagyobb méretű zászló készíttetését sem ellenzi, de figyelmezteti a helyi alakulatokat, hogy egy nagyobb zászló kezelése különösen kivonuláskor, igen nagy nehézségeket okoz.

Left and above:
The pages from the 1942 Frontline Fighters' Association yearbook describing the regulation chapter flag.

Below:
A procession on András Áchim Street viewed from the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Kispest. Chapter members lead the way carrying their wartime flag.

COURTESY OF FORTEPAN.HU 100202



The “Wartime” Flag

The only known official regulations for the Frontline Fighters’ Association chapter flag can be found in the 1942 edition of their yearbook (*Frontharcos Évkönyv*). These guidelines may have been published earlier in their newspaper, the *Magyar Front*, however, the 1938, 1939, and 1941 yearbooks in my collection don’t include any mention of it. A number of aspects of the organization changed with the outbreak of World War II and it is likely that standardizing the chapter flags was part of a program to show solidarity with the regular armed forces and to project the association’s ability to maintain tradition and to adhere to military precedent.

The regulations call for the flag’s main colour to be dark green. Suggestions for its material were wool or ribbed, woven, or plain genuine silk. The recommended width was 70cm; the upper length 115cm, and the lower length 100cm (larger flags could be made, however, if they become too large, the regulations warn that they might become too heavy to carry for long periods of time). Both sides should have 5cm red, white, and green “wolf’s teeth” and gold fringe along all sides except the hoist edge, and two gold tassels should finish the swallowtails.

The obverse was required to feature the Hungarian coat of arms in its proper colours, and above it, in gold or yellow embroidery should be written in a semi-circle: *Istenért – Hazáért – Bajtársainkért* (For God – For the Homeland – For Our Comrades). Below the coat of arms: *Hűséggel – Mindhalálig* (With Loyalty – Until Death).

The reverse was to have the Frontline Fighters’ Association insignia embroidered or applied. Above it: *Magyar Tűzharcos Szövetség* (Hungarian Frontline Fighters’ Association) and the year the chapter was established. Under the insignia should be *Főcsoport* or *Csoport* and the location of the chapter. The term *csoport* means chapter, while *főcsoport* literally means “main chapter.” I usually use the term “headquarters chapter” for *főcsoport* when there would have been more than one chapter in a town or city.

The flagpole was to be 2.92m in length with a 28cm flagpole top. The pole should be 4cm in diameter and painted gloss green. A specially made, green enamelled and double-sided Frontline Fighters’ Association insignia should be in the centre of the flagpole top, and finally, the regulations prescribe a waxed canvas cover for the rolled-up flag when not in use.

The second, or wartime flag of the Kispest Headquarters Chapter is quite faithful to the regulations. It is made of ribbed silk - 67cm wide. The upper length is 110cm and the lower is 97cm. The writing on both sides is chain stitched in yellow thread edged with gold bullion, and on the obverse the Hungarian coat of arms is hand embroidered in satin, chain, and chenille stitching. The reverse bears the association’s insignia made just like the coat of arms.

The wording below the insignia on the obverse is somewhat of a variation. The date (1942) appears below the insignia, and seems to be a better fit than what was suggested. We know that the Kispest Chapter was formed a

decade earlier, so in this case 1942 most probably refers to the year this flag was consecrated. *Kispesti Főcsoport* is as it should be, however, there is the addition of *Törzs Század* (Staff Company) embroidered below it. It would be unlikely that the Kispest Chapter would have had other flags representing it, and I believe that the Kispest Headquarters Chapter’s Staff Company was tasked with taking part in parades and events where the chapter’s flag was needed. It makes sense that a large chapter would have a designated group of veterans whose role it was to regularly attend parades (a very important part of Hungarian life and culture at that time). On pages 10 and 11 we can see the what I believe to be the Staff Company assembling for a group photo, and every man wears the bronze Parade Badge (for attending 50 parade events) and some wear both the bronze and silver (for 100 parades) badges.

The overall length of the flagpole top is 39cm (about 11cm of which is a hollow cylinder made to accommodate the pole). Around that cylinder is a brass ring for the attachment of the flagpole ribbons and a threaded bolt and wing nut secures the top to the pole. A traditional oak and laurel wreath surrounds a double-sided green enamelled Frontline Fighters’ Association insignia which measures 3.4cm x 5.2cm.

Eight more flag ribbons have been preserved with this flag – all of which had been specifically made for the Kispest Chapter.

Below: The two versions of the Parade Badge and certificate named to a man in the Kispest Chapter.



SZÜCS COLLECTION

*Tűzharcos Szövetség
Kispesti Főcsoport 10 Éves
Jubiláris Vezetősége
1942*

(Frontline Fighters' Association Kispest headquarters Chapter Leadership 10 Year Jubilee 1942)

This original 21.4cm x 29.3cm tableau was produced to commemorate the leadership of the Kispest Chapter of the Hungarian Frontline Fighters' Association and the chapter's ten year jubilee in 1942.

Here we meet with some of the people connected with the flag, ribbons, and photographs featured in this issue of the *Magyar Front*:

Chapter President
Béla v. Ózdy

Co-President
József Gerse

I Vice-President
Ferenc Tárnok

Staff Leader
József Fa

Beverage Manager
István Brunecz

Music manager
Ferenc Pestl

Committee Member
Aladár Levandovszky

Among the representatives are treasurers, inspectors, auditors, sergeants-at-arms, secretaries, beverage managers, music managers, storemen, and a caretaker.



EGYENESÍTŐ HŐCSOPORT 10. ÉVES JUBILÁRIS VEZETŐSÉGE. 1942.



BOK FERENC.
I. ELNÖK.



BÁTASZÉKI HENRIK.
II. ALELNÖK.



KÁLMÁNCHÉJ ERŐ
II. PÉNZTÁROS.



MÉSZÁROS JÁNOS.
ELLENŐR.



KOZMA MIHÁLY.
A SZÁMVIZSGÁLÓ.



VITÉZ GÁL GYULA.
A SZÁMVIZSGÁLÓ.



VITÉZ ÖZDY BÉLA.
-ELNÖK-



FA JÓZSEF.
TÖRZS VEZETŐ.



BÁNHIDI OTTÓ.
II. TITKÁR.



PÁLFY ÁRPÁD.
II. HÁZTÁRS.



HORVÁTH FERENC.
VÁL.TAG.



SZABÓ SÁNDOR.
BORGAZDA.



VITÉZ GERSE JÓZSEF.
TÁRSELNŐ



TAKÁCS ISTVÁN.
VÁL.TAG.



VOIGTLÄNDER RÓBERT.
VÁL.TAG.



PESTL FERENC.
ZENEÜGYI ELŐADÓ.



HIDASÍ ALAJOS.
VÁL.TAG.



TORBÍK SÁNDOR.
P.VÁL.TAG.



BRUNECZ ISTVÁN.
BORGAZDA.



VITÉZ BOTKÁZI ISTVÁN.
I. BORGAZDA.



LAJTOS JÁNOS.
BORGAZDA.



BÁRDIÁN MIHÁLY.
SZERTÁROS.



TÓTH GYÖRGY.
P.VÁL.TAG.





CZINK
COLLECTION

The red, white, and green triangles, known as “wolf’s teeth” are chenille embroidered and edged in fine gold bullion cord.

The coat of arms is richly embroidered and incorporates chenille stitching in the central shield.

CZINK COLLECTION



Chapter members, most probably belonging to the Staff Company, gathering for a group photograph in front of the Kispest Post Office (still in use today in Budapest’s XIX District, at 22 Templom Square).



The Frontline Fighters' Association badge is worked in chenille and satin-stitch embroidery.

The central shield's official colour changed from white to apple green in 1939.

The body of the flag is sturdy ribbed silk .

CZINK
COLLECTION

CZINK COLLECTION



This photo (taken at the same event as that on the facing page) shows Chapter Co-President József v. Gerse at the head of the group (left) while behind him stands committee member and flag bearer Aladár Levandovszky.



The Ribbons of the Wartime Flag

The 18cm wide tricolour ribbon pictured at far left was donated by the wife of Chapter President Béla v. Ózdy, and is hand embroidered in yellow cotton thread with the slogan: *Vér és a kard jogán* (By Right of Blood and Sword). The ends are finished in gold bullion fringe.

At left, a presentation from the Frontline Fighters of the BSzKRt (*Budapest Székesfővárosi Közlekedési Részvénytársaság*, or Budapest Transport Company) and the BHÉV (*Budapest Helyiérdekű Vasút*, or Budapest Local Interest Railway) - a 10cm wide ribbon hand embroidered in yellow with matching fringe. (See the Fall 2016 issue of the *Magyar Front* for the first mention of our discovery of this very obscure sub-group of the Frontline Fighters' Association.)

The six ribbons on the facing page are all from 9cm to 10cm in width, hand embroidered in yellow thread, and finished with gold bullion fringe.

The red one is from the wife of Vice-President Ferenc Tárnok embroidered with *Istenért* (For the Lord).

The pale green ribbon is from the wife of Staff Company Leader József Fa embroidered with *Igazságért* (For Truth).

The rose coloured ribbon features *Győzelemért* (For Victory) and is from the wife of the chapter's Beverage Manager István Brunecz.

Hűséggel (With Loyalty) is embroidered on the lavender ribbon given by the wife of József Bozóti.

Mrs. M. Bácsmadarasi provided the pale blue ribbon with *Feltámadásért* (For Resurrection).

And lastly, the emerald green ribbon is decorated with *Újabb Ezeréért* (For the new Millennium) and was donated by the wife of the chapter's Music Manager Ferenc Pestl.

CZINK
COLLECTION



TARNOK FERENCZNE

JSTENERT

FA JOZSEFNE

AGAZSAGEERT

BRUNECZ J-NE

GYOZLEMERERT

BOZOTI J-NE

HUSEGGEL

BACSMADARASI M-NE

FELJAMADASEERT

PESTI FERENCNE

IJABB EZERVEERT

The Kispest
Chapter
flagpole top



Above: 24cm wide wreath ribbon - *A Kispesti Vitézek, Hadirokkantak, és Frontharcosok - A Szabadság Apostolainak* (The [members of the Order of the] Valliant, War Disabled, and the Frontline Fighters of Kispest - Our Apostles of Freedom) is painted in gold, along with gold stamps identifying the maker: Kapari István Virágkereskedése, Kispest, Üllői út 117.



Above: Members of the Kispest Chapter with a war memorial wreath and ribbon. Below: The Chapter on parade passing a Frontline Fighters' Association band. Aladár Levandovszky carries the chapter flag in both photographs.



MILITARY 100 TREASURES

Selected Artefacts
from the Hungarian
Military History Institute
and Museum in
Its Centenary Year

HADTÖRTÉNETI
1918-2018

100

