



0. THE RAID - Story Preface

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In what is believed to be the only photo of “boots on the ground”—on October 3, 1992—we see U.S. Army Rangers, participating in “Operation Gothic Serpent,” under fire in the Battle of Mogadishu. U.S. Army Rangers photo.

Four Black Hawks and 120 men set out on a mission they *thought* would take less than an hour:

- Delta Force commandos would capture Aidid's lieutenants;
- Rangers would secure the perimeter;
- Hovering Black Hawks would provide cover; and
- The captured Somalis would be taken back to base in a Humvee convoy.

Looking at the target area from the south, it is hard to even see the cross streets. They are narrow and especially confusing if they're barricaded. On this day, many were barricaded.

America's elite forces had participated in six prior operations since their arrival in Mog. Three had been at night; three had been in daylight. This mission, on October 3, was in daylight.

According to Mike Goodale, the men went in thinking they were invincible. That's what soldiers are supposed to think. But this mission wasn't exactly humanitarian. It was more like nation-building since U.S. troops were being sent in to capture Aidid's top men.

This time the Somalis, using antiquated guns and rocket-propelled grenades, would resist the U.S. soldiers.

Goodale was flying to the target scene aboard a Black Hawk dubbed "Super 64," piloted by Mike Durant. So were Jamie Smith and Raymond Frank. Goodale made it out alive. Smith and Frank did not.

Everyone needed to descend 60-70 feet, on a rope, from the chopper to the street below. Somali crowds were already gathering in the vicinity. As he made his way down the rope, Ranger Shawn Nelson hoped the crowds wouldn't shoot at him until he was on the street.

For some reason, Todd Blackburn missed the rope altogether and fell the entire distance. He landed on his back, injured but alive.

Cliff Wolcott, at the controls of his "Super 61," was an experienced Black Hawk pilot. But this was his last mission. A Somali, armed with an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade), fired at the chopper and hit it in a vulnerable place.

Everyone was shocked when "61" went down:

*We got a Black Hawk going down!!*

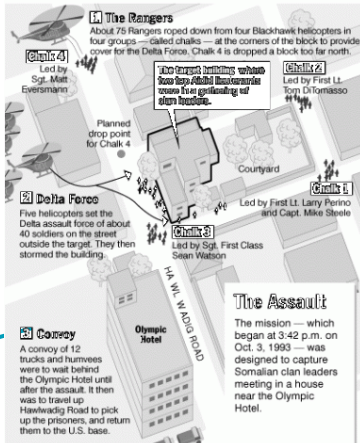
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-RAID-Black-Hawk-Down>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-RAID-Black-Hawk-Down>

## Media Stream



### Ranger and Delta Force Locations in the Assault

Image online, courtesy the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, via the Campbell University website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Ranger-and-Delta-Force-Locations-in-the-Assault>



### Shawn Nelson

Image, U.S. Army handout.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Shawn-Nelson>



### Cliff Wolcott, Black Hawk "Super 61"

Photo, U.S. Army.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Cliff-Wolcott-Black-Hawk-Super-61->



### Black Hawk Down - Pentagon Footage of Raid

Historical footage released by the Department of Defense.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Black-Hawk-Down-Pentagon-Footage-of-Raid>