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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
G.2 (Intelligence) Division

RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE
GERMAN FORCES
INSIGNIA AND BADGES OF RANK

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GENERAL NOTE ON RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE GERMAN ARMY

In the beginning of 1942 the Germans began to form out of the large body of Russian prisoners at their disposal independent and self-contained units that were originally intended to do security duties behind the front lines. The Germans met with a good deal of success in their programme of "recruiting" troops from the Russian P/W camps and at the same time the nature of the Russian campaign as well as their critical manpower problem caused the Germans to use elements of these new foreign units as combat troops. All the Russian units in the German forces were formed and trained under the auspices of the General-Gouvernement in Poland and L. of C. Divisions in the Polish rear area.

In December, 1942, the office of a General of Eastern Troops was established. He was to be the Inspector General of all Russian troops recruited for service with the German Army. The General of Eastern Troops and his staff are directly responsible to the High Command of the Army. They control on the one hand all National Legions of Russian troops and on the other hand the Russian Armies of Liberation and the Cossack units. Whatever the theoretical distinction implied by these titles may be, in effect 90 per cent. of the Russians are ex-P/W and are more or less equally "volunteers." 140,000 men, the majority of the Russian units serving in the German Army, are now in the West.

The National Legions are the Turkestanian Legion, the Volga-Tartar Legion, the North Caucasian Legion, the Aserbaijani Legion, the Armenian Legion, the Georgian Legion and the Mountain Caucasian Legion. Each legion has its own staff and commanding officer and controls a varying number of independent battalions and regiments. The Armies of Liberation are the Russian Army of Liberation, the Ukrainian Army of Liberation and the Don, Kuban and Terek Cossack units. Each of these has its own staff and commanding officer. They control varying numbers of independent battalions and regiments. In two or three cases it is known that divisions have been formed from a mixture of all the above-mentioned types of units.

The Russian battalion is composed of six companies. Each company is 200 men strong, thus giving the battalion a nominal strength of 1,000-1,200 troops.* The battalion commanders are German officers in most cases, some of the company commanders are German as well. However, in most cases an effort has been made to have native Russian company commanders and N.C.O.s. Many of the Russian officers are Russian *emigres*, some of them of the Paris taxi driver variety.

The battalions are equipped as infantry battalions and use captured Russian weapons to a large extent. The Cossack units are mounted or equipped with bicycles and are probably used for reconnaissance. The heavy machine gun used most frequently by the Russian units is the Russian "Maxim" (7.62 mm.). They use a Stokes Brandt type mortar. Their rifles are of German, Russian and French origin. The 25 mm. French A.Tk. gun, the 37 mm. and 50 mm. German A.Tk. guns are found on horse-drawn as well as truck-drawn mountings. Some of the battalions are reported to have light infantry gun companies. On the whole their allotment of small arms is generous, but they are lacking in heavy and motorized weapons. All the transport is horse-drawn.

The shoulder patches reproduced here are worn on the right arm. The badges of rank, shoulder patches and cockades are worn on the regular German Army uniform. The Russian troops serving with German forces as combat troops wear the insignia and badges of rank shown. However, it must be realised that there are in addition to the Russian combat elements a great many Russians and other foreigners employed as volunteer workers (*Hilfsfreiwillige*) by combat units in non-combatant service jobs. These volunteer workers will wear the Germany Army uniform, frequently with an armband reading OST (East). They will not wear insignia of national legions nor have rank, although they are considered Army personnel.

* Where a Russian battalion is incorporated into a German formation it may conform with the organization of a regular German infantry battalion.

INSIGNIA AND BADGES OF RANK OF RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE
GERMAN FORCES

EMBLEMS OF RUSSIAN NATIONALS
(OSTLEGIONEN)

Shoulder Patches

TURKESTAN LEGION



Cockade



Shoulder Patches

TARTAR LEGION



Cockade



Shoulder Patches

ARMENIAN LEGION

GEORGIAN LEGION



Cockade



Cockade



Shoulder Patches

ASERBAIJANIAN
LEGION

MOUNTAINCAUCASIAN
LEGION

NORTHCAUCASIAN
LEGION



Cockade



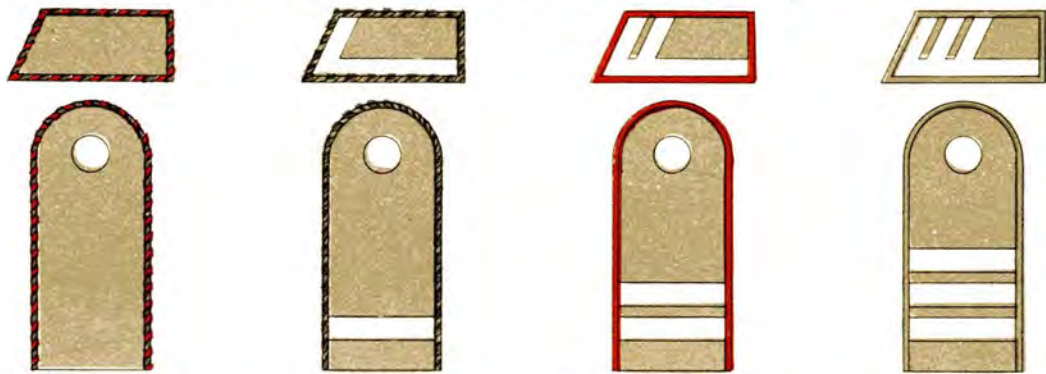
Cockade



INSIGNIA AND BADGES OF RANK OF RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE
GERMAN FORCES

BADGES OF RANK OF RUSSIAN NATIONAL LEGIONS
(OSTLEGIONEN)

Shoulder and Collar Patches (the colour of the piping of all Ranks corresponds in each case to
the colour used in the National Emblem)

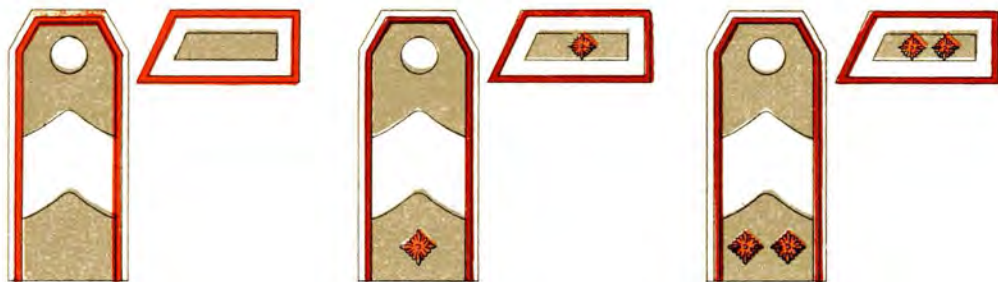


Private in the
Turkestan Legion

Corporal in the
Volga-Tartar Legion

Junior Sergeant in
the North Caucasian
Legion

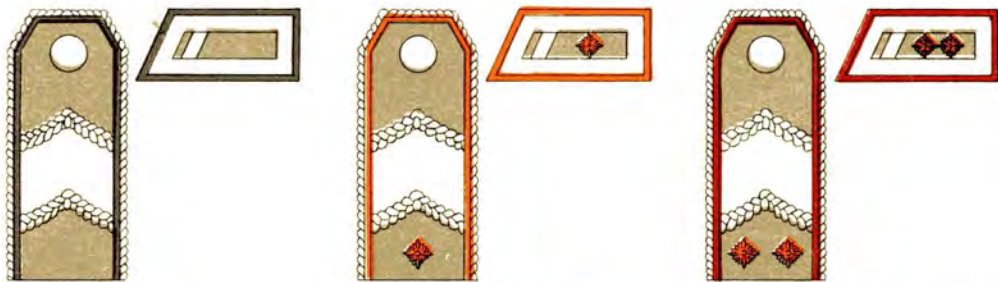
Sergeant in the
Azerbaijan Legion



2nd Lieutenant in the
Armenian Legion

1st Lieutenant in the
Georgian Legion

Captain in the
Georgian Legion



Major in the
Turkestan Legion

Lt.-Colonel in the
Volga-Tartar Legion

Colonel in the
North Caucasian Legion



Major-General in the
Azerbaijan Legion

Lt.-General in the
Armenian Legion

General in the
Georgian Legion

INSIGNIA AND BADGES OF RANK OF RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE
GERMAN FORCES

EMBLEMS AND BADGES OF RANK OF THE
RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN ARMIES OF LIBERATION

RUSSIAN ARMY OF LIBERATION

Shoulder Patches



Cockade



UKRAINIAN ARMY OF LIBERATION

Shoulder Patch



Cockade



BADGES OF RANK OF THE RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN ARMIES OF LIBERATION



Private



Corporal



Junior Sgt.



Sergeant



Second Lt.



Lieutenant



Captain



Major



Lt.-Colonel



Colonel



General

Collar Patches



Officers



Enlisted Men

INSIGNIA AND BADGES OF RANK OF RUSSIAN NATIONALS SERVING IN THE
GERMAN FORCES

EMBLEMS AND BADGES OF RANK OF COSSACK UNITS



National Emblem (HOHEITSABZEICHEN) worn on the right breast of field uniform

Shoulder Patches (worn on left shoulder)



Don Cossacks



Terek Cossacks



Kuban Cossacks

Cockades (worn on front of head-dress)



Don Cossacks



Terek Cossacks



Kuban Cossacks

Collar Patches for all Cossack Units



Enlisted Men



Officers

Badges of Rank



Private (Reiter)



Corporal



Junior Sgt.



Sergeant



Platoon Leader



Company
Officer



Company
Commander



Battalion
Commander

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