

THE GERMAN ARMY 1939–45 (5)

WESTERN FRONT 1943–45



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GERMAN ARMY 1939-45 (5)

WESTERN FRONT 1943-45



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TITLE PAGE ILLUSTRATION: *Füsilier-Bataillon 34*, the reconnaissance unit of *Infanterie-Division 34* in northern Italy, was the only unit serving in the West entitled to wear the bronze 'dragoon eagle' or 'Schwedter-Adler' tradition badge on the front of the cap in memory of the old 1st Brandenburg Dragoons. This Gefreiter surrendering to a British tank unit in May 1945 wears the M1943 field tunic with M1940 collar patches and M1938 dark green shoulder straps and breast eagle. Interestingly, above his M1936 rank chevrons he displays the helmsman's qualification badge awarded to assault boat pilots. (Brian Davis)

Dedication

This book is respectfully dedicated to my late father, War Substantive Lieutenant William Rowland Thomas, Royal Fusiliers, and the late Oberfeldarzt a.D. Dr. Med. Friedrich Hermann, formerly of 198. *Infanterie-Division* and the *Bundeswehr* – two men from whom I have learnt a lot.

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Publisher's Note

Given the nature of the subject, there is inevitably some degree of repetition of e.g. basic uniform information between this title and *Men-at-Arms 330* covering the German Army on the Eastern Front in the same period. To exclude such material from this volume would have denied readers who have not read *MAA 330* information essential for interpreting the illustrations.

For reasons of space we have been unable to repeat basic material in every volume of the sequence. Readers should note that the following tables will be found in the previous titles: *Waffenfarbe* lists appear in the tables in each volume:

MAA 311 The German Army 1939-45 (1) Blitzkrieg

Orders of dress; rank structure; rank insignia

MAA 316 The German Army 1939-45 (2) North Africa & Balkans
Officer candidate ranks; trade badges

MAA 326 The German Army 1939-45 (3) Eastern Front 1941-43
Rank insignia of specialist officers (Sonderführer) and military officials; rank insignia of Eastern Regions

MAA 330 The German Army 1939-45 (4) Eastern Front 1943-45
1942 arm rank insignia; ROA and Cossack rank insignia

Errata: In *MAA 330*, for M1935 other ranks' field cap, read M1934.

Artist's Note

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GERMAN ARMY 1939-45 (5) WESTERN FRONT 1943-45

THE CONTEXT OF THE WESTERN FRONT 1943-1945

The High Command of the Army and Wehrmacht

The German Armed Forces (Wehrmacht) consisted of the Army (Heer), Navy (Kriegsmarine) and Air Force (Luftwaffe) under Chief of the Armed Forces High Command (Chef des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht – OKW) GFM Wilhelm Keitel. The Waffen-SS, officially established in November 1939 under Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, was an independent arm, but its field units operated under Army command. There were also paramilitary units in the Police (Polizei), Border Guards (Zollgrenzschutz), Stormtroopers (SA), National Socialist Motor Corps (NSKK), State Labour Service (RAD), Todt Labour Organization (OT), and from 25 September 1944 the German Home Guard (Deutscher Volkssturm); and these all provided the Army with scratch units to defend western Germany from October 1944¹.

Adolf Hitler, as Führer and head of the German government since 30 January 1933, had appointed himself Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (Oberster Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht) on 4 February 1938 and Chief of the Army High Command (Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres – OKH) on 19 December 1941. Hitler was essentially an armchair strategist who believed that his military experience in the ranks of the infantry during the Great War, combined with his political vision, qualified him as a gifted field commander. Accordingly he increasingly ignored the ineffective Keitel, and bypassed three successive Army Chiefs of Staff – Gen der Inf. (later GenObst) Kurt Zeitzler (24 September 1942 to 21 July 1944); GenObst Heinz Guderian (until 28 March 1945), and Gen der Inf. Hans Krebs – with predictably disastrous results. On 30 April 1945 Hitler committed suicide, and on 1 May Josef Goebbels became prime minister (Reichskanzler), appointing Admiral of the Fleet Karl Dönitz as president before himself committing suicide. On 7 May Dönitz ordered Keitel to sign the unconditional surrender of all German forces to the Western Allies at Rheims, eastern France.

Hitler encouraged rivalry and demarcation disputes in duplicated political and military institutions in order to forestall challenges to his authority. He appointed the OKW to administer France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Italy, leaving eastern Europe and the Balkans to the OKH. This gave Army generals in the West even less power than in the East, a situation compounded by Hitler's determination to marginalise the OKH, especially after the failed Army-inspired 'Bomb Plot' of 20 July 1944.

From 25 April 1945 the OKW Operations Staff under GenObst Alfred



An overladen but determined infantryman trudges through woodland in Belgium, September 1944. He has attached foliage to his helmet, and over his field uniform and equipment he wears his Zeltbahn 31 triangular camouflaged shelter-quarter. He carries a M1943 'Panzerfaust Klein' anti-tank grenade-launcher and a box of warheads as well as his Karabiner 98k rifle and a M1924 stick grenade. (Author's collection)

¹ See inside back cover for listing of other relevant Osprey titles on German uniformed organisations of the Third Reich period.

Jodl nominally took over the military conduct of the war, with Dönitz controlling troops in northern Germany and Luftwaffe GFM Albert Kesselring those in southern Germany, Austria and Northern Italy, thus effectively excluding the OKH from control over its own troops – though given the chaotic conditions of the last couple of weeks of hostilities, this had little practical effect.

The Army was composed of the Field Army (Feldheer) on active service outside Germany; and the Replacement Army (Ersatzheer), from July 1944 under Himmler's SS command, increasingly training replacements for field units in occupied territories. The Army decreased from a peak of 6,550,000 to 5,300,000 by May 1945, with a further 800,000 in the Waffen-SS.

Since 26 October 1940 German Army troops in occupied France – from 27 November 1942 including the former Vichy zone – Belgium and the Netherlands came under Western High Command (Oberbefehlshaber West) in Paris, also called Army Group D (Heeresgruppe D). This command was initially held by GFM Erwin von Witzleben; from 15 March 1942 by GFM Gerd von Rundstedt; from 2 July 1944 until his arrest as a conspirator in the Bomb Plot by GFM Günther von Kluge; from 15 August 1944 by GFM Walter Model; and from 5 September 1944 by Von Rundstedt again. Western High Command controlled Army Groups B and G.

Italy came under the 2nd Air Fleet (Luftflotte 2), later redesignated Southern High Command (Oberbefehlshaber Süd) and from 26 November 1943 Army South-Western High Command, under Luftwaffe GFM Albert Kesselring, controlling Army Group C and, briefly, Army Group B. As the Western and Italian Fronts merged, Western and South-Western High Command were combined on 22 April 1945 as Southern High Command, under Kesselring. The OKW administered the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway directly through the Armed Forces Commands (Wehrmachtbefehlshaber). On 11 November 1944 Netherlands Armed Forces Command became Army Group H; and on 7 April 1945 North-Western High Command, under GenObst Johannes Blaskowitz, and from 15 April 1945 GFM Ernst Busch.

The strategy

Germany's victories from September 1939 to February 1943 had been achieved by experienced generals free to apply 'Blitzkrieg tactics', with concentrations of tanks, motorised infantry and Luftwaffe ground-attack aircraft breaking through weak points in the enemy lines and destroying the enemy's command centres, while 'Decisive Manoeuvre' used infantry to trap the enemy and destroy them in isolated pockets.

Following the fall of France, the decision to postpone the invasion of Great Britain indefinitely, and his self-appointment as supreme field



HIGHT A carefully-posed propaganda photograph intended to reassure the German public that the strong, confident German soldier would successfully resist any Allied invasion. This infantryman wears the M1942 helmet with a foliage net, and the M1935 field tunic with dark green collar bearing standard M1938 patches; he carries late-war green varnished steel 7.92mm link for his section's MG34 or MG42 light machine gun. (Author's collection)

LEFT Although never promoted to Generalfeldmarschall, GenObst Alfred Jodl, Chief of the OKW Operations Staff and the conduit of communication between all field commanders and the Führer, was effectively the most powerful officer in the Wehrmacht. Here he wears the standard M1935 officer's service dress. His service cap has general officer's gold crown and band pipings, buttons and chin cords, and the gilded aluminium eagle and wreath insignia introduced from 16 November 1942. His *feldgrau* tunic, with the collar in dark bluish-green facing cloth, has gold buttons, a gold thread breast eagle, general officer's shoulder boards in gold and silver cord on bright red underlay, and gold on bright red *Alt-Larisch* collar patches. In his button hole he displays the ribbon of the 1914 Iron Cross 2nd Class with the 1939 clasp marking a subsequent World War II award; a similar clasp, with the same significance, is worn on his left breast pocket above the 1914 Iron Cross 1st Class. (ECPA)



commander; Hitler had these tactics discontinued in favour of static defence of fortified lines – essentially the tactics he had observed as a runner at the command post of Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment No.16 on the Western Front during the Great War.

On 23 March 1942 Hitler ordered the OT to build the 'Atlantic Rampart' (*Atlantikwall*), a series of fortified seaport 'fortresses' intended to form a continuous line along the Dutch, Belgian and French Atlantic coasts as far as the Spanish border (and on the Channel Islands). These were connected by concrete coastal artillery positions and pillboxes, tank obstacles, minefields and barbed wire, to prevent the expected Anglo-American seaborne landings and allow German forces to concentrate on the Eastern and North African campaigns. The *Atlantikwall* was guarded by static infantry divisions with some Panzer divisions in mobile reserve; but by June 1944 the fortifications were still incomplete, and the garrisons had been stripped of manpower and tanks to provide replacements for the Eastern Front.

Hitler had reluctantly assigned the 'old warhorse' GFM Gerd von Rundstedt to defend France, Belgium and the Netherlands; but then frustrated this experienced field commander by ignoring his pleas that the Allies would land in Normandy, insisting that they would land at Calais or on the Dutch coast and consequently misdirecting vital reinforcements. Hitler also insisted until May 1945 on maintaining a large garrison in Norway, where he erroneously expected a landing.

In June 1944 the minimal infantry screen fought doggedly to defend the Normandy beaches, but valuable hours and days were lost while his generals attempted to convince a dithering Hitler, remote from the battlefield, to commit armoured reserves against the bridgehead. Thereafter GFM Walter Model, perhaps the most gifted German field commander after Rommel (but prevented by Hitler, and Allied armoured and air superiority, from deploying *Blitzkrieg* or Decisive Manoeuvre tactics), conducted a masterful fighting retreat under constant daytime maulings from Allied ground-attack aircraft. Hitler, wasted reinforcements by insisting on defending every inch of ground and refusing tactical withdrawals to secure defensive lines; and increasingly relied on the *Waffen-SS* to stiffen Army units.

Hitler's insistence, on the grounds of sustaining morale, on the reconstitution of all destroyed and depleted units actually created a deceptively large order of battle on paper, containing nominal divisions of only brigade or even regimental strength. His foolhardy gamble in counterattacking westwards in the Ardennes offensive in December 1944 squandered Rundstedt's best troops; but the depleted forces defended the western German border energetically, only collapsing in late March 1945 when defeat was clearly inevitable.

Hitler's fear of losing Italy was so great that the Italian Front commander Luftwaffe GFM Albert Kesselring was allocated good quality Army and Luftwaffe ground units. He conducted a dogged fighting withdrawal northwards across Italy's easily defensible rivers and mountains until a general collapse in April 1945. This ensured that the Italian campaign, which Winston Churchill had believed would hasten Germany's defeat, remained a comparative 'sideshow', diverting valuable Allied reinforcements from the Western Front.



A Panzergrenadier sniper in France, carrying a Karabiner 98k fitted with a turret-mounted 'scope sight; he has pulled a helmet foliage net over his face. He wears the M1940 field tunic with feldgrau collar and collar patches – much less visible than the M1935 collar and M1938 patches – and feldgrau M1940 shoulder straps piped in the grass-green Waffenfarbe of his branch of service. (Friedrich Herrmann)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARMY UNITS

The German army on the Western Front in 1943-45 was organised into two, later three Army Groups, with a fourth in Italy; these comprised one Panzer and eight infantry Armies, the Ligurian Italo-German Reinforced Army, and a Reinforced Corps (Armeeabteilung – actually an Army without Army HQ troops). These were supported by 1st Luftwaffe Airborne Army and 6th SS Armoured Army, with Replacement Army units briefly organised into the Upper Rhine Army Group (Heeresgruppe Oberrhein) and Blumentritt Army. Each Army controlled two to five infantry Corps; no cavalry, mountain or reserve corps served on these fronts.

Infantry Divisions

The infantry division remained the backbone of the German army and, from September 1939 to March 1945 divisions were organised according to 35 particular establishments, each designated a 'wave' (Welle). The divisional and establishment number gives a general indication of the size and quality of manpower and firepower, the higher the wave and 'house-number' the smaller the division, and the lower the quality of the troops, weapons and equipment.

Waves 1-20, in the 1934-July 1942 period (1-399, 702-719 divisional series) were organised as M1939 Divisions, with steady reductions in the number of troops (from 17,734 to 11,246). From 20 September 1942 onwards 12 'static' (*bodenständig*) infantry divisions, numbered 242-5, 264-6, 326 and 343-8, were formed outside the 'wave' system to guard the Atlantikwall. Each of these had two, later sometimes three fortress or infantry regiments, each with two or three battalions, usually totalling six battalions instead of the normal nine. These were older, less well-trained troops, with minimal motorisation and reduced firepower.

Losses on the Eastern Front forced M1939 Divisions in the West to be reorganised as – and for divisions in Waves 21-28 (52-237 divisional series and named divisions) from November 1943 to July 1944 to be formed as – M1944 Divisions. The M1944 Infantry Division had 12,772 men in three M1944 infantry regiments, each with an anti-tank company, infantry gun company and two infantry battalions. Six divisional support units comprised an artillery regiment, Füsilier bicycle reconnaissance, field replacement (Feldersatz), anti-tank, engineer and signals battalions. Divisional services consisted of horsedrawn and motorised transport columns, a medical company, field hospital, veterinary company, military police troop and field post office. Five of these divisions (59, 64, 226, 232, 237) were static units for the Western and Italian Fronts.

Following the Bomb Plot of 20 July 1944, Hitler from 26 August 1944 designated 54 new and reorganised divisions raised from July to August 1944 in Waves 29-32, and many reconstituted divisions (6-563 and 708 divisional series and named divisions), as People's Grenadier Divisions (Volkgrenadierdivisionen). These were intended to provide politically reliable infantry under Himmler's direct command, and would eventually represent the bulk of the infantry on the Western Front. With a nominal strength of 10,072, the People's Grenadier Division – either a reorganised combat-weary formation, or a new formation raised from

convalescent wounded and untrained recruits – was organised like a M1944 Infantry Division but with a Füsiliers company instead of a battalion, with 18% less manpower and 16% less firepower. Quality varied from reasonably good to wholly inadequate.

On 10 December 1944 all existing infantry divisions, and those formed in Waves 33-35 (48-716 divisional series and named divisions), six of which were Volksgrenadierdivisionen, were reorganised as M1945 Divisions. An M1945 infantry division had 11,909 men; divisional services were reorganised as a supply regiment (Versorgungsregiment) with a motor transport company, two horsedrawn transport companies, an ordnance company and a mechanical repair platoon; administration, medical and veterinary companies, a military police troop and field post office. In March 1945 manpower was further reduced to 11,370, but it is doubtful whether any division now conformed to official establishment so late in the war. Some divisions hastily formed in spring 1945 were assigned a name rather than the usual number.

The Germans were particularly successful at forming in the field small unit remnants and individual stragglers into temporary 'battle groups' (Kampfgruppen), with no fixed organisation and named after their commanders, for particular missions. Similarly, larger assets were sometimes assembled as available into a 'divisional staff for special employment' (Division zur besonderen Verwendung – zbV) lacking a conventional divisional organisation.

From October 1939 each military district (Wehrkreis) raised several depot divisions to train Field Army depot (Ersatz) units in Germany. Each numbered depot division was organised as a M1939 infantry division; and from autumn 1944 they were increasingly deployed as field units to defend territory close to or within the German border – e.g. the deployment of 180th and 190th Depot Divisions at Arnhem in September 1944. In October 1942 many depot divisions were redesignated Reserve Divisions (141-188 series), each 16,000 strong, and deployed as static garrison units in the occupied territories. On 9 October 1944, with virtually all occupied territory recaptured by the Allies, Reserve Divisions were redesignated Infantry Divisions, as were Training Divisions (Feldausbildungs-Divisionen), each with 16,000 recruits undergoing advanced combat training and awaiting posting to front line units.

Three mountain infantry divisions (2, 6, 7) served in Norway and four (2, 5, 8, 157) on the Western and Italian Fronts. The M1939 Mountain Division with 13,056 men was organised like the M1939 Infantry Division but with two mountain regiments and mountain-equipped support units and services; whilst a 13,000-strong M1942 Rifle (Jäger) Division had lightly armed mobile infantry. No Security Divisions served on the Western or Italian Fronts.



Generalfeldmarschall Gerd von Rundstedt, commanding German forces in France, Belgium and the Netherlands in June 1944. He was the only serving officer holding a traditional appointment as Chief or 'Colonel of the Regiment', in his case of the 18th Infantry, which he commanded in 1925-26. He thus wears a unique uniform combining insignia of his rank and his honorary appointment. The eight-buttoned M1920 officer's field tunic has gold buttons and breast eagle for general's rank; the front piping prescribed for general officers in 1927 is here white for Infantry. His field-marshal's shoulder boards have a white underlay, and bear both the crossed batons of rank and the regimental numerals '18'. The M1935 officer's collar patches have silver thread 'guards braids' (Litzen) on an Infantry white background. He wears the Knight's Cross with Oakleaves and Swords at his throat. (ECPA)

Armoured formations and units

On 23 June 1943 the motorised infantry division was redesignated M1943 Armoured Infantry Division (Panzergranadierdivision). This was 14,738 strong with two motorised infantry regiments and one Panzer battalion; seven divisional support units – motorised artillery regiment, field replacement, armoured reconnaissance, anti-tank, motorised anti-aircraft, motorised engineer and motorised signals battalions, plus divisional services. From 20 September 1944 it was reorganised as the M1944 Armoured Infantry Division, with 680 fewer support personnel and less equipment but increased firepower; the motorised infantry regiments were redesignated as Panzergranadier regiments.

Only six army Panzer Divisions were available to fight on the Western Front and two in Italy. On 24 September 1943 all 15,600-strong M1941 Panzer Divisions were reorganised as M1944 Panzer Divisions with 14,727 men. The establishment was one two-battalion tank regiment, of which the 1st Battalion often received PzKpfw V Panthers while the 2nd retained the PzKpfw IV; two two-battalion motorised Panzergranadier regiments, each of which had one battalion equipped with armoured half-tracks; seven divisional support units – an armoured artillery regiment, field replacement, motorised anti-aircraft, armoured reconnaissance, armoured anti-tank, armoured engineer and armoured signals battalions; and divisional services.

This organisation concealed the fact that the number of tanks had steadily declined from 328 per division in September 1939 to 165 in 1943. In practice mechanical breakdowns, shortages of spare parts, combat losses, non-arrival of replacements under skies ruled by Allied fighter-bombers, and equipment abandoned when retreating across the Seine forced GFM Model to report in September 1944 only five to ten serviceable tanks per division – which, although later greatly improved, revealed a catastrophic situation which was virtually ignored by Hitler.

On 24 March 1945 all Panzer and Panzergranadier divisions were ordered reorganised as M1945 Panzer Divisions, with purely defensive capability and only 54 tanks; but it is unlikely that any divisions were thus organised so late in the war. Theoretically the 11,422-strong M1945 Panzer Division would have had a mixed armoured regiment with

one tank battalion and one half-track Panzergranadier battalion; two motorised Panzergranadier regiments; and support units and services as before.

German armour was supported by assault artillery battalions allocated to Army HQs; on 25 February 1944 these were redesignated as brigades. Each had three batteries of 10-14 self-propelled guns. Panzer and Panzergranadier divisions had army anti-aircraft battalions, each with two

Normandy, June 1944: the three-man crew of a camouflaged 7.5cm Panzerabwehrkanone 40 L/46 gun of a divisional anti-tank battalion. They wear a motley selection of field tunics, marching boots and ankle boots; the centre and right soldiers seem to have foliage straps hooked to helmets showing light blotches of camouflage paint. The man at left is armed with a MP40, the centre man with a Luger in a hard-shell holster, and the Gefreiter at right has M1911 rifle ammunition pouches and an 84/98 bayonet on his belt. Although they seem to be in light field equipment it is interesting that they retain the M1930 gas mask canister, complete with strapped-on anti-gas cape. (Friedrich Herrmann)





North-east France, August 1944: an Obergefreiter of Engineers prepares a charge. He wears the second pattern of camouflage cover – note its distinctive foliage loops – drawstrung to his helmet, in Zeltbahn 31 splinter-pattern. The M1935 tunic bears M1940 rank chevrons, with field-grey backing instead of the earlier dark green. (Author's collection)

batteries of 88mm dual-purpose guns – devastating when used in the ground role – and two 20mm light anti-aircraft batteries. On 1 March 1944 rocket-launcher regiments were grouped into brigades; from September 1944 these came under Himmler's nominal command as 'People's Rocket Launcher Brigades', ten of which fought in the Ardennes offensive.

Elite divisions

Of the six élite army divisions formed during World War II all except the Großdeutschland divisions served, albeit often briefly, on the Western Front after June 1940. On 1 June 1943 the 44th Infantry Division was redesignated the Imperial Grenadier Division (Reichsgrenadier-Division) Hoch- und Deutschmeister, encouraging continued Austrian loyalty to the Reich by stressing Imperial Austrian military traditions; it served from August 1943 to November 1944 in Italy. On 20 June 1943 the Panzergrenadier Division Feldherrnhalle was formed from SA (Sturmabteilung) volunteers; 106th Panzer Brigade Feldherrnhalle fought on the Western Front from August 1944. Some 224 men of the Brandenburg commandos were formed into the Stielau Group and sent behind Allied lines as 56 four-man teams in US Army uniforms as saboteurs during the Ardennes offensive in December 1944; 72 soldiers were captured and shot as spies. The Führer Infantry Brigade (Führer-Grenadier-Brigade) and Führer Escort Brigade (Führer-Begleit-Brigade) participated in the final stages of the Ardennes fighting in January 1945.

Non-Army formations

On 1 November 1943, the 14 surviving Luftwaffe field divisions were transferred to the Heer and reorganised as M1944 infantry divisions with 'Rifle (I) Regiments', support units and services. On paper 14 Luftwaffe Airborne Divisions – some of these 'Green Devils' being generally considered among the best German units of the war – were formed, of which nine (2, 3, 5-8, 11, 20, Erdmann) supported the army on the Western Front and two (1, 4) on the Italian Front. The élite Hermann Goering Panzer Division served in Italy from June 1943 to July 1944. (See MAA 139, *German Airborne Troops*, and MAA 229, *Luftwaffe Field Divisions*.)

A group of prisoners captured in Normandy, 12 June 1944. The Obergefreiter (left) is wearing the M1943 peaked field cap and M1940 field tunic; (far right) one soldier retains the old M1934 field cap; and (second right) note the M1943 hooded smock in marsh-pattern camouflage, as issued to snipers. (Brian Davis)





GFM Günther von Kluge (left) photographed on the Normandy front in July 1944 during his three-week tenure as **Oberbefehlshaber West**. The field-grey leather greatcoat was popular with high-ranking officers, but production was discontinued from 29 February 1944 in order to save strategic materials. The lapels were unlined. The Generalmajor accompanying him wears a rubberised greatcoat. (ECPA)

The *Waffen-SS* deployed eight divisions (1, 2, 9, 10, 12 Panzer; 17 Panzergrenadier; 34 Infantry; 6 Mountain) on the Western Front, and 16th SS-Panzergrenadier Division in Italy (see MAA 34, *The Waffen-SS*).

Military Police, Chaplains & Officials

On 1 February 1941 the Army Patrol Service (*Heeresstreifendienst*), supervising Replacement Army garrisons and checking the papers of soldiers on leave, was unified under a Patrol Service Commander controlling railway guard battalions and checking documents in large railway stations. From 1 December 1941 special Army Patrol Service Groups (*Gruppen Heeres-Streifendienst*), from 1 March 1944 redesignated Armed Forces Patrol Groups, were deployed to the occupied territories. Following the German defeat at Stalingrad in February 1943 the army's traditionally high discipline gradually eroded, requiring extra units to support these and the Military Police and Area Command (*Oberfeldkommandantur*) authorities.

On 27 November 1943 Field Police (*Feldjäger*) Commands I-III were established, reporting directly to GFM Keitel, and holding precedence over all Patrol Service and Military Police. Each command controlled a Field Police Battalion (from 25 April 1944, a Regiment) with five motorised companies; based 12 miles behind the front line, these units dealt out rough justice, including summary execution, to Wehrmacht personnel. They were supported from December 1944 by Patrol Corps (*Streifkorps*) sections. Each Army had a 49-strong battalion-status Secret Field Police (*Geheime Feldpolizei*) Group carrying out field security and anti-resistance duties, reporting to Army Intelligence (*Abwehr*).

A Protestant and a Catholic chaplain each served on divisional staffs, whilst Azeri, North Caucasian, Turkestani and Volga-Tartar battalions were allocated a Sunni Muslim chaplain (*Mulla*). On 24 January 1944 some branches of Army Officials, permanently assigned to the Field Army, were redesignated as service personnel, and on 1 May 1944 transferred to the two branches of the newly formed Special Troop Service (*Truppensonderdienst*) – the Wehrmacht Legal Service for senior career court martial officials, and the Administration Service for senior and advanced career district administration officials and senior career paymaster officials.

European volunteers

Western and northern European volunteers in the German army were not deployed on the Western Front, so as to avoid execution as traitors if captured by their compatriots. Thus the Spanish 'Blue Division', Belgian Walloon 373rd Infantry Battalion and French 638th Reinforced Grenadier Regiment served only on the Eastern Front. Belgian Flemish, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Swiss and later Spanish volunteers

served in the Waffen-SS on the Eastern Front, joined on 1 June 1943 by the Walloons and on 1 September 1944 by the French.

On 15 September 1943 Mussolini established the Italian Social Republic (RSI) in northern and central Italy, and the RSI armed forces continued to fight on the Italian Front as German allies in Italian uniforms. They were joined in August 1943 by the 2nd Infantry (later 2nd Technical) Division of the Slovak Army, in Slovak uniform; and on 8 May 1944 by 11 infantry battalions of the Czech Government Army (*Vládní vojsko*) in Czech uniform. Some Italian volunteers joined the Waffen-SS and others were employed by the German army in divisional service units.

The Osttruppen

The German Army on the Eastern Front had been accepting volunteers from Russia and Soviet ethnic minorities as 'Auxiliaries' (*Hilfswillige*, or 'Hiwis') in combat divisions since August 1941, and the success of this recruitment led to the raising of three types of independent units. Cossack cavalry squadrons and later mounted battalions, mounted regiments, infantry battalions and infantry regiments were formed from October 1941. From 8 February 1942 Armenian, Azeri, Georgian, North Caucasian, Turkestani and Volga-Tartar infantry battalions were formed into six Eastern Legions (*Ostlegionen*). On 1 October 1942 Estonian, Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian units were designated Eastern Battalions (*Ostbataillone*); and in January 1943 Russian, Belorussian and Ukrainian units were united as the Russian Liberation Army (*Russkaya Osvoboditel'naya Armiya* – ROA) under ex-Soviet MajGen Andrey Vlasov.

On 14 November 1944 the ROA was officially redesignated the Armed Forces of the Committee for the Liberation of the Russian Peoples (*Vooruzhenniy Sili' Komiteta Osvobodozhdeniya Narodov Rossii* – VS-KONR), although the term ROA was commonly used until May 1945. All these units were attached to German divisions as combat or support units.

By July 1943 the German army was in inexorable retreat towards the Baltic region and into Belarus and Ukraine, and much of the home territory of the volunteers was being recaptured by Soviet forces. In order to avoid the danger of mutiny and desertion, from October 1943 67 battalions were transferred to Western Europe to expand understrength occupation divisions on the Atlantikwall, and 24 to the Italian Front. They were usually deployed as 4th Battalions of German infantry regiments. Two battalions (643rd Eastern, 823rd Georgian) even served on the Channel Islands with 319th Infantry Division. On 1 February 1944 the Volunteer Depot Division (*Freiwilligen-Stamm-Division*) was formed in south-eastern France with 1st-5th Regiments to train unit replacements.

There was a wide variance in morale amongst these battalions, transferred far from familiar territory and required to fight Western Allied forces instead of the Red Army, as the Germans had promised them. Allied troops were amazed to

Two well-camouflaged Panzergrenadiers in M1943 camouflage smocks and trousers lie in wait for Allied armour in a Normandy hedgerow, July 1944, armed with the lethal RPzB54 Panzerschreck. This 88mm anti-tank rocket launcher, an improved copy of the US bazooka, projected hollow charge armour-piercing rockets out to 150 yards. The projectile's rocket motor continued to burn for about 8ft after it left the muzzle – thus the need for the gunner's shield with a sighting port. His mate carries a box of RPzBGr 4322 or 4992 projectiles. (Friedrich Herrmann)



An intriguing scene in eastern Normandy, August 1944: three infantrymen from an ex-Luftwaffe field division leave a knocked-out British Sherman tank carrying full jerrycans. All wear the M1942 second pattern thigh-length Luftwaffe splinter-pattern overjacket so characteristic of the Luftwaffe field units; they also retain the M1935 Luftwaffe other ranks' belt. Other photos show field division infantry wearing Luftwaffe second pattern camouflaged paratroop jump-smocks. (Friedrich Herrmann)

find Russian troops surrendering to their advancing forces. The Eastern Battalions proved to be the most effective, with 23 battalions serving with Army Group B in the Normandy campaign, losing ten battalions, and 11 with Army Group G in southern France. Five Cossack infantry and three cavalry battalions fought with Army Group B, losing one infantry battalion.

The Eastern Legions, recruited to liberate Transcaucasian and Central Asian homelands now well beyond the reach of the German forces, proved more problematic; 18 battalions fought in Normandy and seven in southern France. In July 1944 part of the 799th Georgian Battalion deserted to Allied lines, and the 627th Volga-Tartar Battalion mutinied; and on 5 April 1945 the 803rd North Caucasian and 822nd Georgian Battalions, stationed on Texel island off the Dutch coast, declared for the Allies and held the island against German counterattacks before surrendering to the Germans on 17 April.

The 162nd Infantry Division, formed in occupied Poland to provide units for the Eastern Legions, was mobilised with five Azeri and six Turkestani infantry and artillery battalions and German support units and services; the division was transferred to northern Italy in October 1943. One Armenian, three Georgian and two Eastern Battalions were allocated to other divisions in Italy on anti-partisan duties behind the front. No Cossack units fought in Italy, but from September 1944 to April 1945 Cossack families were billeted in Genoa, later Tolmezzo, in the north-east of that country.

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY 1943-45

Normandy Landings 1944

France, Belgium and the Netherlands were garrisoned in June 1944 by Western High Command, controlling Army Group B (Heeresgruppe B) covering northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and Reinforced Army G (Armeegruppe G) in southern France.

Army Group B, commanded by GFM Erwin Rommel, the celebrated commander of German-Italian forces in North Africa, had two armies and the Netherlands garrison. 7th Army had 12 divisions (77, 243, 265-6, 275, 343, 352-3, 709, 716 Infantry; 2 Luftwaffe Airborne, 21 Panzer) in Brittany and western Normandy, and 319 Infantry Division on the Channel Islands. Further east the 15th Army garrisoned eastern Normandy, the Pas-de-Calais region and



Belgium with 18 divisions (47-9, 84-5, 245, 326, 331, 344, 346, 348, 711-2 Infantry; 163, 182 Reserve; 17-19 Luftwaffe Rifle); while the Netherlands were defended by four divisions (347, 719 Infantry, 16 Luftwaffe Rifle, 19 Panzer). Panzer Group West, on 5 August 1944 redesignated *5th Panzer Army*, constituted Von Rundstedt's strategic reserve near Paris, with nine divisions (271-2, 276-7 Infantry; 2, 116 Panzer, Panzer-Lehr; 1, 12 SS-Panzer).

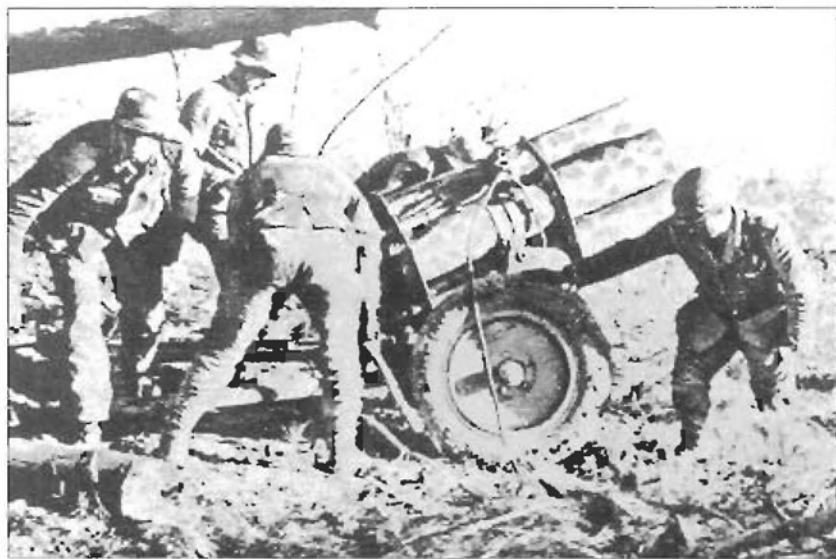
D-Day began just after midnight on Tuesday 6 June 1944, as the Allied 21 Army Group, with eight divisions (three airborne and five infantry), three armoured brigades, and total air superiority, landed in western Normandy, which was defended by three static infantry divisions (352, 709, 716) of 84 Corps, German 7th Army. Hitler's poor strategic instincts left his forces unprepared and his caution prevented a quick reaction or mobile deployment; thus only 21 Panzer Division counterattacked decisively near Caen. With daytime movement virtually excluded by Allied airpower, the deployment by late June of seven first-line mobile divisions from Panzer Group West and Army Group G (2 Panzer, Panzer-Lehr; 1, 9, 10, 12 SS Panzer; 17 SS-Panzer Grenadier) was too late to destroy the Allied bridgehead. By early July this had been reinforced to total 28 American, British and Canadian divisions (three airborne, 19 infantry, six armoured) and five armoured brigades.

Northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands 1944-45

On 17 July Rommel was seriously wounded by a strafing RAF fighter, and von Kluge served as Army Group B commander until his arrest, and replacement by Model, on 17 August. The Allied bridgehead expanded slowly against determined German counterattacks, but the eventual British capture of Caen on 10 July meant that the landings were now secure. On 25 July the Allies broke out of the bridgehead, and by 7 August German 7th Army had lost Brittany. *1st Army* was briefly assigned to Army Group B but was unable to stem the Allied advance; and on 20 August the 7th Army and 5th Panzer Army, which had extricated themselves only at huge cost from encirclement in the Falaise Pocket during the westward retreat, crossed the Seine. Paris was abandoned on the 23rd.

On 25 August 1944 the Allies attacked across the Seine. Western Command and Army Group B (7th, 15th Army; 5th Panzer Army) retreated rapidly eastwards under heavy Allied air attack, evacuating northern France by 6 September – but denying valuable Channel ports to the Allies with isolated 'fortress' garrisons, some of which held out until May 1945. British progress through Belgium was even

North-east France, August 1944:
the four-man crew of a six-barrelled 15cm Nebelwerfer 41 prepare to fire. All seem to wear M1942 reed-green summer field uniform and to have discarded all personal equipment while serving their devastating and much-feared weapon. (Friedrich Herrmann)



taster, with Brussels captured on 3 September, the city – but not the sea approaches – of Antwerp on 4 September, and Luxembourg on 10 September. On 15 September most of Army Group B, with minimal surviving armour and no reserves, had formed a defensive line just inside Belgium (still denying the Allies use of Antwerp's port facilities), and along the 1939 Siegfried Line (Westwall) fortifications on the Belgian-German border.

On 15 September the weary and over-extended Allies, surprised at the speed of the German collapse and short of fuel, halted, allowing the Germans valuable time to reinforce their line with dwindling reserves of Volkssturm home guards, border guards and Volksgrenadier units of mixed value. On 4 September 1944 *1st Luftwaffe Airborne Army* with seven divisions (84-5, 89, 176, 179, 353 Infantry, 6 Airborne) reinforced Army Group B in the Netherlands, just in time to help repulse – with the important assistance of 2 SS-Panzer Corps – the British airborne landings at Arnhem during 17-26 September.

However, by 21 October the Allies had occupied the southern Netherlands and Aachen, the first major town in west Germany, had fallen. On 11 November 1944 Army Group H was formed under Luftwaffe GenObst Kurt Student to defend the remainder of the Netherlands with 1st Airborne Army and 15th Army.

On 16 December 1944 the Wehrmacht attacked through the Belgian Ardennes with 24 understrength divisions (12, 18, 26, 47, 62, 246, 276-7, 326, 340, 352, 560 Volksgrenadier; 3, 15 Panzergrenadier; 2, 116 Panzer, Panzer-Lehr; 1, 2, 9, 10, 12 SS Panzer; 3, 5 Luftwaffe Airborne) from Army Group B (7th, 5th Panzer Army) and Western Command's 6th SS-Panzer Army, and depleted Luftwaffe air support. Initially the cream of the Wehrmacht remaining in the West were faced by just six Allied divisions. The Ardennes offensive, also called the Battle of the Bulge, was intended to recapture Antwerp, but after initial success the advance ground to a halt on 24 December, only four miles from the River Meuse at Dinant after a 50-mile penetration, having wasted valuable mobile forces which could have helped defend western Germany. By 20 January 1945 the German forces were back on the Siegfried Line.

Southern France 1944-45

Southern France was garrisoned by Reinforced Army G, under GenObst Johannes Blaskowitz, commanding *1st Army* in south-western France with three understrength static coastal defence divisions (708 Infantry; 158-9 Reserve), with 11 Panzer Division in strategic reserve; and *19th Army* in southern and central France with seven static divisions (242, 244, 338, 716 Infantry; 148, 157, 189 Reserve) and 198 Infantry Division, with 9 Panzer Division in reserve.

At 0800 hours on 15 August 1944 the US 7th Army with eight US and French divisions (six infantry, one armoured, one airborne) landed in



Generalleutnant Ferdinand Heim retired in August 1943 after serving as Chief of Staff of the 6th Army in Russia the previous year. He was recalled to duty, and on 1 August 1944 was given command of the Boulogne garrison. Here a dejected prisoner after surrendering to the Canadian 3rd Infantry Division on 22 September, he wears the general officer's service cap with gold-embroidered insignia. His M1935 officer's field greatcoat can be seen in the original print to have the bright red lapel linings of a general officer. It is worn open, displaying his *Alt-Larisch* collar patches and Knight's Cross. (Brian Davis)

south-eastern France in Operation Anvil. Reinforced Army G (on 12 September redesignated Army Group G), outgunned and outmanoeuvred, retreated rapidly. 19th Army abandoned Marseilles and Provence on 28 August, Lyons on 3 September and Dijon on 10 September, forcing the outflanked 1st Army to evacuate south-western France without a battle and retreat north-eastwards. When the Allies halted their offensive on 15 September 1944, Army Group G still held the Vosges mountains in Lorraine. On 21 September Gen der Pz Tr. Hermann Balck replaced Blaskowitz, who was reinstated on 24 December, by which time 1st Army had retreated into south-western Germany (15 December). Here in January 1945 it absorbed Upper Rhine Army Group (Heeresgruppe Oberrhein), formed in November 1944 from local defence and Replacement Army units. 19th Army stubbornly defended the Colmar pocket, the last German-occupied part of France, until 9 February 1945; Free French units were prominent among the Allied attackers.



Western Germany and the Netherlands 1945

Throughout January 1945 Western Command on the Dutch-Belgian and western German borders resisted local Allied attacks, but on 8 February three Allied army groups (6, 12, 21) launched a general offensive into western Germany. By 21 March 1945 the Allies had forced Army Group B (7th, 15th Army; 5th Panzer, 6th SS-Panzer Army) and most of Army Group G (1st, 19th Army) – commanded from 29 January 1945 by Waffen-SS General Paul Hausser – across the Rhine, capturing the Reichswald forest on the Dutch border after heavy fighting, Cologne on 5 March, and establishing a Rhine bridgehead at Remagen on 7 March.

The depleted Army Group H, later North-Western Command, garrisoned the Netherlands with 12 divisions in 1st Airborne Army (84, 180, 190 Infantry; 406 zbV; 15 Panzergrenadier; 116 Panzer; 6-8 Luftwaffe Airborne; 106 Panzer Brigade), and 25th Army, formed on 10 November 1944 (331, 346 Infantry; 2 Luftwaffe Airborne). Steady Allied pressure from 2 April forced North-West Command – joined on 9 April by German Replacement Army units organised as Armee Blumentritt – to retreat into north-west Germany on 15 April 1945, abandoning Bremen on 26 April and Hamburg on 3 May before surrendering on 4 May. On 8 May the German garrison in Denmark, with 281 and 398 District Commands, and 20 Mountain Army in Norway with 11 divisions and nine brigades, also surrendered.

Army Group B defended the central front of Western Germany with 27 divisions:

5th Panzer Army – now without significant armour – (85, 89 Infantry; 18, 26, 272, 277 Volksgrenadier; 3, 5 Luftwaffe Airborne)

15th Army (59, 176, 338, 353 Infantry; 12, 183, 363 Volksgrenadier; 476 zbV; 3 Panzergrenadier; 9, 11 Panzer, Panzer-Lehr)

Oberst Constantin Meyer, commanding the Metz garrison in Lorraine in August 1944. His field service uniform comprises the M1943 field cap – officer's silver crown piping is just visible – and M1935 field greatcoat and tunic. The coat's dark green facing cloth collar shows up better here than in the photograph of GenLt Heim; it has shoulder boards of rank on Infantry white underlay, and bearing the gilt regimental numerals as ordered restored on 16 February 1944. Note the 6x30 binoculars, standard issue field flashlight and other ranks' belt. (Brian Davis)

Highly decorated German commanders plan the destruction of the British 1st Airborne Division at Arnhem, September 1944. (Left to right) GFM Model, commanding Army Group B; General der Fallschirmtruppe Kurt Student, commanding 1st Airborne Army, wearing the Army M1934 motorcyclist's rubberised coat with field-grey cloth collar; background, a Major Kaust, who has just been decorated with the Knight's Cross, wearing the M1940 special field-grey uniform; and at far right SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Heinz Harmel, commanding 10.SS-Panzer-Division 'Frundsberg', wearing the motorcyclist's coat but with dark green collar facing cloth. (Author's collection)



Armeeabteilung Lüttich (180, Deichmann, Hamburg Infantry; 190 zbV; 116 Panzer; 2 Luftwaffe Airborne; 22 Luftwaffe Anti-Aircraft).

On 23-25 March 1945 the Allies attacked across the Rhine, and by 2 April had trapped Army Group B in the Ruhr Pocket, which surrendered on 18 April, GFM Model having committed suicide.

Army Group G, commanded from 2 April 1945 by Gen der Inf. Friedrich Schulz, defended south-west Germany with 37 divisions:

1st Army (416, 719, Rössler Infantry; 16, 19, 36, 47, 256-7, 347, 559 Volksgrenadier; 526 Reserve; 905 zbV; 2 Mountain; 17 SS-Panzer-grenadier; 6 SS Mountain)

7th Army (9, 79, 167, 212, 246, 276, 326, 340, 352, 560 Volksgrenadier; 2 Panzer)

19th Army (106, 189, 198, 716 Infantry; 550 Grenadier; 16, 47, 257 Volksgrenadier; 405, 805 zbV; 1005 Infantry Brigade) – also included the 24th Army Staff formed in November 1944.

On 22 March the Allies attacked across the Rhine, taking Karlsruhe on 4 April, Stuttgart and Nuremberg on 20 April and Munich on 30 April, and reaching Salzburg in Austria on 4 May. Army Group G surrendered on 5 May.

Sicily and Southern Italy 1943

On 10 July 1943 British and US forces landed in south-eastern Sicily, defended by Italian 6th Army (four infantry, one motorised, six coastal divisions) and the German 14 Panzer Corps with three divisions (15, 29 Panzergrenadier; Hermann Goering Luftwaffe Panzer) in northern Sicily. German forces led a determined Axis defence of the island, and on 17 August retreated largely intact to Calabria in southern Italy.

The approaching loss of Sicily shocked the Italian government, which on 25 July arrested Mussolini and appointed Marshal Pietro Badoglio as prime minister. Hitler, correctly suspecting a coming Italian surrender and the prospect of Allied forces rushing to the southern Austrian border, formed the highly mobile 10th Army on 15 August 1943 around the divisions in Calabria. 10th Army, reporting to Luftwaffe Southern Command in Rome, had ten divisions

in 56 Corps (15, 29 Panzergrenadier; 16, 26 Panzer; 1 Luftwaffe Airborne) in Calabria, and three divisions (3, 90 Panzergrenadier; 2 Luftwaffe Airborne; plus 16 SS Assault Brigade Reichsführer SS) – later under 14 Panzer Corps – in reserve in central Italy.

On 3 September 1943 the Allies landed in Calabria and on 9 September at Taranto in Apulia, as 10th Army conducted a fighting retreat northwards. Italy's surrender was announced on the 8th, prompting



Troops of a Volksgrenadier division defending Aachen, October 1944. The soldier being congratulated on just having been awarded the Iron Cross 2nd Class wears a M1935 helmet still bearing the Wehrmacht eagle decal, ordered discontinued from 28 August 1943. He has an entrenching tool – perhaps intended as a hand-to-hand weapon? – thrust into the front of his M1940 field greatcoat, which has no shoulder straps. Contrast the M1924 concussion stick grenade in his belt with that carried by the soldier at right, who wears the M1934 motorcyclist's rubberised coat – the latter's grenade has the M1942 serrated fragmentation sleeve. (Friedrich Herrmann)

Hitler to send GFM Erwin Rommel's Army Group B (51, 97 Corps, 2 SS-Panzer Corps) to occupy northern Italy. Meanwhile Allied forces landed at Salerno on 9 September, but 10th Army attacked the bridgehead energetically until 18 September. Resuming its skillful retreat, 10th Army evacuated Potenza on 20 September, Foggia on 27 September and Naples on 1 October, halting on 8 October on the Capua-Teroli 'Viktor Line'.

Central and Northern Italy 1943-45

On 26 November 1943 Army Group C was formed under GFM Kesselring with 18 divisions, deployed under 10th Army in central Italy (44, 65, 94, 305 Infantry; 15, 29, 90 Panzergrenadier; 5 Mountain; 26 Panzer; 1 Luftwaffe Airborne; Hermann Goering Panzer); and 14th Army, formed 18 November 1943, in the north (71, 162, 278, 334, 356, 362 Infantry; 188 Reserve Mountain). 10th Army defended the narrow Italian front with great skill and resourcefulness, exacting a high price for ground lost, before halting on 27 December 1943 on the 'Gustav' or 'Hitler Line' on the Sangro and Garigliano rivers through the Monte Cassino strongpoint. On 18 January 1944 the Allies assaulted the Gustav Line, and on 22 January landed at Anzio and Nettuno; but 10th Army held the Gustav Line until 13 May 1944, and 14th Army confined the Anzio beachhead until 23 May. Evacuating Rome on 4 June and retreating rather faster northwards, the Wehrmacht gave up Florence on 4 August and halted on the 'Gothic Line' on 19 August. Meanwhile on 17 March 1944 the Von Zangen Reinforced Corps (Armeeabteilung von Zangen) was formed in northern Italy, expanding on 31 July 1944 to form *Liguria Army* with two RSI divisions and six German (34 Infantry; 148, 157 Reserve; 42 Rifle; 5 Mountain).

On 25 August 1944 the Allies broke through the Gothic Line, taking Rimini on 21 September, but further advances were slow against determined opposition by Army Group C, which had halted south of Bologna on 29 December 1944. On 10 March 1945 GenObst Heinrich von Vietinghoff, the distinguished 10th Army commander, took over Army Group C on Kesselring's promotion. The final Allied offensive was launched on 1 April 1945; the Germans were soon in headlong retreat towards Austria, abandoning Bologna on 21 April and Genoa on 27 April. German forces in Italy surrendered on 2 May 1945, allowing the Allies to advance into southern Austria by VE-Day.

ARMY UNIFORM

Officers' service uniform

This consisted of the M1935 officer's 'saddle-shaped' peaked cap, M1935 officer's field tunic with ribbons, M1935/M1940 officer's field greatcoat, M1934 officer's brown leather belt, officer's breeches and officer's black leather high-boots, grey suede gloves, pistol and holster. The cloth was a superior quality greenish-grey traditionally called *feldgrau*



Three platoon leaders of a Panzergrenadier regiment on the Dutch-Belgian border in January 1945 confer over the map while the troops wait in their half-tracks. All three wear the M1934 motorcyclist's rubberised coat with dark green or M1940 feldgrau collars. The officer (centre) wears the M1934 'old style' peaked field cap. (Friedrich Herrmann)

(field-grey). These items are described in detail in MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4).

Other ranks' service uniform

The service uniform for technical and senior NCOs and many junior NCOs, in lesser-quality field-grey, consisted of the other ranks' M1935 peaked service cap or M1934/M1942 field-cap *Feldmütze*, M1935 field tunic and M1940 field greatcoat. The M1940 trousers were worn with high black 'dice-cup' marching-boots, or M1943 belted trousers with M1941 field-grey canvas anklets and black lace-up ankle boots. A black leather belt with a M1936 aluminium buckle,

from 1941 painted field-grey, a holstered pistol and grey suede gloves were also worn. More junior NCOs and men wore the field cap instead, and a scabbarded bayonet on the belt. The peaked M1943 universal field cap (*Einheitsfeldmütze*), which officially replaced the M1934/1942 from June 1934 and was by 1944 the most common Army headgear, was essentially the M1942 cap with a deep peak.

The M1942 field tunic omitted the previous pocket pleats, and the M1943 tunic had straight pocket flaps. Some NCOs had the collars sharpened, the skirt shortened in officer style, and the bellows side pockets sewn up for a more elegant appearance. The M1943 belted trousers incorporated a reinforced seat and tapered legs for anklets. The other ranks' field greatcoat had other ranks' quality cloth and insignia, with a wider collar for better protection against the cold on the M1942 model.

These items, and the walking-out uniform for all ranks are described in more detail in MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4).

Officers' field uniform

In the field all officers (except platoon leaders – by 1944 only NCOs and the youngest second lieutenants were commanding platoons) wore the M1935 officer's field tunic with officer's belt and holstered pistol; M1935/M1942 steel helmet, officer's M1938 or M1943 field cap and officer's breeches with riding boots.

On 31 October 1939 all officers below general rank in combat units were ordered to wear the other ranks' field tunic, black belt, trousers and marching boots, in order not to be too conspicuous to the enemy; but most officers either totally or partially ignored the order. Many purchased and altered an other ranks' tunic, adding officers' features

such as a shortened skirt, roll-back cuffs, pocket pleats, bluish dark green collars, and officer's insignia. The tunic could be worn with the collar unbuttoned when in the field with troops. The other ranks' black belt could no longer be worn by officers after 23 July 1943 and a blackened officer's M1934 belt was prescribed instead, but from 30 October 1943 the M1934 brown belt was reinstated.



Western Front, January 1945: a fire support team manning an MG42 light machine gun on a tripod mount for the sustained fire role. The first gunner (left) wears the M1942 padded reversible *feldgrau*/white winter tunic. (Friedrich Herrmann)

On 25 September 1944 the M1944 field uniform was introduced for all ranks of the Army, Navy shore units, Luftwaffe and Waffen-SS. The waist-length field jacket or blouse, of inferior quality cloth in a browner green-grey *feldgrau* 44 shade, had six front buttons and two plain breast pockets. It was apparently popular for its resemblance to the British battledress blouse and US 'Eisenhower jacket', which were felt to look more modern than the old tunics; some officers imitated these garments further by having fly fronts sewn in. The M1944 trousers, also in *feldgrau* 44, had an integral belt and ankle drawstrings. From 13 December 1944 tailored M1944 jackets could be worn with the collar open over a black tie and a shirt – greenish-grey, green, greenish-brown, beige or white were all seen. Other ranks' M1941 field-grey 'guards braids' were sewn directly onto the collar, as were officer's M1935 collar patches. Officers were prescribed the standard M1944 mouse-grey woven breast-eagle and swastika on a field-grey woven triangle, but most substituted the officer's M1935 pattern in aluminium thread on dark green backing, or the M1944 aluminium woven eagle on a dark green triangle. General officers preferred a dress-quality M1935 gold thread or M1938 cellean eagle.

The M1935 and M1942 steel helmets were painted matt greenish-grey and initially bore a silver-white Wehrmacht eagle decal on the left side, abolished 28 August 1943. The peakless M1938 officer's field cap had aluminium thread pipings, and an aluminium wire embroidered cockade below an aluminium thread eagle on a bluish dark green backing (gold thread or cellean for general officers). Officers also wore the M1943 peaked field cap with aluminium (gold for general officers) cord crown piping, and occasionally the other ranks' eagle and cockade. The obsolete M1934 'old style' officer's peaked field cap with flat machine-woven insignia (called the 'crusher cap' by today's collectors) was worn by many individuals until May 1945. Some officers also unofficially wore the other ranks' M1942 field cap with officers' aluminium or gold piping added.

Subalterns acting as infantry platoon leaders wore the other ranks' black belt supporting the 84/98 bayonet and scabbard, M1939 bayonet frog, M1938 folding shovel, M1941 or M1944 bread bag, M1931 canteen and cup and the M1935 dispatch-case. The M1920 'officers' support



Oberleutnant of anti-tank troops captured at Deventer, Holland, in April 1945 by Canadian 1st Army. He wears the M1940 special field grey uniform, with the pink-piped black Panzer collar patches identifying anti-tank battalions in Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions and those under direct Army or Corps command; he probably commanded a company of self-propelled guns. His shoulder boards have pink underlay and show one gilt 'pip' of rank and the gilt 'P' for Panzerjäger, but no battalion numbers. His other ranks' M1943 field cap has standard insignia and no officer's silver piping, but his breast eagle is the officer's silver model. Note the ribbons of the Eastern Winter 1941/42 Medal and Iron Cross 2nd Class; the Iron Cross 1st Class, General Assault Badge, and silver Wound Badge (three and four wounds) on the left breast; and the Kuban Shield on the left sleeve. (Brian Davis)

straps' secured two sets of triple M38/40 pouches for the MP38/MP40 sub-machine gun magazines. The anti-gas cape in a pouch was usually tied to a M1930 gas mask canister slung from a shoulder or strapped to the bread bag. Zeiss 6 x 30 binoculars, a signal whistle and a flashlight were also carried.

Other ranks' field uniform

Other ranks wore the service uniform, with M1941 field-grey canvas anklets and black lace-up ankle boots increasingly replacing the traditional marching boots, and a steel helmet. Some senior NCOs preferred the M1934 'old style' peaked field cap to its replacements. The tunic could be worn with the collar unbuttoned by order of the company commander. Technical and senior NCOs carried a pistol in a black holster; NCOs acting as infantry platoon or section leaders wore a subaltern platoon leader's equipment but with other ranks' M1939 infantry support Y-straps. The other ranks' M1944 field uniform had plain round-ended shoulder straps with branch-colour piping. M1940 field-grey 'guards braids' sewn directly onto the collar, no NCO collar edging braid, and the standard M1944 mouse-grey breast eagle on a field-grey woven triangle.

Other NCOs and men wore the standard rifleman's equipment. The waist belt carried the 84/98 bayonet, M1938 folding shovel, M1931 or M1944 bread bag and M1931 canteen and cup. The M1939 infantry support Y-straps and supplementary 'D-ring' straps supported two sets of three M1911 ammunition pouches for the Karabiner 98k rifle on the belt front, and on the back the M1939 canvas A-frame for the M1931 mess kit, M1931 camouflage shelter-quarter, canvas battle pack bag, and the gas cape strapped to the gas mask canister when not worn on the canister shoulder strap. The equipment worn by the section light machine-gun team is described in MAA 311, *The German Army 1939-45* (1).

Summer field uniform

Summer field uniforms were worn on the Western and Italian Fronts in hot weather. Tropical uniforms were permitted in southern France and southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia from summer 1943, after the surrender of North Africa on 12 May 1943 had made them superfluous outside Europe.

The reed-green cotton herringbone twill M1940 fatigue uniform was still occasionally encountered. The tunic, with two skirt pockets only, bore the breast eagle, and collar braid for senior NCOs; they, and officers, added their shoulder straps of rank. The M1941 reed-green pullover-style cotton shirt was worn as an outer garment in warm weather. This had five white plastic buttons and two breast pockets; officers' shoulder-boards, other ranks' piped M1940 field-grey shoulder straps, and arm chevrons or M1942 arm rank insignia were added as appropriate.

The most commonly encountered uniform was the M1942 summer tunic in reed-green or light grey HBT, cut like the M1942 field tunic, with field quality rank insignia and breast eagles. Officers wore M1935 collar patches, NCOs and men M1940 field-grey 'guards braids'. Matching trousers appeared in 1943. A reed-green drill M1944 field blouse and trousers were authorised but almost certainly never produced.

The light olive tropical uniform is described and illustrated in more detail in MAA 316, *The German Army 1939-45* (2). It consisted of the distinctive M1940 Afrikakorps peaked field cap; M1940 or M1942 field tunic; M1940 shirt and tie; M1940 breeches or trousers, or M1943 straight-leg trousers; M1940 shorts and knee socks; high lace-up boots or ankle-boots, and brown field greatcoat, worn with the M1940 canvas tropical belt and webbing.

The Luftwaffe tropical uniform, introduced 25 April 1941 in light tan-brown cloth, was worn by Luftwaffe divisions transferred to the Army and by individual soldiers. Individuals also acquired Italian and Waffen-SS tropical items, and often wore them mixed with reed-green Army-issue summer clothing.

Winter clothing

Standard winter uniform items included the woollen balaclava or toque; extra-thick woollen underwear; sweater; woollen mittens, sentry's double-breasted guard coat and felt over-shoes; the vehicle crews' surcoat; fur-lined mittens; and the drivers' and motorcyclists' over-gloves. Other issue winter clothing included sheepskin overcoats, a plain brown quilted jacket and trousers worn over the field uniform and under the greatcoat, and leather-reinforced felt calf-length boots.

Winter uniforms developed for the Eastern Front were mainly worn on the Western Front during the Ardennes offensive from December 1944 to January 1945 and in the Italian Apennines in winter 1944/45. The M1942 padded reversible white/field-grey winter tunic was issued in lightweight, medium weight and heavyweight versions, with waist and sleeve drawcords, six buttons, two slash waist pockets and an integral hood. Reversible trousers had two thigh pockets, a crutch strap and ankle drawcords. A reversible separate hood was issued with this uniform, but was unpopular. Reversible mittens and leather-reinforced white felt snow boots were also worn. Production of this uniform probably ended in late 1944 due to the chronic raw materials shortage.

Other winter items were the seven-button M1942 one-piece snow overalls, the four-button M1942 snow coverall, the M1942 two-piece snow suit, and the M1942 mountain troops' snow uniform – a reversible anorak and over-trousers, issued to all combat troops. For further details see MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4).



Sturmartillerie-Brigade 12 was raised from Luftwaffe paratrooper volunteers, who wore Luftwaffe headgear and insignia with the M1940 special field-grey uniform. This interesting photograph shows two members of an SP gun crew led by Lt. Heinz Deutsch who distinguished themselves in battle against Allied armour in the Reichswald, February 1945 – the gunner, Oberfeldwebel Berndt (left), and the driver, Feldwebel Stangassinger. Both wear the Army field-grey uniform with yellow Luftwaffe rank collar patches partly enclosed by L-shapes of NCO braid. Both have the Iron Cross 1st Class and the Luftwaffe Ground Combat Badge; Berndt also wears his Parachutist's Badge. (Friedrich Herrmann)



This apprehensive infantry Oberfeldwebel from Army Group B, taken prisoner in the Ruhr Pocket in April 1945, is distinguished from his men as a senior NCO by retaining in the field the M1935 other ranks' service cap, with field-grey crown, dark green band, aluminium insignia, white pipings, and black patent leather chin strap. He still has a M1935 other ranks' field greatcoat with dark green facing cloth collar and shoulder straps, worn here with a coloured civilian scarf at the throat. The looks of the men behind him seem to betray nervousness and continued reliance on his leadership. (Brian Davis)

Camouflage uniforms

The M1931 triangular shelter-quarter (Zeltbahn 31), in tightly woven cotton drill, was used as a summer camouflage cape under or over field equipment. It was reversible, between light and dark shades of the first pattern angular 'splinter' camouflage scheme in green, brown and khaki.

The M1942 smock, a collarless cotton drill garment in Zeltbahn 31 camouflage reversible to white, saw limited issue, and was worn over the field uniform. It was closed at the chest by a cord passing through five sets of holes; two breast slits gave access to the tunic beneath; it had a waist drawcord, often two side pockets, and buttoned cuffs. M1942 arm rank insignia was prescribed but usually omitted. Over-trousers in the same material, and helmet covers, were also worn. The first M1942 pattern cover had Zeltbahn 31 reversible to white; the second pattern had added foliage loops; both attached by a drawstring under the helmet rim.

A small number of M1942 padded reversible winter tunics, trousers and mittens were produced in Zeltbahn 31/white from April 1942. A non-reversible winter tunic was also produced in both Zeltbahn 31 and 'marsh pattern' versions – the latter a softer-edged pattern of brown and green on khaki or greyish-green background. The M1944 camouflage apron was a sleeveless smock closed by a buttoned chest flap, in Zeltbahn 31 or marsh pattern herringbone twill.

Later production smocks and winter tunics were made in second pattern M1943 splinter camouflage, in marsh pattern, and in a third pattern M1944 rounded 'blotch' version. The M1943 marsh pattern camouflage smock was issued to snipers and Panzergrenadier units.

Personnel of the Luftwaffe field divisions who had transferred to the Army often retained their M1942 thigh-length over-jackets in Luftwaffe splinter camouflage or marsh pattern herringbone twill. M1943 field tunics and M1940 trousers, M1944 field blouses and trousers, and M1940 special tunics and trousers for armoured crews were often privately tailored in Zeltbahn 31 or marsh pattern herringbone twill.

Troops on the Italian Front often wore Italian Army M1929 shelter quarters, or M1942 three-quarter length parachutist smocks, M1942 helmet covers, and Sahariana-style tunics and long trousers made up in standard Italian Army camouflage; this was a rounded 'cloud' pattern in brown, light forest green and ochre. It was also used to manufacture versions of the camouflage items described above, particularly the M1943 field tunic. Waffen-SS camouflage items were also individually acquired; and Luftwaffe troops of the Hermann Göring Division were issued with Waffen-SS camouflage smocks and helmet covers from summer 1942.

Rank insignia

Officers' shoulder boards, NCOs' shoulder straps and mens' arm

chevrons are described and illustrated in detail in MAA 311, *The German Army 1939-45 (1)*.

General officers' shoulder boards displayed dress-quality plaited cords on a bright red underlay. The design incorporated two gold bullion or 'celleon' imitation gold cords and one bright aluminium cord. (After 25 April 1944 only generals of combat branches were supposed to wear bright red underlay.) The rank of Generalfeldmarschall was marked by silver crossed marshal's batons (and from 3 April 1941, all-gold cords); the Generaloberst, General, Generalleutnant and Generalmajor wore respectively three, two, one and no silver four-point stars or 'pips'. Generals of specialist branches and élite formations wore appropriate additional shoulder board insignia.

Field officers' shoulder boards had double plaited aluminium cords on a branch-colour underlay; Oberst, Oberstleutnant and Major were differentiated by wearing respectively two, one and no gold pips. The company ranks of Hauptmann, Oberleutnant and Leutnant wore doubled flat parallel cords, again differentiated by two, one or no gold pips. All officer ranks of specialist branches and élite units wore the appropriate additional insignia in gold. Shoulder boards of field and company ranks were manufactured during wartime in a less conspicuous dull silver-grey cord (sometimes referred to by collectors as 'oxydised silver').

The senior NCO ranks (from Stabsfeldwebel down to Feldwebel) wore dark green or field-grey shoulder straps piped in branch colour and edged with M1935 bright aluminium or M1940 mouse-grey artificial silk or cellulose-fibre braid; to these were applied respectively three, two or one pips, plus appropriate insignia of branch and/or unit, in aluminium. The Hauptfeldwebel (company sergeant major) wore two braid cuff rings. Junior NCOs (Unterfeldwebel and Unteroffizier) wore the same shoulder strap without pips, the latter without braid across the base, with branch and/or unit insignia in branch-colour chain-stitch. If appointed Hauptfeldwebeldienststuer (acting company sergeant-major – a wartime appointment necessitated by the increasing lack of qualified NCOs) they also wore the two braid cuff rings.

The enlisted men wore plain shoulder straps edged with branch colour piping. Rank was indicated by braid chevrons (or aluminium



On 19 June 1943 Grenadier-Regiment 134 was redesignated Reichsgrenadier-Regiment 'Hoch- und Deutschmeister'. Following regulations Hauptmann Arnulf Abele, a battalion commander, wears the M1940 other ranks' field tunic and breast eagle, but has added M1935 officer's collar patches. (Brian Davis)

Belgium, 3 June 1943: a colour-party of Grenadier-Regiment 134 parade their newly awarded regimental flag, in the old Austrian style. That August they transferred to the Italian Front with 44. Reichsgrenadier-Division 'Hoch- und Deutschmeister'. The Oberfeldwebel standard-bearer wears the M1942 other ranks' field tunic but, contrary to German tradition, no carrying sash, gorget or arm badge. He is escorted by two subaltern officers; all three display the Iron Cross 1st Class, Infantry Assault Badge and black Wound Badge in slightly different positions on their left breast pockets. The regiment was awarded the 'Stalingrad Cross' shoulder strap insignia on 31 December 1943. (Brian Davis)



pijs) on a bluish dark-green or field-grey triangular (or round) backing patch on the left sleeve. From 25 April 1942 an Obergefreiter of two years' seniority not suitable for junior NCO rank could be promoted to Stabsgefreiter; and many, though not all soldiers ranking as *Obergefreiter mit mehr als 6 Dienstjahren* were promoted to this new pay grade.

The M1942 system of sleeve rank insignia, introduced on 22 August 1942 for wear by officers and NCOs on white winter tunics, anoraks, shirts and drill tunics (i.e. garments on which shoulder straps were not officially worn), is illustrated in MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4). Consisting of gold or green oakleaf sprays and bars on black rectangular backing, these insignia were not in widespread use until 1944, and even then was relatively unpopular.

Branch insignia

A selective list of branch insignia is shown in the Table on page 40. For security reasons troops of the Army were ordered on 1 September 1939 to conceal or remove their shoulder board/shoulder strap branch letters and unit numerals when outside Germany. Replacement Army personnel, and Army troops on leave or assigned to duties in Germany, could continue to wear these insignia openly. During the war élite units such as the Großdeutschland divisions were permitted their prized GD monogram shoulder strap insignia in the field. By 1944 the OKH recognised that the improved morale – and quick identification of deserters by military police – which the open wearing of unit insignia permitted now outweighed the risk of compromised field security. From 16 February 1944 all Army and Replacement Army officers were ordered to fix gold-coloured galvanised metal branch and unit insignia to their shoulder boards, and senior NCOs bright or matt aluminium insignia to their shoulder straps.

Junior NCOs and men were issued field-grey (or Panzer black) slip-on shoulder loops with insignia in branch-colour artificial silk chain-stitch. Although intended for wearing in the middle of the straps they were often worn at the base. An order of 16 May 1944 prescribed shoulder loop insignia in light grey chain-stitch if the correct branch colour was unavailable. The deteriorating supply situation meant that shoulder loops were not manufactured for, or supplied to, all units, especially for newly formed ones with high 'house-numbers', so in practice the reintroduction of shoulder branch and unit insignia was mainly limited to officers and senior NCOs (many of whom had in fact been wearing them before February 1944).



A Panzer field officer in Italy, summer 1944, wearing the standard field-grey M1935 officer's service cap and the M1940 olive tropical tunic with non-regulation embellishments – he has added the entire M1934 pink-piped black skull patches from his black Panzer Feldjacke. His decorations include Iron Crosses awarded in both World Wars and the German Cross in Gold; on his left sleeve we can just make out what seems to be the 'AFRIKA' cuff title; yet he has not replaced the factory-applied all-ranks' breast eagle with an officer's pattern. (ECPA)

Special black uniform and insignia for tank crews

Most personnel in Panzer battalions, regiments and brigades, Panzer

NORMANDY & NORTHERN FRANCE, 1944

1: Grenadier, Grenadier-Regiment 914; Omaha Beach, Normandy, 6 June 1944

2: Gefreiter, Panzergrenadier-Lehr-Regiment 901; Barenton, August 1944

3: Oberwachtmeister, Armoured Rocket-Launcher Battery; Normandy, June 1944



NORMANDY & NORTHERN FRANCE, 1944

1: Hauptmann, Festungs-Grenadier-Regiment 857; Caen, July 1944

2: Leutnant, Heeres-Flakartillerie-Abteilung 281; Falaise Pocket, August 1944

3: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 192; Lille, September 1944

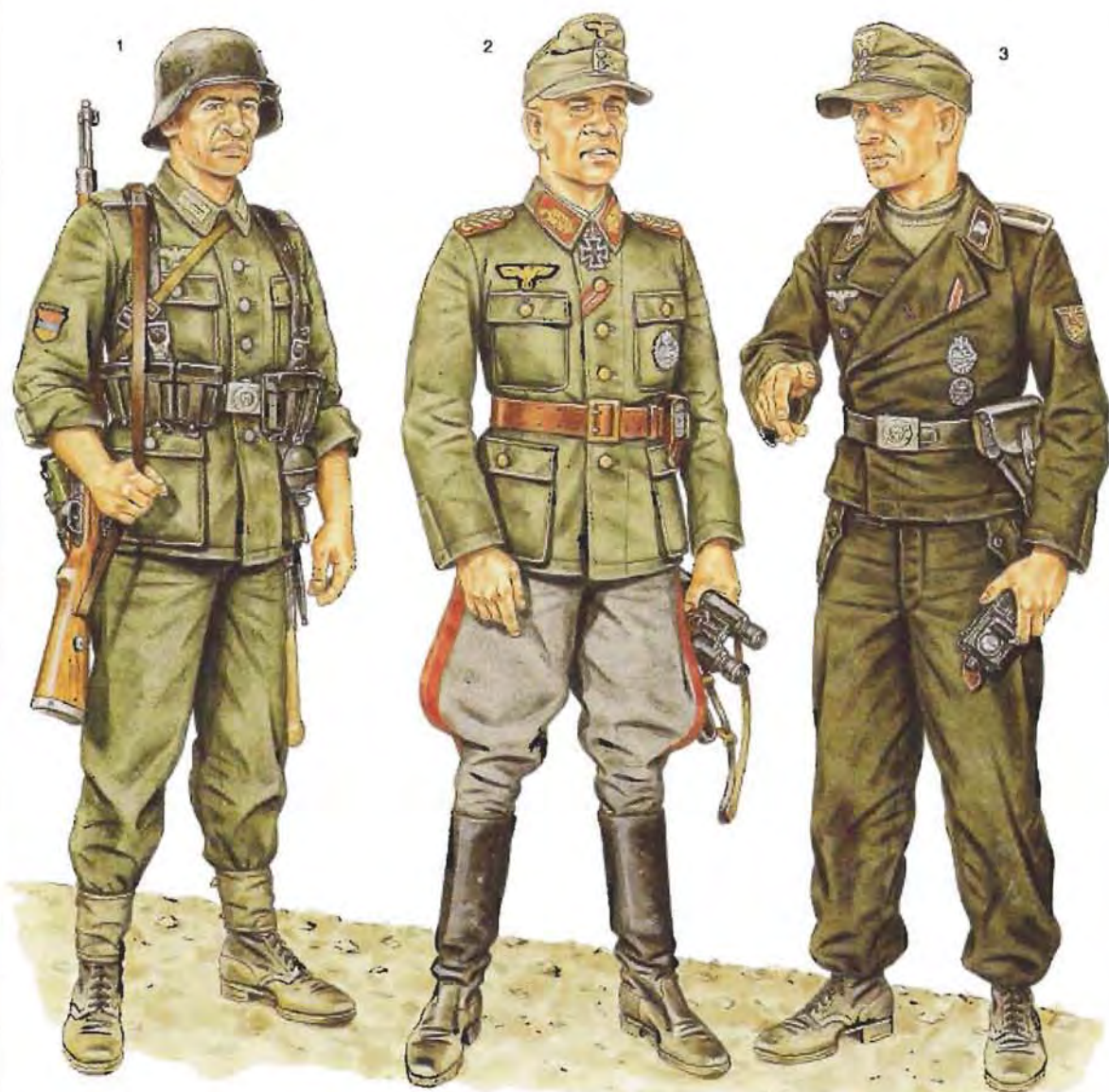


SOUTHERN FRANCE, 1944

1: Legionär, Armenisches Feld-Bataillon I/198; Toulon, August 1944

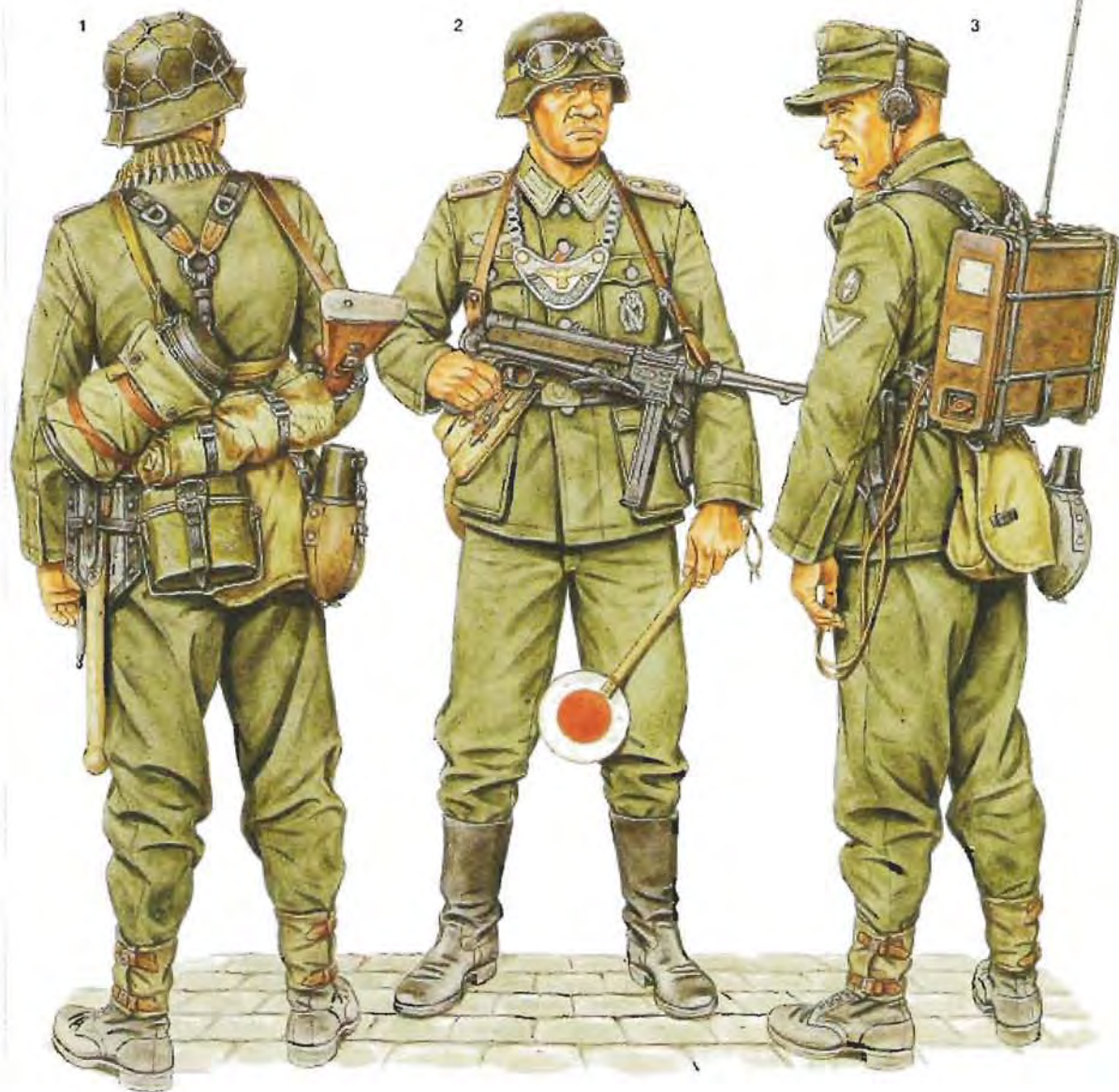
2: Generalmajor, 11. Panzer-Division; Alsace, September 1944

3: Unterfeldwebel, Panzer-Abteilung 2113; Lorraine, September 1944



BELGIUM AND NETHERLANDS, 1944

- 1: Grenadier, Grenadier-Regiment 1222; Arnhem corridor, October 1944
- 2: Feldwebel, Feldgendarmarie-Trupp (Mot.) 189; Dutch-Belgian border, September 1944.
- 3: Obergefreiter, Grenadier-Regiment 1039; Breskens Pocket, October 1944



ARDENNES OFFENSIVE, 1944-1945

- 1: Unteroffizier, Füsilier-Regiment 39, December 1944
2: Oberstleutnant, Pionier-Bataillon 33, December 1944
3: Panzerbergrenadier, I Panzergrenadier-Bataillon,
Führer-Begleit-Brigade, January 1945

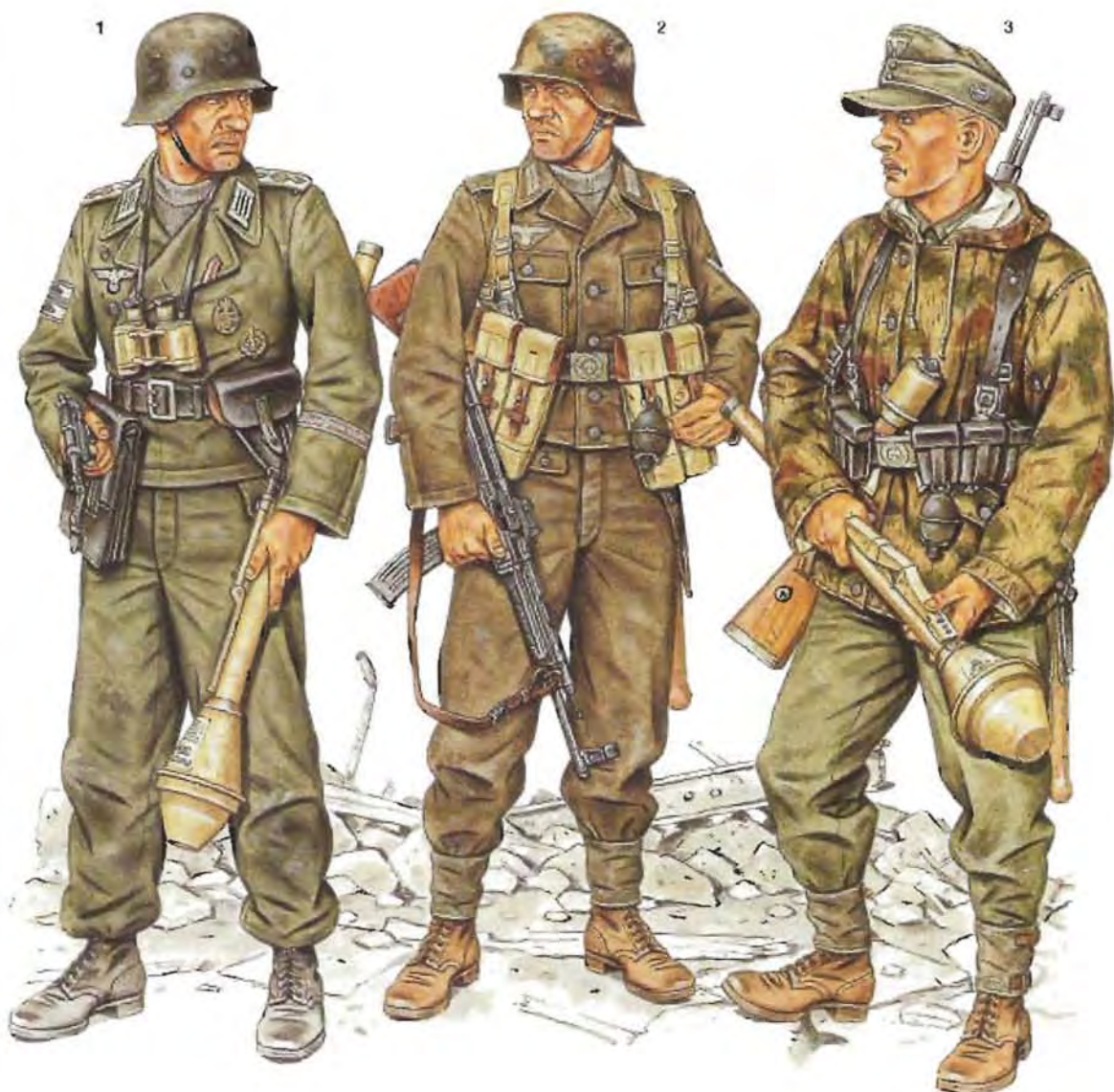


WESTERN GERMANY, 1945

1: Oberleutnant, Panzergrenadier-Bataillon 2106; Cologne, March 1945

2: Gefreiter, Grenadier-Regiment 40; Ruhr Pocket, April 1945

3: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 156; Reichswald Forest, February 1945



SICILY AND SOUTHERN ITALY, 1943

1: Wehrmachtoberpfarrer, 26. Panzer-Division; Volturno, November 1943

2: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 64; Salerno, September 1943

3: Unterfeldwebel, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 115; Sicily, July 1943



CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ITALY, 1944-45

1: Obergefreiter, Jäger-Regiment 25; Gothic Line, September 1944

2: Unteroffizier, Reichsgrenadier-Regiment Hoch- und Deutschmeister; Gustav Line, February 1944

3: Stabsfeldwebel, Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 26; River Po, April 1945



and Panzergrenadier divisional anti-tank battalions and many on Panzer divisional staffs wore the M1940 black field cap; M1934, M1936 or M1942 field jacket and trousers, with grey shirt, black tie and black lace-up shoes, or marching boots for Armoured Engineer companies. (Against regulations some general officers in Panzer divisions wore the special black uniform with the *Alt-Larisch* collar-patches, sometimes even adding red trouser pipings and stripes.)

A black wool version of the M1942 other ranks' field cap saw limited issue. All sidecaps were superseded from 11 June 1943 by the black wool version of the M1943 peaked field cap, but the peak got in the way when using the optical equipment inside an armoured fighting vehicle; those who had them often preferred to keep the old sidecaps, and this was widely tolerated. Against regulations many officers and senior NCOs also preferred the field-grey officers' M1935 peaked service cap, M1934 'old style' peaked field cap, or the other ranks' M1935 peaked service cap.

Armoured vehicle crews and mechanics and Armoured Artillery and Rocket-Launcher crews were issued cotton one-piece overalls in mouse-grey, field-grey, off-white, light brown or reed-green. Panzer crews sometimes dyed these black, and some crews on the Italian Front had them privately manufactured in Italian camouflage pattern. Crews of armoured car companies wore the M1941 Panzer denim uniform in reed-green herringbone twill or in white or mouse-grey cotton as a fatigue and summer field uniform.

The M1942 Panzer denim uniform in reed-green or light grey HBT was issued for all armoured vehicle crews, including Assault Artillery crews and mechanics. It comprised a loose-fitting jacket with a large left breast pocket with buttoned scalloped flap, with two parallel rows of five concealed buttons on the right side; these allowed adjustment so that it could be worn over the black or field-grey uniform in cold weather, or alone in hot weather. The trousers had a large left thigh pocket. This uniform was also privately acquired in splinter, marsh and Italian M1929 forest-pattern camouflage material.

See MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4), for more detailed descriptions of these uniforms and their insignia worn on them.

Special field-grey uniform and insignia

Eleven categories of troops serving on the Western and Italian Fronts in armoured vehicles but not wearing the black Panzer uniform were issued the special field-grey uniform. These were Assault Artillery; Armoured Artillery with Wespe and Hummel self-propelled guns; army motorised Anti-Aircraft battalions; Armoured Engineers; Armoured Trains; Anti-Tank and Infantry Gun companies on half-tracks in infantry and Panzergrenadier units; Panzergrenadier battalions on half-tracks; Armoured Rocket-Launcher batteries; towed and self-propelled Anti-Tank units in infantry, rifle or mountain divisions or Army or Corps



This Oberst commanding a Panzer regiment in Italy, 1944, wears the olive M1940 tropical field cap; the eagle insignia is woven in light bluish-grey on rust-brown, and a chevron of pink Waffenfarbe (officially discontinued from 8 September 1942) encloses the national cockade, also on a rust-brown patch. The olive M1940 tropical tunic bears the all-ranks collar patches and breast eagle, in light bluish-grey on rust-brown. On the lower lapel he has added the aluminium skulls from the collar patches of his special black uniform – a practice first seen in North Africa. The M1940 light olive tie is worn with a non-regulation dark shirt. His decorations include the Iron Cross 1st Class and German Cross in Gold, a Wound Badge and an unidentified foreign cross. (Brian Davis)



This cheerful Obergefreiter taken prisoner at Lugo near Ravenna, Italy, in January 1945 also wears field-made camouflage trousers, this time in German Zeltbahn 31 splinter-pattern, and cut loose in apparent imitation of M1942 Panzer trousers. His field cap and tunic are of M1943 pattern, with M1936 rank chevrons, and radioman's lightning-flash arm badge in infantry white, on dark green backings.

HQ units; Anti-Tank units under Army or Corps HQ command equipped with the Elephant self-propelled gun; and Signals (not Armoured Signals) personnel in armoured vehicles. General officers sometimes wore this uniform with *Alt-Larisch* collar patches and breeches.

This uniform consisted of the field-grey M1940 version of the black Panzer field uniform – field jacket, trousers, grey shirt, black tie and black leather lace-up boots. Officers wore the M1938 peakless or M1943 peaked field cap, other ranks the M1934 or M1942 peakless or M1943 peaked field cap.

On the jacket officers wore standard M1935 collar patches, NCOs and men M1940 mouse-grey standard 'guards braids' on a field-grey backing sewn onto the rectangular collar patches, piped in branch-colour: bright red for Assault and Armoured Artillery and army Anti-Aircraft battalions; black for Armoured Engineers; pink for Armoured Trains; white for Anti-Tank and Infantry Gun companies in infantry units; grass-green for Panzergrenadier battalions on half-tracks and Anti-Tank and Infantry Gun companies in Panzergrenadier units; and bordeaux red (piping sometimes omitted) for Armoured Rocket-Launcher batteries.

All ranks of Anti-Tank units in infantry, rifle or mountain divisions or Army or HQ units wore the pink-piped field-grey rectangular collar patches with skulls; Signals, lemon yellow-piped field-grey patches with skulls; and self-propelled Anti-Tank units in Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions or Elephant-equipped Army or Corps HQ units, pink-piped black patches with skulls as for Panzer regiments. Photos from mid-1941 onwards also show many examples of these patches worn with the skulls removed, and an order to this effect was published (or repeated) in January 1943. It was equally often disregarded.

Troops also wore the reed-green fatigue and summer field uniform with appropriate branch insignia.

Special insignia for other branches

The élite divisions continued to develop distinctive insignia. From 31 December 1943 personnel (including general officers) of the divisional staff and Reichsgrenadier-Regiment Hoch- und Deutschmeister of the 44th Infantry Division wore on their shoulder boards/straps a grey aluminium 'Stalingrad Cross' – the badge of the medieval Teutonic Order with the campaign title commemorating the original division's destruction at Stalingrad in January 1943. The cross was also worn as an unofficial unit cap badge. A cuff title, probably for the right cuff, was awarded the division on 26 February 1945 when it had transferred to Hungary. Since 3 June 1943 the Grenadier Regiment had already been allowed the unique distinction of carrying the regimental flag of the 4th Infantry Regiment Hoch- und Deutschmeister of the former Austrian Army, with a black imperial Habsburg eagle on a golden yellow ground.

The 106th Feldherrnhalle Panzer Brigade (2106 Panzer and Panzergrenadier Bns) wore the woven brown 'Feldherrnhalle' title on the left cuff and the bronze SA 'victory runes' (Siegrunen) shoulder board/strap monogram. During the Ardennes offensive the Führer-Begleit-Brigade wore the GD shoulder-board/strap monogram and 'Großdeutschland' right cuff title; personnel assigned to guarding Hitler's

various headquarters added the *'Führer-Hauptquartier'* title in hand-embroidered gold wire or machine-embroidered yellow thread Gothic script and edging on a black cloth band, or hand-embroidered aluminium wire 'Sütterlin' script and edging on a black doeskin band. During that operation the Führer-Grenadier-Brigade wore the *'Großdeutschland'* cuff title and GD monogram.

Hitler hoped that strong National Socialist political leadership would transform the understrength, under-equipped and poorly trained **Volksgrenadier** divisions raised after July 1944 into elite units; on 8 October 1944 a distinctive badge, probably a monogram incorporating the letters VGD, was planned, but this was never manufactured.

From 1941 personnel of a number of units, usually in Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions, wore **unofficial cap badges** on field headgear; these were usually aluminium reproductions of the divisional vehicle sign, worn on the left side just above the ear. The only division on the Western Front with such a badge was the 116th Panzer, who wore the 'Windhund' greyhound in an oval filled in with black. There were three on the Italian Front: 34th Infantry – white and blue shield; 5th Mountain – chamois; and 90th Panzergrenadier – sword over Sardinia map.

On the Italian Front many members of the 5th Mountain Division, which had helped capture Crete in May-June 1941, wore the **'cuff title KRETA'**, and members of the 90th Panzergrenadier Division wore the **'AFRIKA'** title awarded on 15 January 1943 to Afrikakorps veterans. Individual soldiers reassigned to other units retained these titles until May 1945 and, if awarded another title, could wear one above the other on the same cuff.

On 20 August 1944 the staff and cadets of the VI Infantry Officer Candidate (Fahnenjunker) School at Metz in German-annexed Lorraine, under GenMaj Joachim von Siegroth, joined the Krause Battle-Group of Stössel Regiment, 462 Volksgrenadier Division, and held out from 27 August to 20 November 1944 against attacks by US forces. On 24 October 1944 a cuff title was awarded to members of the school who had fought in the battle, and cadets of the school, which was subsequently relocated to Meseritz, central Germany, could wear it whilst training at the school. The black cloth band bore the title *'Metz 1944'* in machine-embroidered silver-grey cotton Roman script and matching edging.

Until 1 September 1943 **reconnaissance battalions** in infantry and mountain divisions wore the cavalry's golden-yellow branch colour, but on that date they were remustered to the infantry as Fusilier Battalions wearing infantry white branch colour. In order to preserve the traditional cavalry association 57 battalions throughout the army were on 23 February 1944 named 'Divisional Fusilier Battalions (AA)', wearing golden-yellow and using cavalry ranks and unit designations. Only the 34th Fusilier Battalion, originally part of 6th Cavalry Regiment, wore its traditional 'dragoon eagle' cap badge. On 25 March 1943 all Armoured Reconnaissance battalions were required to wear the Panzer pink branch colour, but many retained golden-yellow, and on 29 November 1944 this colour was once more prescribed for all such battalions.

The personnel of **military internal security units** apparently feared victimisation if captured by Allied troops, and from early 1944 tended only to wear duty gorgets, armbands and aiguillettes which could be



An Unteroffizier from a Panzergrenadier regiment captured at Castiglione di Lago near Perugia, Italy, July 1944. He wears the M1940 reed-green summer field tunic with M1938 shoulder straps and M1940 collar patches and breast eagle. The cap is the light olive M1940 tropical model; the loose trousers are made up in Italian M1929 forest-pattern camouflage. Note details of other ranks' belt and M1939 leather infantry Y-straps; he carries his bread bag slung. (Brian Davis)



Northern Italy, January 1945: Hauptmann Leopold Berger, of 296th Mountain Regiment, 157th Mountain Division, openly displays his gilt regimental numerals on his shoulder boards in accordance with the regulation of 16 February 1944. His M1935 tunic, collar patches and breast eagle are clear; just cut off by the left edge of the photo is his M1939 Mountain Troops arm badge. Note that he wears an M1943 field cap identified by its single flap button as Waffen-SS issue, with aluminium crown piping and Army insignia. (Friedrich Herrmann)

easily discarded before capture. Thus from 19 March 1944 Military Police (Feldgendarmarie) no longer wore their M1939 arm badge and cuff title, retaining only their distinctive M1939 duty gorget. Field Police (Feldjäger) wore the uniform of their original branch of service and a duty gorget with the inscription 'Feldjägerkorps'; they were prescribed, but rarely wore, Fj shoulder strap monograms; and a red armband on the left upper or lower sleeve with an official stamp and 'Oberkommando der Wehrmacht/Feldjäger', in black Roman letters. Wehrmacht Patrol Service (Wehrmacht-Streifendienst) personnel wore their original uniforms with M1935 officers' aiguillettes, and on the left upper sleeve the black-on-white 'Wehrmacht/Streifendienst' armband. Troops guarding District Command HQs wore the 'Kommandantur' gorget; railway guards, the 'Zugwachabteilung' gorget, and railway-station guards the 'Bahnhofswache' gorget.

Uniforms and insignia of Army Chaplains

Divisional chaplains were classified as senior career Army Officials (Beamten) with equivalent officers' rank, the Chaplain-General (Feldbischof der Wehrmacht) being equivalent to a general officer. From 8 March 1937 chaplains wore the M1935 officer's service dress cap with matt aluminium chin cords and buttons, violet branch-colour pipings and a small aluminium or hand-embroidered Gothic cross between the eagle and the wreathed cockade. A chaplain-general had a gold wire crown and lower cap band piping and violet upper cap band piping (later changed to gold wire); a gold wire or cellean chin cord with gold buttons, and from 1 January 1943 a gold metal eagle, Gothic cross, wreath and cockade. The M1934 'old style' field cap with aluminium or gold thread insignia was also worn, as were the following caps, with aluminium or gold wire crown and front flap pipings, normal army insignia and the Gothic cross badge: M1938 peakless field cap; M1936 mountain cap, introduced 21 July 1942 as the M1942 peaked field cap; and the M1943 peaked field cap. The steel helmet could also be worn in the front line.

The M1935 officer's field tunic had a breast eagle but no shoulder boards, rank being indicated by M1935 violet facing cloth collar patches with two bright wire embroidered 'guards braids' with violet centre cords, gold for the chaplain-general, silver for chaplains ranked as field-officers (*Wehrmachtdekan-Wehrmachtpfarrer*). No collar patches were worn by a war-substantive chaplain ranked as captain (*Wehrmachtkriegspfarrer*), this rank being phased out from October 1942. As non-combatants chaplains wore a white armband, with a violet centre stripe broken by a red cross, on the left upper sleeve; but against regulations some chaplains carried a holstered pistol on their M1934 officers' brown belt for self-protection in the front line.

The full-length pocketless field-grey cassock had a violet standing collar, front and cuff pipings and breast eagle. On their chests Protestant chaplains wore an aluminium cross and chain, and Catholic chaplains a crucifix with a black wooden insert, worn by chaplains-general in gold. For chaplains the M1935 field greatcoat had no shoulder boards, chaplains-general showing violet lapel linings.

The uniform and insignia of other Officials are described in MAA 326, *The German Army 1939-45* (3).

Uniforms and insignia of European Volunteers

Italian troops in RSI support units with German divisions on the Italian Front wore normal Italian Republican Army uniforms and insignia. From 30 July 1944 individual Italians serving as 'Volunteers' (on the same basis as Hilfswillige on the Eastern Front) in divisional service units were ordered to wear Italian M1940 or German uniforms with German rank insignia and a national badge on the left upper sleeve. The design of the badge is unconfirmed, but was either a black printed armshield with *ITALIA* in white over an inner shield with green-white-red horizontal bars, or a white embroidered eagle and lictor's fasces badge as worn by the Italian 29th SS Infantry Division.

Uniforms and insignia of Osttruppen

From January 1943 ROA personnel in the Eastern Battalions wore standard German uniforms with a Tsarist-style red and blue cap cockade and modified Tsarist rank and collar insignia – illustrated in MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4) – and on the left upper sleeve an armshield featuring a blue St Andrew's Cross. In 1944 some troops were issued a distinctive light blue-grey field uniform – possibly using surplus French Army stocks of M1915 'horizon blue' material – with M1943 collar and shoulder insignia and armshield. The pullover field tunic resembled a Soviet M1935 *gymnastiorka*, open at the chest and secured by three field-grey pebbled buttons; it had two breast pockets and two side pockets with V-shaped buttoned flaps, and single-button cuffs. The trousers were worn with M1941 anklets.

From 18 March 1944 personnel who appeared to be 'worthy in character, general performance and political reliability' were permitted German rank insignia and collar patches, a distinction more likely to be gained by battalions integrated into German infantry regiments than independent battalions. In practice ROA officers wore M1943 ROA or M1935 German officers' collar patches, and German shoulder boards with white infantry underlay, while NCOs and men wore M1943 ROA or M1940 German collar patches and M1943 ROA rank-bars on German shoulder straps piped in white. On 2 March 1945 personnel were ordered to remove their German breast eagles, a command often ignored, and German cadres to remove their ROA armshields, to perpetuate the fiction that the ROA/KONR were independent armed forces allied to Germany.

Cossack troops in France wore standard German Army uniforms with breast eagles, M1942 'lance' collar patches and M1943 ROA rank insignia. From 18 March 1944 some troops adopted German collar patches, and many officers added German shoulder boards with white underlay for infantry battalions and golden-yellow for cavalry battalions. Other ranks



On 20 April 1945 Generalleutnant Max Pemsel, commanding 6th Mountain Division in Norway, was appointed Chief of Staff to the German-Italian Liguria Army, only to see it surrender 12 days later on 2 May. His M1935 service cap and tunic bear conventional general officer's distinctions in gold and bright red. At his throat are the Knight's Crosses of the Iron Cross and the War Merit Cross with Swords; in his button hole and on his left breast pocket are the 1914 Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon and 1st Class decoration, both with 1939 clasps for subsequent World War II awards; and note the very long ribbon bar above. General Pemsel went on to serve in the West German Bundeswehr, and could thus claim the rare distinction of having served in three German Armies. (Brian Davis)



The disparity in uniforms and insignia and the dejected appearance of these troops captured by the French Expeditionary Corps in Italy, 1944, make a striking contrast with the smartness and confidence of the early war years. The private (left foreground) wears the M1943 tunic with regulation M1940 collar patches, shoulder straps and breast eagle. The young Unteroffizier (centre foreground) has the M1942 tunic with M1940 breast eagle, to which he has attached M1935 dark green collar facing and bright aluminium NCO braid, M1938 collar patches, and long-obsolete M1935 pointed dark green shoulder straps without piping. (Brian Davis)

wore M1943 ROA or Cossack shoulder straps or M1940 German shoulder straps with white or golden-yellow piping, all with M1943 ROA/Cossack rank insignia. The M1943 peaked field cap was worn with German or Cossack badges. A red cloth armshield, with additional 1-4 white diagonal stripes probably indicating different battalions, was worn on the left upper sleeve, sometimes with a ROA armshield above.

Eastern Legion battalions continued to wear Legion armshields and German breast eagles as well as the M1942 cap badges, collar patches and shoulder board/strap rank insignia (described and illustrated in MAA 330) until May 1945. Relatively few personnel appear to have adopted German collar patches and shoulder boards/straps with infantry white underlays/pipings after 18 March 1944 – probably because they were considered less reliable than the ROA and Cossacks. German officer and NCO cadres wore German uniforms and insignia with the Legion armshield on the right upper arm.

Medals and awards

By 1944 the German soldier was entitled to wear a substantial number of medals, ribbons, campaign and qualification badges on the field uniform. This may have bolstered morale, but also made much-decorated soldiers obvious targets for snipers.

The principal **medal for bravery and leadership** in the front line remained the Iron Cross, displayed in its 2nd Class by a button hole ribbon and in the 1st Class by a black and silver pin-on cross on the left breast pocket. The German Cross in Gold might be awarded to personnel who already had the Iron Cross 1st Class, and was worn as a swastika within a gilt sunburst on the right breast pocket. For further acts of conspicuous gallantry or leadership four classes of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross might be awarded progressively, and were worn at the throat: the basic Knight's Cross, with Oakleaves, with Oakleaves and Swords, and with Oakleaves, Swords and Diamonds – the latter supreme award being granted to only a handful of very distinguished officers.

The War Merit Cross with or without Swords for acts of bravery or leadership away from the front line was in four classes: 2nd Class button hole ribbon, 1st Class cross pinned to the left breast pocket, and silver and gold classes of Knight's Cross worn at the throat. Soldiers admitted to the 'Roll of Honour of the German Army', equivalent to the British Army's 'mentioned in dispatches', were from 30 January 1944 awarded a gilt metal wreathed swastika clasp to be worn in the button hole on the Iron Cross ribbon.



Cotentin Peninsula, France, summer 1944: a *Feldwebel* of the Russian Liberation Army (ROA) reports to an officer while a German soldier looks on. The Russian NCO is probably from Ostbataillon 439, assigned as 4th Bn to Grenadier-Regiment 726, 716. Infanterie-Division. He wears a M1935 field tunic with the applied ROA rank insignia of 1942, superseded by January 1943 regulations; and the M1943 ROA arm shield - blue saltire on white shield edged red, on dark green backing shield with white or yellow lettering. (Friedrich Herrmann)

Four combat qualification badges were worn on the left breast pocket: the silver Infantry Assault Badge for infantry, rifle and mountain troops (bronze for motorised infantry); the silver Tank Battle Badge for tank crews (bronze for Panzergrenadiers and armoured car crews); the dull grey Army Anti-Aircraft Badge; and the silver General Assault Badge for other branches, including artillery, anti-tank, engineer and medical personnel. Apart from the Flak badge these were initially awarded for participation in three separate actions, but higher classes were later added.

The Close Combat Clasp, Sniper's Badge, Tank Destruction Badge, and the similar award for shooting down an aircraft with light weapons are described in MAA 330, *The German Army 1939-45* (4). Awards such as the Narvik, Cholm, Crimea, Demyansk and Kuban Shields and the Anti-Partisan War Badge, awarded for service on the Eastern Front, could be seen worn by troops transferred from that theatre to the Western and Italian Fronts - see MAA 330. However, only one campaign shield was awarded for service on the latter fronts, and that was unofficial. The submarine base of Lorient in southern Brittany held out as an isolated 'fortress' from 6 August 1944 until 8 May 1945. In December 1944 the base commander, Admiral Henneke, approved a locally-made shield for wear on the left arm, in white metal, copper, aluminium or brass; this featured a defiant warrior naked except for helmet, shield and sword bestriding the base, with the date above and name below. How many were made is unknown.



Normandy, June 1944: mail for soldiers of 116. Panzer-Division, which would be badly mauled in the fighting against the Allied bridgehead. The Oberfeldwebel handing it out wears the M1942 reed-green summer tunic with unusual buttoned cuffs; M1938 dark green shoulder straps, M1936 arm chevrons, and on his M1943 field cap the division's unofficial *Windhund* badge. The Oberfeldwebel (centre) - probably a platoon leader in Panzergrenadier-Regiment 60

or 156 - wears the M1940 special field-grey uniform, now no longer the sole preserve of SP gun units but beginning to be issued to the half-track mechanised infantry. On his collar M1940 field-grey patches with standard 'guards braids' are outlined in grass-green *Waffenfarbe* piping. Note this NCO's MP40 magazine pouches, non-standard 10x50 *Volgländer* binoculars, and on his left breast the Close Combat Clasp above the Iron Cross 1st Class. (Brian Davis)

Table: SELECTIVE LIST OF BRANCH AND UNIT INSIGNIA OF UNITS ON THE WESTERN AND ITALIAN FRONTS 10 JULY 1943-8 MAY 1945

Units	Branch colour	Shoulder-strap insignia		Other distinctions
		Western Front 8.6.1944 – 8.5.1945	Italian Front 10.7.1943 – 29.5.1945	
Combat Troops – Staff (Kommandobehörde)				
7 Army Group (Heeresgruppe) Staffs	White	G (B,D,G,H,Oberheim)	G (B,C)	-
10 Army (Armee) Staffs	White	A / 1,7,11,15,19,25 (Blumentritt)	A / 10,14 (Ligurien)	-
2 Reinl. Corps (Armeeabteilung) Staffs	White	None (Von Lüttwitz)	None (Von Zangen)	-
1 Armoured Army (Panzerarmee) Staff	Pink	A / West/5	-	-
30 Corps (Korps) Staffs (* Corps had Latin numbers)	White	Voege/v13,25,30,37,47,53, 58, 62-4,66-7,74,80-2,84, Kniess/85,86,88-91,Feldt	14,51,Venetisches Küstenland/73,75, 87/Lombardia, Adriatisches Küstenland/97 14,76	-
2 Armoured Corps (Panzerkorps) Staff *	Pink	-	-	-
Combat Troops – Infantry (Infanterie)				
47 Infantry (Infanterie) Division Staffs	White	D / 16,49,77,84-5,89,106, 176,180,189-90,198,219,249, 269,271-2,275-7,319,331, 338,352-3,361,363,416,703, 716,719, Deichmann,Hamburg,Rassler	D / 34,65,71,92,94,98,148, 162, 278,334, 356,362,715	-
1 Airlanding (Luftlande) Div. Staff	White	D / 91	-	-
1 Infantry (Reichsgrenadier) Div. Staff	White	-	Stalingrad cross	-
23 Static (bodenständig) Inf. Div Staffs	White	D / 59,64,70,226,242-5,265-6, 326,343-4, 346-8,708-9,711-2	D / 232,237,305	-
3 Line Infantry (Grenadier) Div. Staffs	White	D / 36,553,559	-	-
28 Infantry (Volkgrenadier) Div. Staffs	White	D / 9,12,16,18-9,28,36,47, 62,79,167,183, 212,246,256-7, 272,277,326,340,352,361, 363,462,553,559-60,708	-	-
2 Line Infantry (Grenadier) Brigades	White	1005,Baur	-	-
231 Line Infantry (Grenadier) Regts	White	36-1303 (179 Regts)	80,107,117,131-2,145-7,191, 194,211,253,267,274,276,281, 285-8,289-90,303,314,329, 576-8,725, 735,754-6,869-71, 956,992-4,954-6,1043-8, 1059-60	-
3 Line Infantry (Füßler) Regts	White	26-7,39	-	-
7 Fortress Inf. (Festungsgrenadier) Regts	White	F / 729,739,851-2,854-5,858	-	-
3 Rifle (Jäger) Div. Staffs	Light green	None (Alpen)	D / 42,114	Jäger badges
6 Rifle (Jäger) Regts	Light green	None (1 Alpen,2 Alpen)	25,40,721,741	Jäger badges
3 Rifle Field (Feld(L)) Div. Staffs	White	D / 18-8	-	-
1 Assault (Luftwaffe-Sturm) Div. Staff	Gold-yellow	-	D/19	-
9 Rifle (Feld(L)) Regts	White	31-8, 46-8	-	-
3 Rifle (Feld(L)) Regts	Gold-yellow	-	37-8, 45	-
5 Mountain (Gebirgs) Division Staffs	Light green	D / 2,157	D / 5,175/8,188	Edelweiss badges
10 Mountain (Gebirgs) Regts	Light green	136-7,296-7	85,100,296-7,901-4	Edelweiss badges
7 Reserve (Reserve) Division Staffs	White	D / 158-9,165,172,182,189	D / 157	-
14 Reserve Inf (Reserve-Grenadier) Regts	White	9,15,18,28,34,36,79,112, 213,221,251,342	7,157	-
1 Res. Mtn (Reserve-Gebirgs) Div. Staff	Light green	-	D / 188	Edelweiss badges
3 Reserve Mtn (Reserve-Gebirgs) Regts	Light green	-	1,136-9	Edelweiss badges
71 Replacement (Ersatz) Bns		3-1560 (50 Bns in divisional series)	3-1057 (23 Bns in divisional series)	-
1 Training (Feldausbildungs) Div. Staff	White	D / 149	-	-
2 Training (Feldausbildungs) Inf Regts	White	1301-3	-	-
5 Special Div. Staff (Divisionsstab z.b.V)	White	D / 136,406,806,816-7,	-	-
10 Depot (Division Nr.) Div. Staffs	White	D / 176,180,190,405,462,471, 476,526,805, 905	-	-
7 Depot (Grenadier-Ersatz) Inf Regts	White	22,30,269,520,211,253,536	-	-

Units	Branch colour	Shoulder-strap insignia		Other distinctions
		Western Front 6.6.1944 – 8.5.1945	Italian Front 10.7.1943 – 29.5.1945	
Combat Troops – Mobile Troops (Schnelle Truppen)				
7 Armoured (Panzer) Division Staffs	Pink	D / 2,9,11,21,115	D / 16,26	Black Panzer uniform
1 Armoured (Panzer-Lehr) Div. Staff	Pink	D / L	-	Black Panzer uniform
3 Armoured (Panzer) Bns.	Pink	106-7,108	-	Black Panzer uniform
8 Armoured (Panzer) Regts.	Pink	3,15-6,33,100,130	2,26	Black Panzer uniform
7 Armoured (Panzer) Bns.	Pink	5,103,115,2106-7	103,115,129,190	Black Panzer uniform
12 Armd. Recce. (Panzeraufklärung) Bns.	Pink	A / 2,21	-	Black Panzer uniform
12 Armd. Recce. (Panzeraufklärung) Bns.	Gold yellow	A / 9,11,103,115-6,125,130	A / 16,26,103,115,129	Black Panzer uniform
5 Armd. Inf. (Panzergranadier) Div. Staffs	Grass green	D / 3,15,25	D / 3,15,29,90	Grey Panzer uniform
25 Armd. Infantry (Panzergranadier) Regts	Grass green	2,8,10,11,29,35,60,104,110-1,115,119,125,156,192,304	9,64,76,79,104,115,155,200,361	Grey Panzer uniform
2 Armd. Infantry (Panzergranadier) Regts.	Pink	901-2	-	Grey Panzer uniform
2 Armd. Infantry (Panzergranadier) Bns.	Grass green	2106-7	-	Grey Panzer uniform
5 Motorized (Grenadiermot.) Regts	White	8,29,1000	8,15,29,71	-
5 Reconnaissance (Aufklärung) Bns.	Gold yellow	-	A / 44,114,142,194,236	-
39 Reconnaissance (Füsilier) Bns.	White	59,64,70,84-5,149,176,180,185,189-90,212,226,272,275-7,331,344,346-7,361,363,405,560,708,712,716,719,1089,1316,1553	34,148,192,198,232,237,278,715	-
14 Div. Recce. (Divisions-Füsilier (A.A.)) Bns	Gold yellow	12,26,82,256,269,271,352-3	65,171,305,334,356,362	-
1 Div. Recce. (Divisions-Füsilier (A.A.)) Bn	Gold yellow	-	34	Dragoon eagle badge
17 Div. Recce. (Füsilier) Coys.	White	9,47,167,246,257,271,276-7,340,352,361,363,553,559,716,1462,1575	-	-
91 Anti-tank (Panzerjäger) Bns.	Pink	P / 3-1818 (69 Bns in divisional series)	P / 3,16,26,29,33-4,46,95,114,142,165,171,190,192,194,198,232,236,278,305,334,356,362,715,1048,1057	-
Combat Troops – Artillery (Artillerie)				
92 Artillery (Artillerie) Regts.	Bright red	3-1818 (72 Regts in divisional series)	3,29,33-4,96,142,165,171,190,192,194,198,232,236-7,278,305,334,356,362,661,1048,671	-
6 Artillery (Artillerie) Bns.	Bright red	28,656,663,6D (Alpen)	-	-
5 Mtn. Artillery (Gebirgsartillerie) Regts	Bright red	111,191,1057	95,1057,1088	Edelweiss badges
8 Armd. Artillery (Panzerartillerie) Regts	Bright red	103,119,130,146,155,1818	16,93	Black Panzer uniform
11 Assault Artillery (Sturmartillerie) Bns.	Bright red	243-4,290,341,394,667,902,905,911	907,914	Grey Panzer uniform
2 Assault Artillery (Sturmartillerie) Bns.	Bright red	200	242	Grey Panzer uniform
16 Army AA Art. (Heeresflak) Bns	Bright red	273,277,281,287,292,305,311-2,315,1026,1036	274,304,312-3,315	Grey Panzer uniform
3 AA Art. (Flak) Coys	Bright red	36,191	1048	Grey Panzer uniform
11 Rocket Launcher (Völk-Werfer) Bns	Bord. red	4,7-9,15-20	5	-
22 Rocket Launcher (Werfer) Regts.	Bord. red	1,2,14,21-6,51,53-5,83-9	56,71	-
Combat Troops – Engineers (Pioniere)				
92 Engineer (Pionier) Bns.	Black	3-1818 (72 Regts in divisional series)	3,33-4,80,114,142,165,171,190,232,237,278,192,194,198,305,334,356,362,715,936,1048	-
4 Mtn. Engineer (Gebirgspionier) Bns	Black	82,1057	95,1057,1088	Edelweiss badges
9 Armd. Engineer (Panzerpionier) Regts	Black	38,66,130,209,220,675	16,29,93	Black Panzer uniform
Combat Troops – Signals (Nachrichtentruppe)				
91 Signals (Nachrichten) Bns.	Lem. yellow	9-1818 (71 Bns in divisional series)	29,33-4,64,114,142,165,171,192,194,198,232,236-7,278,305,334,356,362,715,1048,1057	-

Units	Branch colour	Shoulder-strap insignia		Other distinctions
		Western Front 6.6.1944 – 8.5.1945	Italian Front 10.7.1943 – 29.5.1945	
3 Mot. Signals (Nachrichten) Bns	Lem. yellow	3,33	3	-
3 Mtn Signals (Gebirgsnachrichten) Bns	Lem. yellow	67,1057	95	Edelweiss badges
9 Arm'd. Sigs (Panzer Nachrichten) Regts	Lem. yellow	38,85,89,130,200,228	16,93,190	Black Panzer uniform
8 War Correspondent (Propaganda) Coys	Lem. yellow	605,619,624-5,643,698,698	614	PK cuff-title
Supply Troops (Versorgungstruppen)				
98 Div. Supply (Nachschubtruppen) Cdrs	Light blue	D / 3-1818 (73 Cdrs in divisional series)	N / 3-1088 (28 Cdrs in divisional series)	-
50 Supply (Versorgungs) Regts	Light blue	D / 9-1818 (39 Regts in divisional series)	D / 34,165,171,194,198,278,305,334,356,715,1048	-
65? Motor Transport (Nachschub) Cols.	Light blue	N / 3-1580 (40 Cols in divisional series)	N / 3-1088 (27 Cols. in divisional series)	-
88? Horse Transport (Nachschub) Cols.	Light blue	N / 9-1818 (89 Cols in divisional series)	N / 3,34,44,114,142,165,171,192,194,198,232,237,278,305,334,356,362,715,936,1048	Cavalry breeches, boots
4 Mtn Horse Transport (Nachschub) Cols	Light blue	N / 87,1057	N / 95,1057,1088	Cavalry legwear, Edelweiss badges
86 Horse Medical (Sanitäts) Coys – men	Dark blue	N / 9-1818 (67 Cols in divisional series)	34,44,114,142,165,171,192,194,198,232,237,278,305,334,356,362,715,936,1048	Red Cross armband
4 Mtn Med. (Gebirgs Sanitäts) Coys – men	Dark blue	67,1057	95,1057,1088	Red Cross armband
13 Mot. Medical (Sanitäts) Coys – men	Dark blue	3,25,33,60-1,66,82,130,200	3,16,29,33,93,190	Red Cross armband
91 Veterinary (Veterinär) Coys – men	Crimson	9-1818 (70 Coys in divisional series)	34-1088 (22 Coys in divisional series)	Cavalry breeches, boots
Security Troops (Sicherungstruppen)				
9 Army Rear-Area Commanders (Korück)	White	K / 517,533-5,570,588,591-2	K / 594	-
10 Dist. Comds (Oberfeldkommandantur)	White	K / 520,570,589-91,671-2,680,894	K / 379	-
64 Sub-Dist. Comds (Feldkommandantur)	White	K / 493-994 (63 Comds)	K / 1017	-
3 MP (Feldgendarmarie) Bns	Orange	690,693	692	Sleeve badge, cuff-title
77 MP (Feldgendarmarie) Troops	Orange	None (3-1560 in divisional series)	None (3-715 in divisional series)	Sleeve badge, cuff-title
Foreign Troops				
43 ROA Eastern (Ost) Bns	White	None (285,406,439,441,517,550,561,600-2,605,608,615,618,621,628-30,633-6,642-3,649,654,661,663,665-6,669,680-1,750)	None (263,339,406,412,556,560,616-7,620)	ROA arm-badge
6 Armenian Ostlegion Bns	Gold yellow	None (II/9, I/198, 810, 812-3)	None (815)	Armenian arm-badge
6 Azeri Ostlegion Bns	Green	None (807)	None (I/4 (Geb.), I/97 (Jäg.), I/101 (Jäg.), 804, 806)	Azeri arm-badge
11 Georgian Ostlegion Bns	Red	None (I/9, I/298, II/4 (Geb.), 795, 797-9, 822-3)	None (III/9, IV/125, IV/198)	Georgian arm-badge
5 North Caucasian Ostlegion Bns	Brown	None (800, 803, 835-7)	-	North Caucasian badge
9 Turkestan Ostlegion Bns	Light blue	None (781-2, 787)	None (I/29, I/44, I/101 (Jäg.), I/297, I/305, I/384)	Turkestan arm-badge
3 Volga-Tatar Ostlegion Bns	Blue/Green	None (627, 826-7)	-	Volga-Tatar badge
5 Cossack (Kosaken) Infantry Bns	White	None (II/360, 570, III/854, IV/855)	-	Cossack arm-badge
3 Cossack (Kosaken/Ostreiter) Cav. Bns	Gold yellow	None (281, 285, 403)	-	Cossack arm-badge
Army Officials (Heeresbeamten)				
26 Field Security Police (GFP) Groups	Light blue	GFP (2-3, 7-9, 30, 131, 161, 530, 540, 560, 590, 625, 644, 648, 707, 710, 712, 716-7, 737-8, 743)	GFP (610, 637, 741)	-

THE PLATES

A: NORMANDY & NORTHERN FRANCE, 1944

A1: Grenadier, Grenadier-Regiment 914; Omaha Beach, Normandy, 6 June 1944

This rifleman of the 352. Infanterie-Division opposing US landings on 'Bloody Omaha' is wearing the Zeltbahn 31 camouflage shelter-quarter with its darker side exposed, over his M1943 field tunic and trousers with M1941 field-grey canvas anklets and lace-up boots. His M1942 helmet has a regulation net and foliage. He wears the other ranks' black belt with tropical M1940 canvas infantry support Y-straps, leather rifle ammunition pouches, and slung M1930 gas mask canister. He carries the rare Walther 7.92mm Gewehr 41(W) semi-automatic rifle, a M1924 stick grenade and two M1939 'egg' grenades.

A2: Gefreiter, Panzergrenadier-Lehr-Regiment 901; Barenton, August 1944

This section first gunner is participating in the unsuccessful Operation Lüttich counterattack, 7-8 August 1944, when his regiment was destroyed. He wears the M1940 special field-grey uniform issued to all Panzer-Lehr-Division troops not entitled to the black Panzer uniform. The dark green M1935 shoulder straps have grass-green branch-colour piping and stitched Gothic L for Lehr, and an NCO candidate's aluminium shoulder loops. The M1940 collar patches are also piped grass-green; rank is indicated by the M1940 left sleeve chevron. His M1942 helmet has the second pattern cover in M1931 splinter-pattern camouflage. He wears M1939 black leather infantry Y-straps, supporting on his belt an MG42 first gunner's spares pouch and P38 Walther pistol in a soft-shell holster.

A3: Oberwachtmeister, Armoured Rocket-Launcher Battery; Normandy, June 1944

The personnel of independent armoured rocket-launcher batteries, equipped with 15cm Nebelwerfer 42 launchers mounted on half-tracks, were issued the M1940 special field-grey uniform. However, this senior NCO wears the M1942 Panzer working uniform in light grey herringbone twill with large left breast and thigh pockets. This was issued with the breast eagle attached; instead of the regulation M1942 sleeve rank insignia he has added M1935 shoulder straps and M1940 collar patches piped with artillery red (patches piped in regulation bordeaux-red were rare); note also his General Assault Badge. He wears a M1943 peaked field cap, a P38 Walther pistol in a soft-shell holster, and lace-up ankle boots; and carries 'liberated' war booty in his M1942 helmet - American cigarettes were particularly prized.

B: NORMANDY & NORTHERN FRANCE, 1944

B1: Hauptmann, Festungs-Grenadier-Regiment 857; Caen, July 1944

This battalion commander from 346. Infanterie-Division wears a privately-made field tunic in Zeltbahn 31 splinter-pattern camouflage, resembling the M1935 other ranks' tunic in cut, with added M1935 officer's collar patches, shoulder boards and breast eagle. It was not uncommon to see such jackets fairly liberally decorated; he displays the ribbons of the Iron Cross 2nd Class and Eastern Winter 1941-42 Medal, his Iron Cross 1st Class and an Infantry Assault Badge. The M1934



Members of a ROA Ostbataillon and their German cadre happy to be taken prisoner by US forces in Normandy, June 1944. All wear German uniforms and insignia; with the exception of the man wearing the fleecy cap and the ROA arm shield, the non-Germans are only recognisable by their features. (Friedrich Herrmann)

'old style' soft-peaked field cap has BeVo machine-woven insignia; the M1943 field-grey belted trousers are tucked into M1939 other ranks' short-shaft marching boots. He carries a holstered P08 Luger pistol on his blackened M1934 officer's belt, and Voigtländer short 10x50 binoculars.

B2: Leutnant, Heeres-Flakartillerie-Abteilung 281; Falaise Pocket, August 1944

This young anti-aircraft battery commander in 116. Panzer-Division wears a version of the M1940 reed-green HBT summer field tunic cut like the M1935 other ranks' field tunic with pocket pleats, with M1935 officers' collar patches, shoulder boards, and other ranks' breast eagle; note matching M1943 issue reed-green trousers. He wears a M1942 helmet, M1941 canvas anklets and lace-up ankle boots; his blackened M1934 officer's belt supports a P38 Walther pistol in a soft-shell holster, and he has tucked under it his M1938 officer's field cap with aluminium front flao and crown pipings. He displays the Army Anti-Aircraft breast badge and Iron Cross 2nd Class button hole ribbon; and carries a M1934 range finder.

B3: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 192; Lille, September 1944

This 21. Panzer-Division soldier wears the M1943 marsh-pattern hooded smock in Zeltbahn 31 splinter-pattern camouflage over his M1940 field tunic, with M1943 field-grey belted trousers, M1941 field-grey canvas anklets and ankle boots. His M1942 helmet has a field-made net of twine and hooks for foliage. He has the black other ranks' belt with field-grey painted buckle, M1939 leather infantry support Y-straps, slung M1930 gas mask canister, a P38 Walther pistol in a soft-shell holster. He carries the 8.8cm M43 Panzerschreck ('tank frightener') anti-tank rocket-launcher, a copy of the US Army 2.36in bazooka introduced late in 1943.

C: SOUTHERN FRANCE, 1944

C1: Legionär, Armenisches Feld-Bataillon I/198; Toulon, August 1944

This Armenian Legion unit formed the 4th Bn of Grenadier-

Regiment 918, 242. Infanterie-Division, and was one of few Eastern Legion units to be awarded German insignia after 18 March 1944; the battalion was destroyed in the defence of Toulon. This rifleman wears the M1943 field tunic with M1940 field-grey shoulder straps piped infantry white, M1940 other ranks' collar patches and breast eagle, and a M1942 national armshield. He wears the M1942 helmet, M1943 field-grey belted trousers, M1941 canvas anklets and ankle boots. The other ranks' black belt with leather M1939 infantry Y-straps supports rifle ammunition pouches, a bayonet and entrenching tool on his left hip, and bread bag and canteen on his right; the M1930 gas mask canister is slung round his body. He is armed with the standard Karabiner 98k rifle and a M1939 grenade.

C2: Generalmajor, 11. Panzer-Division; Alsace, September 1944

Rejecting a general officer's normal affectations such as a privately-tailored field-grey or black Panzer uniform, this divisional commander wears the regulation other ranks' M1943 field tunic with general officers' *Alt-Larisch* collar patches, shoulder boards, gold breast eagle and gilded pebbled buttons. He has a M1943 peaked field cap with gold wire crown piping; officer's breeches with general officer's bright red piping and broad stripes, and officer's riding-boots without spurs. He carries a 7.65mm Walther PPK pistol (his only personal indulgence) holstered on his M1934 officer's brown belt, and 10x50 long Zeiss binoculars. He displays the Knight's Cross, the ribbon of the Eastern Winter 1941-42 Medal and the Tank Battle Badge.

C3: Unterfeldwebel, Panzer-Abteilung 2113; Lorraine, September 1944

This 113. Panzer-Brigade tank commander wears the black M1942 Panzer jacket with M1934 shoulder straps and NCO braid, collar patches and breast eagle. He wears black

lace-up ankle-boots, and an M1936 round neck field grey sweater in preference to the regulation grey shirt and black tie. The M1943 field-grey peaked field cap suggests supply shortages of the black Panzer version. He has a P38 Walther in a soft-shell holster on his belt; and displays the Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon in his button hole, the Tank Battle Badge, a black Wound Badge (for one and two wounds), and on his left sleeve the Crimea Shield, indicating previous Eastern Front service. He carries the standard field flashlight.

D: BELGIUM AND NETHERLANDS, 1944

D1: Grenadier, Grenadier-Regiment 1222; Arnhem corridor, October 1944

This section third LMG gunner from 180. Infanterie-Division wears the M1943 field tunic and belted trousers with M1941 canvas anklets and ankle boots; his M1942 helmet has a hooked chicken-wire 'basket' cover. His belt and M1939 leather infantry Y-straps support standard rifleman's equipment: M1938 folding shovel in second pattern carrier and 84/98 bayonet on his left hip; M1931 mess kit, bread bag and camouflage shelter-quarter on his lower back; and M1931 canteen and cup behind his right hip. He has tied his gas cape pouch to the M1930 gas mask canister hanging

Part of an infantry section training in France, May 1944.

They wear M1940 and M1943 field tunics; M1942 greatcoats; M1940 trousers with M1939 short-shaft marching boots, or M1943 belted trousers with M1941 canvas anklets and ankle boots. The first gunner of the LMG team is at far right; he has a holstered P35 Radom pistol and the MG42 spares pouch on his belt. Left of him we see the second gunner, with holstered pistol, ammunition box, and stick grenades. The third gunner, with standard rifle equipment, holds the late model MG42. All three carry spare ammunition belts. (Friedrich Herrmann)



ABOVE Very different from the appearance of a German officer of 1939/40 – a Leutnant of infantry wearing the M1943 other ranks' field tunic, to which (like many) he has added non-regulation M1935 collar patches and breast eagle. Note the aluminium officer's crown piping on his M1943 field cap. (Brian Davis)



from his shoulder. He carries a Karabiner 98k rifle and a spare ammunition belt for the light machine gun.

D2: Feldwebel, Feldgendarmerie-Trupp (Mot.) 189; Dutch-Belgian border, September 1944

This military policeman from 89. Infanterie-Division is on traffic control duty as passenger on a motorcycle combination. He wears a M1942 field-tunic, with scalloped pocket flaps but no pleats, with M1940 shoulder straps, collar patches, breast eagle and NCO collar braid. M1935 helmet with motorcycle goggles, M1943 belted trousers and M1939 short-shaft marching boots complete the uniform. On his belt he wears a second pattern triple magazine pouch for the MP40 sub-machine gun slung around his neck for easy access. He wears his 'chained dog' duty gorget and displays the Infantry Assault Badge; however, following the 19 March 1944 regulations, he has removed his military police left arm badge and cuff title. He carries a baton to direct traffic.

D3: Obergefreiter, Grenadier-Regiment 1039; Breskens Pocket, October 1944

This infantryman of 64. Infanterie-Division trapped in the Breskens Pocket in northern Belgium wears the M1943 field tunic, peaked field cap and belted trousers, M1941 canvas anklets and lace-up boots. As a radioman at company HQ he wears the signaller's qualification badge in infantry white above his M1940 rank chevrons. He carries the Feldfu.B short-range (one mile) radio with 32in antenna and attached headphones suspended from his M1939 leather infantry Y-straps, and the minimum of belt equipment - a P38 Walther in a soft-shell holster and M1931 bread bag, canteen and cup.

Dieppe, August 1944: German POWs have tied and buttoned their Zeltbahn 31 shelter-quarters together to make four-man tents. That in the foreground clearly shows the contrast between the light (outside) and dark (centre) sides of the Zeltbahn. (Brian Davis)



This Panzergrenadier in Italy in 1944 wears the M1938 Mountain Troops' reversible feldgrau/white anorak, which has three distinctive chest pockets. He still wears the M1934 field cap rather than the peaked M1943 model. (Brian Davis)

**E: ARDENNES OFFENSIVE, 1944-45
E1: Unteroffizier, Füsilier-Regiment 39; Ardennes, December 1944**

On 12 November 1942 this infantry regiment in 26. Volksgrenadier-Division was designated *Füsilier* in honour of the Great War commander, GenObst Erich von Ludendorff. This NCO section commander wears the M1942 field greatcoat with extra wide collar for warmth, M1942 helmet with chicken-wire cover, M1942 tubular woollen balaclava pulled down around his neck, woollen gloves, M1943 field-grey belted trousers, M1941 canvas anklets and ankle boots. His other ranks' black leather belt and M1939 infantry Y-straps support two sets of triple canvas magazine pouches for his MP44 (later designated StG44) assault rifle; an 84/98 bayonet and entrenching tool on his left hip; and two M24 stick grenades.

E2: Oberstleutnant, Pionier-Bataillon 33; Ardennes, December 1944

This commander of the 15. Panzergrenadier-Division's combat engineers is wearing a late version of the M1934 rubberised greatcoat with field-grey cloth collar; initially issued to motorcyclists and military police, from 1944 it was privately acquired by many officers and senior NCOs in the front line. He has added his shoulder boards with engineer black underlay. His M1943 officer's peaked field cap has aluminium wire crown piping and a M1943 eagle and cockade on a T-shaped field-grey backing; he wears officers' suede gloves and riding boots. He carries a P38 Walther in a



The M1944 field blouse was popular, but officers often had them privately made or retailed to personal taste. General der Panzertruppen Gerhard Graf von Schwerin, commanding 76 Panzer Corps, was photographed at Bologna, March 1945, wearing one with his shoulder boards, *Alt-Larisch* collar patches, dress-quality gold thread breast eagle (against regulations), gold buttons, and decorations. The open throat displays his Knight's Cross with Oakleaves, Swords and Diamonds. The headgear is the M1934 'old style' field cap with gold machine-woven insignia and gold pipings. (Brian Davis)

M1938 hard-shell holster on his blackened M1934 officer's belt, a standard field flashlight and Voigtländer short 10x50 binoculars.

E3: Panzerbergrenadier, I Panzergrenadier-Bataillon, Führer-Begleit-Brigade; Ardennes, January 1945

The Führer-Begleit-Brigade, a detachment of which formed Hitler's personal bodyguard, was effectively a Großdeutschland unit. This senior private wears M1942 one-piece snow overalls over a M1942 padded non-reversible winter tunic in M1944 marsh-pattern camouflage; a field-grey tubula balaclava around his neck; a M1942 helmet with minimal chicken-wire cover and streaked with whitewash; three-finger reversible mittens, and lace-up ankle boots. He carries leather rifle ammunition pouches and

a M1939 grenade on the right front of his belt, and on the left canvas magazine pouches for the Gew.43 semi-automatic rifle and a 84/98 bayonet. A fighting knife is clipped to the chest of his overalls.

F: WESTERN GERMANY, 1945

F1: Oberleutnant, Panzergrenadier-Bataillon 2106; Cologne, March 1945

This veteran company commander in 106.Panzer-Brigade 'Feldherrnhalle' fighting on the Rhine front wears the M1940 special field-grey jacket displaying M1935 officer's collar-patches and breast eagle, the 'Feldherrnhalle' shoulder board monogram and cuff title, two silver Tank Destruction Badges, the bronze Tank Battle Badge, the SA Military Sports Badge and Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon. He also wears the M1942 helmet and field-grey sweater, the trousers of the M1940 special field-grey uniform, and black ankle boots. He carries standard 6x30 binoculars; a M1935 officer's dispatch (map) case and a P38 Walther pistol in a M1938 soft-shell holster on his black other ranks' belt; and a M1943 Panzerfaust 30 ('tank puncher') anti-tank grenade-launcher.

F2: Gefreiter, Grenadier-Regiment 48; Ruhr pocket, April 1945

This section commander from 12.Volksgrenadier-Division wears the M1944 field blouse with M1944 shoulder straps piped infantry white, all-ranks' breast eagle and collar patches; his M1940 rank chevron is just visible on the left sleeve. His M1942 helmet is painted in imitation of the Zeltbahn 31 tan, brown and green camouflage colours. M1944 trousers are tucked into M1941 canvas anklets; note the plain leather lace-up ankle boots. He has M1940 web supporting-straps, canvas magazine pouches for his MP44/StG44 assault rifle, an M1939 grenade, and 84/98 bayonet and folding shovel behind his left hip.

F3: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 156; Reichswald Forest, February 1945

This soldier from 116.Panzer-Division wears a M1942 non-reversible padded winter tunic in M1943 marsh-pattern camouflage, without insignia, over his M1943 field-grey tunic and belted trousers. His M1943 field cap bears the unofficial silver and black (or dark grey) divisional greyhound badge on the left side. Again, note the plain leather of the unblackened ankle boots. He has M1939 leather infantry Y-straps and M1911 ammunition pouches with a grenade attached; behind his left hip are an 84/98 bayonet and his entrenching tool. He also carries a M1924 stick-grenade, his slung Karabiner 98K, and a M1943 Panzerfaust 60 anti-tank grenade-launcher.

G: SICILY AND SOUTHERN ITALY, 1943

G1: Wehrmachtoberpfarrer, 26.Panzer-Division; Volturno, November 1943

This Roman Catholic divisional chaplain wears the M1935 officer's field tunic without shoulder boards but with an M1935 officer's breast eagle. His rank is approximately indicated by the M1935 violet collar patches with aluminium 'guards braids'. His M1937 officer's peaked service cap has violet pipings, and an aluminium Gothic cross between the national insignia. His M1934 officer's belt, M1940 officer's breeches and riding boots are conventional; he wears a

Catholic crucifix around his neck, and the chaplain's armband. On his left breast pocket are pinned the War Merit Cross 1st Class with Swords and a black Wound Badge; he wears the ribbon of the War Merit Cross 2nd Class in his button hole.

G2: Panzergrenadier, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 64; Salerno, September 1943

This member of a rifle section in 16. Panzer-Division, attacking the Allied bridgehead, wears the M1940 light olive tropical shirt with applied M1940 field-grey shoulder straps piped grass-green; M1943 field-grey trousers are confined by M1941 field-grey canvas anklets over black ankle boots. He has dust-goggles on his sand-painted M1935 helmet; a M1940 canvas tropical belt and Y-straps support M1911 black leather rifle ammunition pouches and the rest of the conventional rifleman's belt order, obscured here. Also obscured but slung by a canvas strap over the left shoulder is an olive-green canvas rifle-grenade pouch for the launcher screwed to his Karabiner 98k. The pouch was also manufactured in both reed-green canvas and black leather; and note at his feet a pair of second pattern rifle-grenade carrying bags, designed to be carried by hand.

G3: Unterfeldwebel, Panzergrenadier-Regiment 115; Sicily, July 1943

This section commander from 15. Panzergrenadier-Division, opposing the Allied landings, wears the M1942 light olive tropical field tunic with M1940 machine-woven blue-grey thread breast eagle and collar patches on rust-brown backing, and copper-tan aluminium NCO braid on the collar and olive M1940 tropical shoulder straps. His M1940 light olive tropical peaked field cap has a blue-grey eagle and tricolour national cockade on rust-brown backing. The M1940 light olive tropical trousers are gathered at the ankle over laced leather boots. He wears second pattern tan canvas MP40 magazine pouches on his M1940 tropical canvas belt, with a 84/98 bayonet and entrenching tool; the M1935 sand-painted helmet still bears the Wehrmacht eagle decal on the left side. Note on his left breast the Close Combat Clasp in bronze and the bronze Tank Battle Badge; he also displays the Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon, and the M1943 'AFRIKA' cuff title for North Africa veterans.

H: CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ITALY, 1944-1945

H1: Obergefreiter, Jäger-Regiment 25; Gothic Line, September 1944

This section third gunner in 42. Jäger-Division wears the M1942 reed-green herringbone twill tunic and trousers. His M1940 field-grey shoulder straps are piped in light green; note also the M1942 machine-embroidered Jäger right arm badge, and M1940 rank chevrons. His M1942 helmet has a second model cover in 1943 marsh-pattern camouflage. He has the M1943 field-grey woollen shirt, M1941 field-grey canvas anklets, and cleated mountain boots. His combat equipment is conventional; note tucked into his belt the



April 1945, Ruhr Pocket: two subaltern officers – appearing rather old for their rank – prepare to leave for a US POW camp, retaining the equipment necessary for an uncertain future. (Left) M1934 motorcyclist's rubberised coat with feldgrau cloth collar; wartime-manufactured feldgrau canvas rucksack with leather straps, and blanket; M1943 field cap with aluminium crown piping. (Right) M1935 officer's field greatcoat, piped M1943 field cap, M1931 bread bag and mess kit. (Friedrich Hermann)

M1943 field cap with M1942 aluminium three-leaf Jäger badge on the left side. He carries a Karabiner 98k, M1939 grenades, and a machine gun ammunition box.

H2: Unteroffizier, Reichsgrenadier-Regiment Hoch- und Deutschmeister; Gustav Line, February 1944

This NCO from the Hoch- und Deutschmeister (44. Infanterie-Division) wears the M1942 collarless smock, in Zeltbahn 31 camouflage reversing to white, over his M1943 field tunic and M1942 wide-collar field greatcoat; M1943 field-grey belted trousers, M1941 field-grey canvas anklets and black ankle boots. His M1942 helmet has a rubber foliage retainer ring; and tropical canvas Y-straps support his black leather belt. This section commander has one set of pouches for his MP40 sub-machine gun, a M1935 brown leather map case, and 6x30 binoculars.

H3: Stabsfeldwebel, Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 26; River Po, April 1945

This senior NCO in 26. Panzer-Division wears the M1942 reed-green HBT Panzer working jacket with a machine-woven M1944 breast eagle and the unpopular M1942 regulation arm rank insignia; he has added – against regulations – Panzer collar patches, piped golden-yellow for Armoured Reconnaissance troops. His M1943 Panzer field cap has machine-woven insignia on a T-shaped backing. His trousers are field-made in Italian M1929 forest-pattern camouflage cloth, to resemble M1942 Panzer denims but with an added second thigh pocket; they are drawstringed at the ankle over lace-up boots. As an AFV crew member he carries a P38 Walther in a hard-shell holster on his other ranks' belt



Prisoners near Perugia, Italy, in July 1944. The Oberleutnant (left) wears the M1942 reed-green summer tunic with pleatless pockets (the M1943 had straight pocket flaps), privately shortened in the skirt, with M1935 collar patches, and has against regulations added an officer's aluminium thread breast eagle. He wears the M1934 'old style' field cap, patched, reinforced breeches and riding boots; note the M1935 dispatch case at his belt.

The three officers from 5th Mountain Division (right) all wear M1941 Luftwaffe light khaki tropical uniform – note Edelweiss arm badges. All show typical slight differences: the man on the left of the trio has a privately-made light khaki version of the M1936 mountain cap; the officer in the centre has the M1943 field-grey field cap, with the Mountain Troops badge pinned to the left side; the right hand officer has non-standard trousers with two thigh pockets. (Friedrich Herrmann)

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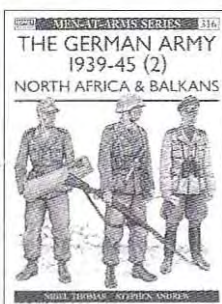
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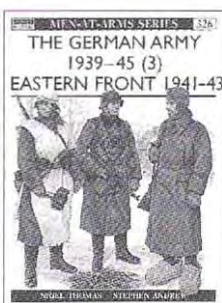
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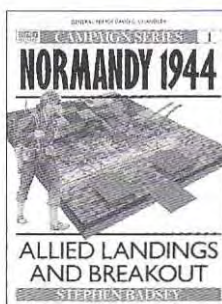
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