

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

BY RICHARD K. RIEHN



What was Lost was Saved

If one were to search our surviving specimens of a nation's infantry colors dating back as far as the 18th century, the least likely place to find them would be in their countries of origin. A search among the museums of its adversaries would probably offer a far better yield. This is a truism which has sooner or later come to all who have been actively engaged in this field.

Colors and standards were generally carried on service until they became unserviceable or, more directly, unsightly. Cavalry standards, usually made of heavily embroidered, double layered damask, brocade or satin, have exhibited a remarkable capacity for survival. Some remained on service for better than a century and were still in fine condition when they were finally laid up. On others, the embroidery was so compact that it was possible to transfer it to a new cloth when the old one became unserviceable.

Infantry colors, on the other hand, presented a problem. Owing to their large size (some ran to six feet square), they were, of necessity, made of lighter materials, generally silk, if they weren't to become unmanageable in the hands

of a color bearer. If they were painted, their useful service life might extend over ten or more years. If they bore appliqued embroideries, as for example, the British, wind and rain might effectively demolish them in the course of a single campaign.

Beyond the ravages of weather, time, use and, on occasion, combat, economy was another killer of infantry colors.

Because their wear-out periods exceeded that of the other textiles on service which were replaced annually or bi-annually, funds for their renewal were not part of the regular maintenance budgets. Instead, they were generally subject to special appropriations — and these, whether they came from the state treasury, the colonel's, or the sovereign's purse, were not always readily forthcoming. Thus, when infantry colors were finally laid up, this was generally done only when they were no longer fit to be seen in public or when political or dynastic changes made their renewal advisable.

It is mostly as a result of the latter circumstances that we find army museums crammed full of old colors; old, that is, only in the sense that they are no longer on active service. Few

have gone to combat during the last hundred years. Reserved primarily for ceremonial occasions, their capacity for survival has increased correspondingly. And when they are laid up at last, they generally come into the hands of museum staffs which give them far more tender, loving care than they got one or two hundred years ago.

Thus, as soon as we look beyond the more immediate past, it becomes apparent that the plethora of colors and standards to be seen in modern military museums is largely a mirage, where old colors are concerned. Slowly, we come to realize that while trophies were something considered worthy of preservation in earlier times, the colors laid up by the home team were little better than venerable discards, no longer useful to anyone. A sense of history was only slowly coming to the fore. Thus, indeed, it was primarily that which was lost which ended up being saved.

From Professional Hirelings to Hired Professional

It required the better part of the century following the conclusion of the Thirty Years'



Attack of the Prussian infantry line at Hohenfriedberg

War, before the fully regulated standing army as we know it today emerged from the first regiments kept in hand during times of peace. Yet, even after the transition was made, some old habits died hard. The memory of the colonel-entrepreneurs who, against payment of a lump sum, raised their own regiments, uniformed them, appointed their own officers and exercised military justice over their commands, lingered on for some time. History is replete with the incessant bickerings over one detail or another which went on for decades between the colonels on one hand and their paymasters on the other, be these duodecimo princelings or royal sovereigns. As late as 1812, Napoleon still experienced considerable passive resistance from his colonels when he decreed that all musicians in the army were to wear the imperial livery. He had put his foot into what was probably the last remaining private preserve of the regimental commanders.

During the days of the professional hirelings, this same rugged individualism applied to the matter of colors and standards. When, upon disbandment of a unit, the time for their use had passed, they were generally separated from the

staff and were either presented to the colonel or further torn into pieces which were distributed among deserving members of the unit they had served.

Under these circumstances, the best chance for a color to survive for posterity rested with its capture by the enemy. For proof positive, compare, for example, the sum total of colors and standards of Thirty Years' War vintage remaining today in Austria, Bavaria and all the territories whose troops served the Empire or the Catholic League, with the stock of trophies still reposing in the Royal Swedish Army Museum. It's not even a contest.

The Period of Transition in Prussia

In the Prussian army, where the design and issuance of colors and standards were first regulated by Frederick William I (1713-1740), a wear-out period of five years was first thought appropriate for infantry colors¹⁾. However, since the painted colors proved more durable than expected in time of peace, this period was extended considerably. When they were eventually laid up, they wandered into the arsenals nearest to their regimental garrisons where they

were kept on hand for possible reissue, should some occasion necessitate this²⁾.

When Frederick II (the Great) became king in 1740, he completely altered the design of the Prussian infantry colors as well as the cavalry standards. However, while the infantry colors were entirely replaced by 1745 the production cost of new standards caused him to replace these only on an "as needed" basis. For this reason, surviving examples of cavalry standards of Frederician design are virtually non-existent. In all, Fiebig³⁾ estimates that the Prussian cavalry lost some fifty standards in the course of the three Silesian Wars. In view of the fact that a squadron first had to lose its old issue and then a new issue as well, this didn't happen often.

Thus, the arsenals all over Prussia contained stocks of retired infantry colors from the reign of Frederick William I but no cavalry standards at all, since the only cause for their replacement was if a loss was incurred on campaign.

After the conclusion of the three Silesian Wars, the Frederician issues became objects of reverence, their rents and powder stains, incurred in battle, objects of veneration. But this hardly halted the process of deterioration. Seams gave way, rents lengthened, and dampness weakened the silk until the wind began to carry off one shred after another. By 1775, their condition had become so bad that a general issue of new colors was made for the entire infantry . . . a process which was, incidentally, to repeat itself about half a century after the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars.

Of what remained of laid-up stocks in the arsenals, only that which was in the few fortresses which held out against Napoleon during the catastrophe of 1806/7, was saved. The remainder was carried off by the French. The surviving stocks were consolidated in Berlin during the course of the 19th century, when the Berlin Armory, the *Zeughaus*, became more of a museum than an arsenal. Here, much of what had remained was destroyed or lost during World War II and its aftermath.

The stocks of the Berlin Arsenal had, however, been looted once before. In October 1760, when Austrian and Russian troops held the city for about three days, they cleaned out the *Zeughaus*, carrying off 277 colors and 75 standards⁴⁾. These, with the exception of just a few trophies, consisted almost entirely of historical material not only from the era of Frederick William but dating back to the reigns of the electors.

However, while St. Petersburg (Leningrad), Russia and Vienna, Austria remained mother lodes for the researchers of later times, the governor of Paris ordered the burning of the trophies and the loot which had been laid up in the Cathedral of Notre Dame on the day the Allies entered the city. Unfortunately, there were many retired old colors among them, some nearly a hundred years old, which had been laid up in the arsenals captured by the French.

All told, Fiebig⁵⁾ estimates that the Prussians lost more than 400 colors and 50 standards in the course of the three Silesian Wars. This, by modern standards, may seem inordinately high. But it must be remembered that every company

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and squadron carried one and that no other war of the era of linear tactics knew of such a string of crashing confrontations as took place in the Silesian Wars between 1740 and 1763. Moreover, in almost every one of them, Frederick cast himself in the role of a gambler risking all on a single roll of dice. While his opponents had comparatively vast resources, any defeat for Frederick carried with it the potential for the destruction of both army and state. As a result, Prussian battalions, again and again, marched into clouds of grapeshot and if his brave grenadiers, who usually made the first assault, had carried colors, surely the losses would have been even higher. At Torgau, where the decision hung in the balance for a long time, even victory was bought at the cost of at least 27 colors and two standards. Weighed against this, the terrible defeat at Kunersdorf cost no more than 26 colors and two standards.

The largest loss of colors in the open field came when Fouque's corps was ground into the dust by vastly superior forces. It was a stubborn, step-by-step defensive withdrawal action, the most difficult of all linear tactics, which, aside from eliciting Laudon's respect, also netted him 34 colors and again the magic number of two standards.

Many colors were lost when sieges ended in the surrender of a fortress but the largest single take the Austrians made came with the surrender of Fink's corps at Maxen on 22 November 1759: 96 colors and 24 standards . . . nearly twenty percent of all the colors and fifty percent of all the standards lost in the Silesian Wars.

Against this must be held the Prussian take, which I have never seen tabulated. But 75 colors and standards were taken at Leuthen alone. The Regiment Bayreuth took 66 colors at Hohenfriedberg (some sources say 67, the Austrians say 68) in a single charge and the total take there came to 70 colors and seven standards.

Such enormous losses were entirely in context with the sort of fighting that took place during the era of linear tactics. Volleys were delivered at short ranges, the final one often coming at distances of less than a hundred paces, followed by an advance with levelled bayonets. If cavalry appeared at the critical moment, the results could be devastating. In the end, however, the high losses in colors and standards incurred by both sides, even in moments of victory, can only be explained in terms of the extraordinary staying power of 18th century troops. Capable of sustaining losses far beyond what later times considered to be a knock-out punch, the action generally got very close before a decision fell. Added to this must be the fact that it was quite common to pay a *doceur* for the capture of a trophy. This could run to as high as fifty ducats apiece, several years net pay for a common soldier. Enough, certainly, for the hardy types to take risks far beyond the call of duty.

No doubt, all of this is exactly what Napoleon, who had certainly studied the Frederician campaigns, had in mind when he first reduced the number of colors to one per battalion and, finally, to one per regiment. In doing so, he put

a low ceiling on what his troops might provide by way of trophies if and when they had a bad day.

Getting back to Frederick and the Silesian Wars, with such massive losses, the question of what happened to all these colors and standards arises of its own accord. Again, it is Fiebig who informs us that about fifty Frederician specimens remain or remained both in St. Petersburg and in Vienna, making for a total of about one hundred or roughly twenty percent of the whole. What happened to the rest is hard to say.

Dr. Bleckwenn, who examined the Vienna holdings, noted that the basic stock seems to consist of pieces which came from Fink's surrender at Maxen. The survivors, for example, of the brutal encounter ensuing from the nocturnal surprise attack the Austrians made upon a careless Frederick's camp at Hochkirch, notably the hotly contested colors of Battalion No. 6, the former Giant Grenadiers, and of No. 19, Margrave Charles, appear to have been originally laid up in cloisters and churches before finding their way to Vienna⁶. This was probably done quite frequently, by way of a thanksgiving for the deliverance from great peril⁷. Others probably remained in regimental trophy collections until they became otherwise dispersed and lost. Although the preservation of trophies was already in general practice, it was not yet by any means systematized. This did not come until central collections via the medium of military museums came into existence.

Few as these survivors may seem, we are again reminded that "that which was lost was saved." Even fewer survivors from the 18th century come from sources other than trophy collections.

Thus, for the researcher of the 19th century, the Peter and Paul Fortress in Leningrad, the Arsenal Museum in Vienna and, to a far lesser extent, and only for electoral pieces, the Royal Museum in Stockholm (10 standards and 7 colors), became prime repositories for what remains of old Prussian colors. Very few other pieces are known in scattered holdings. The most notable is the sole surviving cavalry standard of Frederician design, that of the 9th Cuirassiers, reposing in Ghent, Belgium. Taken by a Walloon dragoon regiment in the Austrian service, it also furnishes an example of a survivor which was handed down to posterity by remaining, apparently, in the hands of the regiment long enough to be laid up in or near its garrison.

THE PRE-1713 ERA

The earliest designs of Prussian colors were not subject to norming regulations, even though the Great Elector (Frederick William, 1640-1688) passed a set of guidelines late during his reign which was, obviously, not implemented. Apart from the fact that the colonel's colors were generally white, the color as well as the design of the ordinary or company colors was left entirely to the discretion of the colonels. Only the house regiments, i.e. those which had the electors or members of their immediate family as colonels, generally bore the insignia of Brandenburg: the red eagle, the electoral cypher or hat in any and all combinations.

How completely the colonels were in charge of the appearance of their colors is illustrated by

an order circulated in 1699, requiring the commanders of regiments or independent battalions to report on the appearance of their colors and standards, as well as the drum banners; how many were in each unit, what their colors were and when, where and how they had been obtained.

Fiebig⁸ regards this document of extraordinary importance to the history of Brandenburg colors and standards because, quite apart from its detailed contents which have survived, it shows that the colonels were in such complete authority in these matters that not even the elector or his military advisors knew what they looked like.

At other times, on the occasion of inspections or reviews, comment is made concerning the appearance of these insignia. Sometimes, their colors are mentioned without a word about the designs. At other times, the designs are described, but no mention is made of their color. Again, Fiebig points out that this off-handed and meager treatment is reflective of the fact that during this early period, colors and standards were still far more related to the person of the colonel (who generally also displayed his own arms) than they were emblematic of the state.

Frequently, the colors of a unit were changed as soon as a new colonel assumed command, even though those remaining from the tenure of the previous colonel were still entirely serviceable. This is also entirely reflective of the fact that those regiments which did remain on service over extended periods of time were not identified by any house numbers based on seniority, as became practice later, but by the names of their colonels. And here, too, their position on the muster rolls was determined by the rank of the colonel in chief, i.e. the "holder" of the regiment, rather than the seniority of the regiment itself. Regiments could also, for example, wander in and out of "guard" status with confusing frequency.

Yet, as the power of the electors, i.e. the power of the central state, overcame the resistance of the feudal estates, the emblems of the state gradually assumed their rightful place on ever more colors and standards of the line regiments⁹.

When the elector Frederick III became Frederick I, the first king of Prussia, the red eagle of Brandenburg was, at first, joined by the black eagle of Prussia white, at the same time, it also became fashionable to render the eagle in flight and in natural colors rather than in formalized heraldic fashion. And, of course, the electoral hat (Kuruhut) was replaced by the royal crown.

THE EAGLE AND THE SUN

A certain amount of apocrypha surrounds the origin of the eagle flying toward the sun, which became a standard fixture on the colors of Frederick William I. In view of its political significance, this question merits a certain amount of discussion.

While it may be entirely true that the king seized upon this device because it gave vent to his political attitudes, it is not possible to say more than that he decreed its universal use on the colors and standards of his army. He did not invent it.

Jany¹⁰ gathered some interesting material



FIGURE 1/ The 1708 issue of Regiment Crown Prince (No. 6), after 'Les Triomphes de Louis XIV et de Louis XV'.

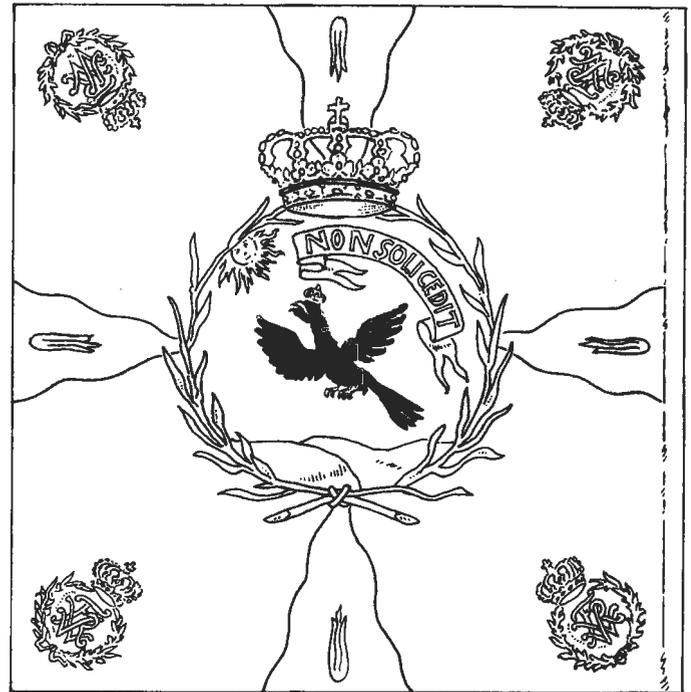


FIGURE 2/ The first issue of colors carried by the Giant Grenadier Battalion of Frederick William I. The drawing reflects the altered cyphers, after the specimen in the Artillery Museum in Leningrad.

which, at the very least, shows that the device is older than Frederick William, who was born in 1688.

As early as during the lifetime of the Great Elector (Frederick William, 1640-1688), a medal bearing the eagle flying toward the sun was struck in 1677, commemorating the capture of Stettin. Another, struck in 1688, the year of Frederick William I's birth, commemorated the participation of the Brandenburgers (Schoning's corps) in the capture of Ofen from the Turks. Again, the eagle flies toward the sun above the captured fortress. And it is on this medal, where Jany says the motto:

*Non soli cedit
Dum luci credit*

is first seen together with the device. This motto was said to translate: "He immerses his head in this light so long as he credits it."

Later interpretations of the first line were said to read either "He fears no Sun," or "He yields to no Sun." Far more direct and to the point. But it is hard to say if the early appearances of this device were already directed at the self-styled "roi soleil," the Sun King at Versailles. It is possible on two counts:

Louis' intrigues to encourage the Turks to attack the Hapsburgs are a matter of history. That this same Louis also enriched himself with another piece of imperial territory in the West whenever the Turks knocked on the gates of the empire and Christian Europe in the East is also historical fact.

These intrigues, even though carried on under the cloak of secret diplomacy, were not exactly unknown. Thus, the symbolism of the eagle admonishing the sun may not be dismissed out of hand, particularly since, not long after, this same symbolism begins to appear on several colors of the Brandenburg army.

First evidence of this comes from the report of 1699 which is already mentioned above. Extracting only that which is germane to the

subject, it reads as follows:

La Cave (an independent battalion, disbanded before the first house numbers were assigned to existing units by Leopold von Dessau in 1729): Colonel's color white, strewn with small golden flames. In the blue center a black eagle flying toward the sun and the motto: *Patrios imitando conatus* (continue on the paths of your fathers). The company colors were red, strewn with silver flames, possibly with the same emblems, but they are not described in the source.

Fiebig thinks the eagle may be a holdover from margrave Christian Ludwig's, the elector's youngest step-brother, colonelcy. But this seems rather contrived in the light of contemporary practice. Considering the colonel's name and the content of the motto, I am far more interested in the possibility that La Cave was the scion of Huguenot emigrees, bent on directing his own message at Versailles.

Horn (another battalion disbanded at a later date): Colonel's color white, strewn with golden stars, in each corner a large golden flame; in the center, within a golden laurel wreath, a red eagle flying toward the sun. Company or ordinary colors: Red, strewn with silver stars; in each corner a large silver flame; in the center, in a green and silver laurel wreath a pair of crossed keys.

Regiment Anhalt (House Number 3): Somewhat different from the foregoing, this regiment also has an eagle flying toward the sun and an illustration of this one is available. Its motto reads: *Omnes pello hostes vincoque sub tuis alis* (Under your wings I chase and conquer all foes).

The Grenadier Guard of Frederick I: This regiment received new colors in 1701. On a white field, black eagles and golden royal crowns, interspersed with a few black grenades, are strewn; in each corner a large, black grenade. The center shield, enclosed in a gold-

en frame and the chain of the new Prussian Order of the Black Eagle, a black eagle flying toward the sun. Between the top of the shield and the royal crown surmounting it, a light blue ribbon, bearing the motto "Non soli cedit."

Regiment Prince Elector, later, Crown Prince (House Number 6): Here, the story of what was to become the standard design of Prussian colors and standards begins in earnest.

In the report of 1699, the colonel's color of the regiment, as issued in 1696, is described as being white with a black eagle flying toward the sun and the inscription "Non soli cedit" in the center. Company colors: blue, with the same device in a white center.

A report dating from 1706 indicates colors the same as those of 1696, but the cloth additionally strewn with small black and red eagles.

A new issue, made in 1708, possibly is the first reflecting the prince's will. The small eagles have disappeared and the royal cyphers make their first appearance in the corners.

This time, we have an illustration to go along with the description (Figure 1). During the battle of Malplaquet, the crown prince's regiment lost seven of its colors, including the colonel's. These became immortalized in a series of watercolors entitled "Les Triomphes de Louis XIC et de Louis XV" which were, in turn, reproduced in Verillon's "Trophees de la France," published in Paris in 1907. Although not identified there as other than being Prussian, there is no doubt that we have here examples of the colors of Regiment Crown Prince. The cyphers FWP (Frederick William Prince of Princes), enclosed in laurel branches, as well as the colors, blue and white, make it certain.

The main problem with the illustration in the "Triumphs" is the *laissez faire* attitude with which such things were reproduced during the Baroque. However, even if they may not be entirely accurate down to the last detail, the illustrations certainly reflect the general appear-

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ance of the real thing.

A more accurate source, however, is at hand for the 1709 issue which was made to replace the losses at Malplaquet. Part of the loot taken from Berlin in 1760, Lehmann¹¹⁾ found two in St. Petersburg which, in every way, represent the standard design of 1713, but for the cyphers FWCP (the CP for crown prince).

Yet another color in St. Petersburg, of the same design but blue with a red flame cross, is most certainly the first type carried by the "Giant Battalion" of the King's, formerly the Crown Prince's Own (House Number 6). In its corner medallions, the FWCP has altered by painting over the "C" and changing the "P" into an "R" (= Rex-king) (Figure 2).

At this point, the evolution of design was all but complete and it only remained for the new king to issue his regulation which would normalize the appearance of all the colors and standards in his army, at the same time establishing a geometry of design which was to become characteristic of German colors and standards until 1945.

It remains one of the curious aspects of this entire course of evolution that all existing works on the subject, save the passing mention in Jany's monumental history of the Prussian army, leave the reader with the impression that Frederick William was the originator of the emblems *cum* motto so pointedly directed at the French. Dr. Bleckwenn has even unearthed what appears to be the source of the motto, a citation of Thomas de Aquino in the "*summa theologica*," which is reproduced in its original context in his preamble to the reprint of the Dessau Specifications of 1729¹²⁾. There it reads: "May the eye of the night bird (or night flyer) not perceive the Sun, the eye of the eagle does nevertheless." He also reminds us that this, along with many others, was to be found in a catalogue of quotations which circulated in contemporary Europe and from whence mottos were frequently selected for sundry purposes.

Beyond this, Dr. Bleckwenn also invites attention to the fact that even though the motto "*Non soli cedit*" was banished from Frederick the Great's colors and standards, in view of his own political orientation at the time, both emblem and motto subsequently reappear (the motto in the significant mutation "*Nec soli cedit*") on such items of accoutrements which still allowed the regimental commanders the expression of a certain individualism¹³⁾. However, even this mutation, reading "*Nor does he yield to the sun*", was not really new. It had already appeared in this form on the very first issue of Prussian thalers struck under Frederick William in 1713.

The foregoing, however, provides clear evidence that both the devices and the motto did exist in concert before Frederick William was born and that their first appearance on the colors of the Prince Elector's regiment in 1696 could hardly have come on the initiative of an eight year old, no matter how precocious he might have been — not, at any rate, within the context of their political significance.

In summation, I am far more inclined to view the eagle, sun, and motto on the colors of the

prince's regiment either as an accident of history or, and this may not be discounted either, that the men responsible for the young prince's education may have pointed the boy's attention at its symbolism.

We may never know the whole story and, important or not, the year 1713 not only marked Frederick William's accession to the Prussian throne, it also spelled an end to the hodge podge of rugged individualism reflecting itself on the colors and standards. It marked the beginning of Prussian colors and standards as distinctive and completely regulated emblems of the state's armed might.

The Distribution of the Colors on Service

The practice of each company carrying its own color prevailed until the end of the 18th century. Only those units in Dutch and British pay carried two colors per battalion while on service in the Netherlands, in conformance with the practice of their paymasters.

Colonel's colors were carried only by the first, or colonel's company, of each independent command, be this an independent battalion or a regiment of three battalions. All other companies carried so-called regimental or ordinary colors. Unlike, for example, in the British army, the ordinary colors within a unit were not in any way differentiated from each other. The colonel's colors in most Continental armies were generally white and such was the practice in Prussia. To mark the elevated status of guard formations, their ordinary colors were also generally white and differentiated from the colonel's colors only in some minor ways.

Until the reorganizations after the death of Frederick the Great, Prussian regiments, with but two exceptions, consisted of two battalions. One of the two, the Regiment Anhalt, had three battalions during the reigns of both Frederick William I and Frederick the Great. The other was the Guard. Under Frederick William it was the House Number 6, the erstwhile Regiment Crown Prince, which became the King's Regiment and took on its third battalion when the Giant Grenadiers were incorporated into the regiment. Upon Frederick the Great's accession, Number 6 was reduced to one battalion and received the title Grenadier Guard, while Frederick's own erstwhile Crown Prince, Number 15, became the new guard regiment. In doing so, it took on its third battalion and assumed the role of training school and proving ground for the entire army, a role once held by the old "Six."

In 1735, the grenadier sections were pulled out of each line company and augmented to form a grenadier company in each battalion. During the Silesian Wars, it became the practice to brigade the grenadier companies of two regiments into temporary grenadier battalions, thus furnishing the army with a powerful corps of elite troops. These battalions did *not* carry colors.

In addition to these temporary battalions, there were also a number of so-called standing grenadier battalions. They were known as such because, drawn from the garrison regiments which occupied the fortifications and did no field duty, they were kept as regular units during peacetime as well. They, too, did *not* carry colors.

Thus, the *only* units which wore the grenadier cap, the mitre, and carried colors were the old "Six," the Grenadier Guard, and the third battalion of the King's Regiment, Number 15, under Frederick the Great.

Both these units also had their organic grenadier companies which, in a manner of speaking, were the grenadiers of the grenadiers, a very select crowd called the flank-grenadiers (*Flugel Grenadiere*). No colors here either.

Thus, the choice for the figure collector becomes limited. A grenadier color bearer can be shown only for Number Six or for the III Battalion of Number Fifteen during the reign of Frederick the Great.

Methods of Manufacture and Workmanship

The quality of workmanship on the colors of Brandenburg varies as widely as their design. In general, those of the house regiments set the highest standards both in design and execution but this does not, by any means, provide a parameter. A lowly militia color, for example, illustrated by Fiebig, appears to be finely executed despite its simple design. What probably played a decisive role was a confluence of the colonel's purse, his artistic tastes, his will to put up more or less of a showing, who was available locally to execute the contract and, finally, how quickly delivery was demanded.

Examples illustrating any and all of these possibilities are not rare. The magnificent colors of the Hesse-Darmstadt infantry under Ludwig IX were painted by a member of the Grenadier Guard, who happened to have a truly fine hand. On other occasions, another good but not so fine hand may have been pulled in *ad hoc*, when a new set was in quick demand.

That things did not always move at a leisurely pace even in times of peace is illustrated by the review held at Crossen in 1686 over a corps raised to march to the aid of the Empire against the Turks. Here, Fiebig feels that the description made of the colors indicates that these were specially produced for this campaign.

When Frederick William standardized the design for all Prussian colors, the contract for their manufacture had already been in the hands of a single family since 1707¹⁷⁾. However, when the illustrations in the DS 29¹⁵⁾ are compared with the color photo of an original in Brandenburg Preussens Heer,¹⁷⁾ it may be noted that although the overall design checks out completely, certain small details do not. This is entirely due to the fact that each piece was individually hand made. Even though the contract was in the hands of a single supplier, assistants certainly were at work in the shops. Thus, minor differences, notably in the execution of the crowns, the leaf work and, especially, of the landscapes in the center medallions (which seem to have been entirely up to the fantasy of the painters) and the configurations of the eagle in flight, do not represent regimental distinctions but rather the signature either of a painter or of an entire work lot which may extend over part or all of the colors of one or several different battalions or regiments. This also indicates that, despite the substantial numbers of colors which must have been required on a given work order, stencils or cut patterns were either not used or, if they were, they could only have been of the most rudi-

mentary configuration.

The colors were made of imported silk, *Gros de Tours*, which was obtained in a variety of colors. It is, however, not possible to bring the colors of the silks used into any viable relationship with either the colonel's armorials or the distinctive facing colors of the units who carried them. Dr. Bleckwenn points out that if and when a congruence does exist, it may be deemed largely accidental.

Major differentiations of colors, where they do exist, i.e. the flames and wedges as well as the center medallions, were not appliqued but fitted into cutouts, that is, inset with silks of appropriate colors. Then, the final details were painted on with oils and bronzes.

The norm for the colors hovered to either side of 150cm square, but they frequently appear as horizontal rectangles. The example mentioned above, being of No. 77, shows the design square or nearly so, even though the cloth is rectangular because it was not rolled up on the staff as far as it might have been. The example illustrated, of Regt. 32, on the other hand, shows the corner medallions set in a distinctly horizontal rectangle.

By contrast, the later Frederician patterns are, by design, vertical rectangles. Indeed, the center medallions, still perfectly or nearly circular on the FW colors, are distinctly ovoid on the Frederician models, where the landscapes have also been completely eliminated.

The earliest FW I colors are slightly larger than later examples. But the most distinguishing feature of the early models is the setting of the cyphers in the corner medallions.

In the earlier types, the painters, on the left to right principle of writing, obviously started the layout of the colors with the staff side, the stationary side, to the left of the cloth. In this way, they proceeded to paint the cyphers as one would normally write them. But since the paint would frequently bleed through the single layer of silk, it became necessary to cover what would have been blemishes by following the exact reverse of the letters on the back side. This, incidentally, also accounts for the fact the eagle *always* flies *away* from the staff, no matter which side of the color is viewed.

On later models, this necessary evil is accommodated by setting the cyphers on the front of the colors in opposite directions, i.e. top flying and bottom standing corner normal, the top standing and bottom flying corners mirror reversed.

One would think that it defies common sense to set the correctly reading cyphers opposite to the way the eyes are accustomed to read: from top left to bottom right.

Prussia, however, was the only European state where the colors were *never* dipped before the sovereign. Instead, the sovereign, who considered himself to be the "first servant" of the state, doffed his hat before the colors which were the symbols of that state. also, colors stand completely open in the wind only for brief moments at a time in anything but a small gale. Generally, the top edge will trail almost at a diagonal. The same holds true when the colors are carried at the trail — quite common in Europe. when the color bearer stands with his colors up or grounded to his right, he will gen-

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

erally shake them out, so that the top edge hanging vertically, in obedience to the laws of nature, will not obscure the central design. And — lo! — in all of these instances, the parade side will show the most prominent, the bottom flying corner, with the cypher reading correctly!

Taking all this into account, it is safe to assume that the decision to reverse the cyphers in the fashion it was done was not by any means an arbitrary one.

The Sources

If we were reduced to the study of colors of that era exclusively on the basis of surviving specimens, we would be hard pressed to come up with anything like the comprehensive image we have. It was Leopold von Dessau, who came to the aid of posterity when he, twice, presented his sovereign with (what certainly in the case of the DS 29) the first systematic pictorial representation of an entire army.

Much is to be said about the Dessau Specifications, but only that which relates to the renditions of the infantry colors is of importance to this effort.

There were earlier general status reports, notably that of 1699, already mentioned and another of 1720. But it is in the *Dessauer*

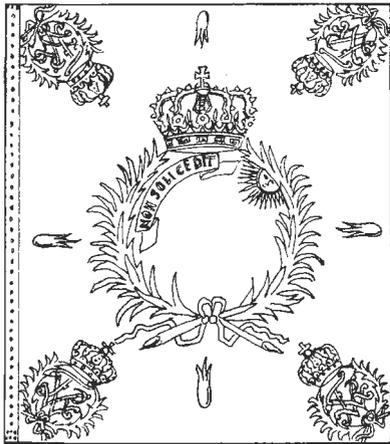


FIGURE 3/ A copy of the sheet left blank in the DS 29, presumably reflecting the pattern which was sent to the regiments so that they might fill in the appropriate details. (Courtesy Biblio Verlag, Osnabrueck)

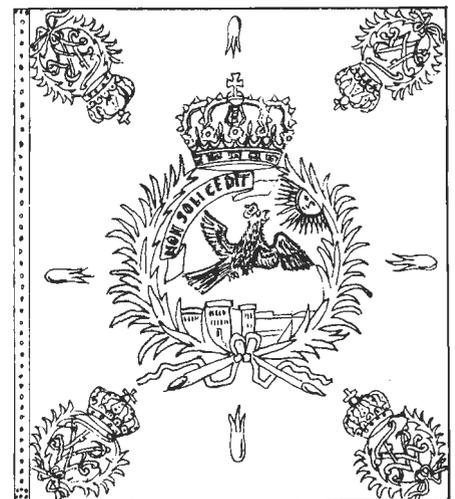
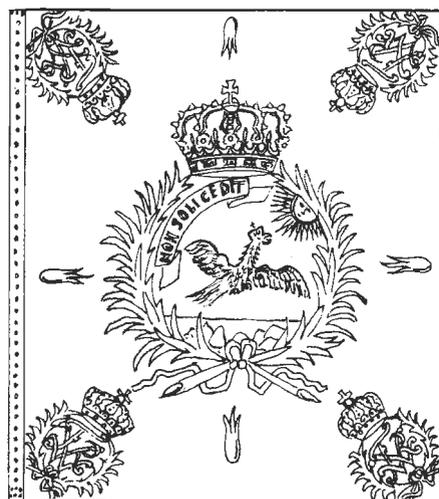


FIGURE 4 Left to right, Regiments 31, 5, 6, 13, 26, and 20.

Spezifikation of 1729 and its undated updating which has been fixed at 1737, herein referred to as the DS 29 and DS 37, where it was all laid down pictorially.

Both works were produced as manuscripts in duplicate, as far as we know today. Until 1902, when the duplicates were discovered in Anhalt, both works were thought to have been lost. At that time, copies were made which became the basis for their first publication by Biblio under the aegis of Dr. Bleckwenn's monumental series on the history of the Brandenburg Prussian Army in 1970 and 1974, respectively, which makes these heretofore unique works available to the interested public for the very first time.

For the original 1729 set, work sheets were apparently sent out which contained a stencilled outline to be detailed by the units (Figure 3). On the colors, the center medallions were obviously left blank. As a result, the landscapes and eagles come down to us in the rich variety in which they were seen on the original colors (Figure 4). Also, in this first edition, all the cyphers in the corners are set correctly.

When the work sheets for the second edition went out, these were far more comprehensive, reflecting not only the uniform details for the enlisted men but for the officers, noncoms and musicians as well. This time, the cyphers are shown with two in reverse and the landscapes seemed to have been included in the stencil outlines. These latter all seem to consist of varieties on the same theme, they are almost but not quite alike and the patterns for No. 77 and No. 32 for example, do not match the photographs of the originals.

No doubt, Dr. Bleckwenn will add much more to this subject when the special volume on colors and standards will make its appearance in the Biblio Series sometime in the future.

The Differentiating Patterns

In the era of black powder and close order the colors still fulfilled a pragmatic function. Whether they stood singly, in pairs, or in color platoons of five, they stood at the center of the battalion, furnishing the point of alignment and rally. Those of the enemy, if nothing else, furnished aiming points for the battalion guns. It is, for example, a well known phenomenon of linear tactics that in a battalion, when casualties

mounted and its determination began to waver, the men would crown inward in the direction of the colors, thus increasing the intervals between the battalions. A good cavalry commander, like Von Gessler, at Hohenfriedberg, kept a close eye on this so that he might seize upon the opportunity of the moment.

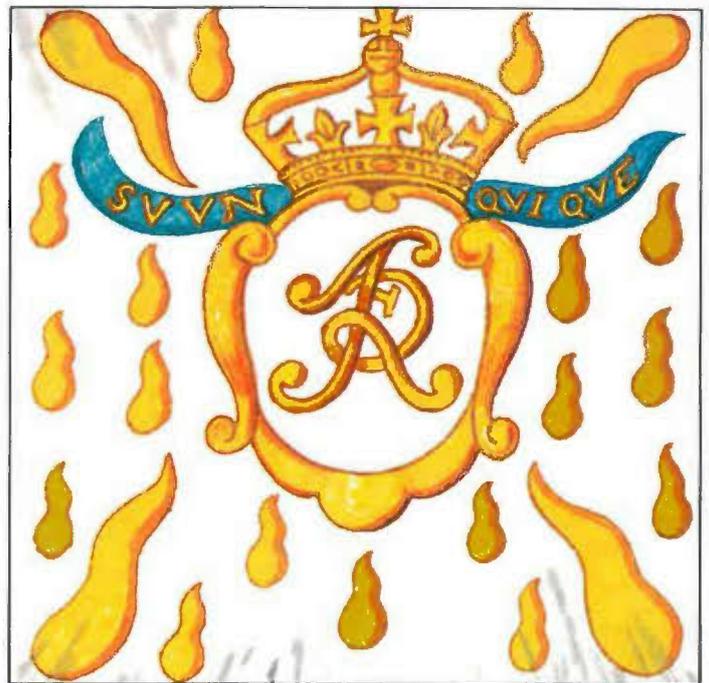
Although there were decided limits to the business of separating one hue from another, basic colors, i.e. red, green, blue, yellow, etc. could be easily made out at distances of several hundred paces until the haze generated by the black powder lowered visibility. Certainly a brigadier, in command of a portion of the line, could make out the colors of three, four, or five battalions deployed before his post between the lines, as well as those of the second line behind him. But it remains questionable if this was really part of the thinking of the times. The Austrians, for instance, did away almost completely with distinguishing features between the different regiments, even though their colors were still a mixed bag during the first two Silesian wars. Thus, their primary function as an aid of command was directed inward at the men of the battalion. During an alarm, they represented the point of assembly; during an advance, they were the point of alignment, and during a melee after an advance or after a retreat, they furnished the point of rally. That's why it was important for the soldier in the ranks to know what his colors looked like and this was the pragmatic origin of the Trooping of the Colors which may still be seen to this day on the occasion of the Queen's Birthday Parade in Great Britain.

Since there were thirty-one regiments in the Prussian army by the time of the 1729 specifications, it had from the beginning not been feasible to base the distinctive features of the colors on color alone. Certainly, on special order, silks could have been furnished on so rich a palette of different hues. But it wouldn't have been practical. Even with the addition of secondary distinctive colors, the range of prime colors is considerable. But it was via the means of secondary distinguishing features that the problem was tackled, i.e. by the addition of differently colored flashes.

The DS 29 knows only two differentiating patterns, the "standing flame cross" (Figure 5)



Standard of the Canitz Regiment No. 14, 1705.



Standard of the Leibregiment, 1707 (From 'Les Triomphes').

and the "corner wedges" (Figure 6). The sole exception to this is the Maltese cross on the colors of No. 19. The colonelcy of this regiment was in the hands of the margraves of Brandenburg-Schwedt, who were also hereditary grand masters of the Protestant Order of St. John, which accounts for this badge being displayed on the colors.

The blue colors of No. 13, reported in 1720 to include both a white flame cross and yellow flames in the corners, had already given way to a more orthodox pattern in 1729.

Apart from some minor changes in the distribution of color combinations, the DS 37 shows three notable newcomers:

No. 15 Crown Prince Frederick's as of 1732, has white colors with blue center medallions throughout. The colonel's with a standing straight sided cross of very narrow blue wedges, i.e. two vertical, two horizontal; the ordinary with an additional four, also very

narrow, blue corner wedges, making a total of eight.

No. 18 furnishes the first example, as of 1731, of the corner flames (Figure 7) as a differentiating pattern.

No. 32 a newly raised Fusiliér Regiment, displays both the flame cross and the straight sided corner wedges (Figure 8).

General Description

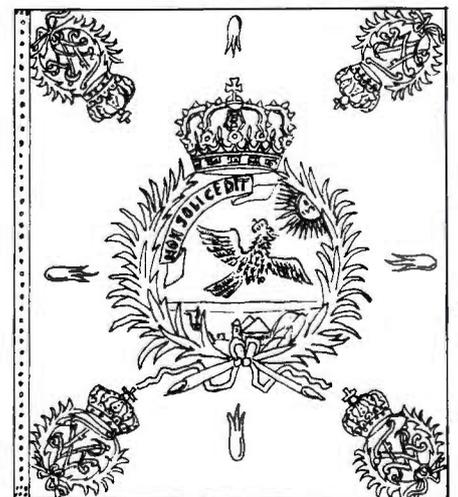
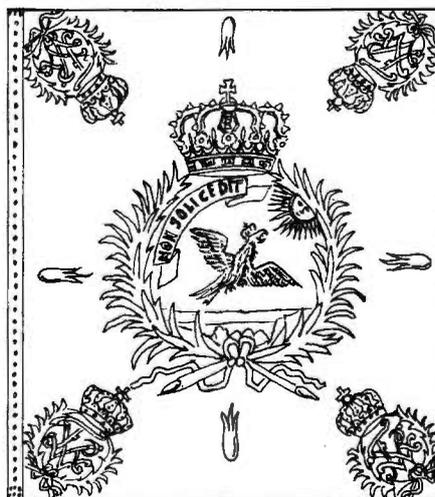
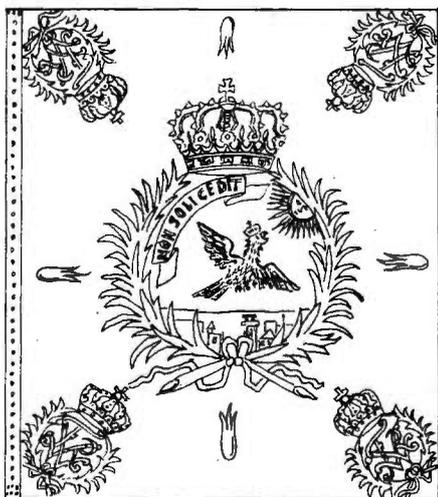
The details listed here are common to all colors. Wherever deviations from the norm are known, they will be listed under the remarks following the regimental distinctions.

Ordinary Colors

All emblems (wreaths, crowns, flames and cyphers) are executed in gold paint, except on the colors of No. 3, No. 15 from 1732 and No. 26 from not later than 1729, where they are rendered in silver (Note remarks for these regiments).



Standard of the Anhalt Regiment No. 14, 1705. Yellow with silver flames, black eagle, and golden sun. Silver scroll with black lettering: 'Omnes pello hostes vincoque sub tuis alis.' The bear is black, the lion and patch of ground are rendered in natural colors.



Secondary Distinctions of Prussian Infantry Colors

House No.	Type of Color	Cloth and Scroll	Center Medallion	Type	Color	Remarks
1	Colonel's Ordinary	white orange	orange white	— —	— —	1)
2	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	— —	— —	2)
3	Colonel's Ordinary	white Pale yellow	pale yellow white	— —	— —	3)
4	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	golden yellow golden yellow	4)
5	Colonel's Ordinary	white golden yellow	gray white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	light blue red	5)
6	Colonel's Ordinary	white white dark blue	white dark blue white	— — Fig. 2	— — red	7) 8)
7	Colonel's Ordinary	white blue	blue white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	red red	9)
8	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	black white	10)
9	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue-green	dark blue-green white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	dark red dark red	11)
	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue-green	dark blue-green white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	dark red dark red	12)
10	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale sea green	pale sea green white	— —	— —	12a)
11	Colonel's Ordinary	white purple	purple white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	purple white	13)
	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	dark red white	14)
12	Colonel's Ordinary	white light sea green	light sea green white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	light sea green white	15)
13	Colonel's Ordinary	white blue	white white	— —	16) 16)	16)
	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	dark red dark red	17)
14	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	— —	— —	
15	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	red red	18)
	Colonel's Ordinary	white white	dark blue dark blue	19) 19)	dark blue dark blue	
16	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow orange	yellow orange white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	yellow orange white	
17	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	dark red white	
18	Colonel's Ordinary	white cornflower blue	cornflower blue white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	red red	20)
	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 7 Fig. 7	red/dark blue red/white	21)
19	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	22) 22)	dark red white	
20	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue-green	dark blue-green white	— —	— —	
21	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	black black	23)
22	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	red red	
23	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark cornflower blue	dark cornflower blue white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	dark cornflower blue white	
24	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark green	dark green white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	dark green white	24)
25	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark green	dark green white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	yellow yellow	25)
26	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	yellow white	26)
27	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	yellow/red yellow/red	27)
28	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	dark blue dark blue	27a)
29	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	lemon yellow lemon yellow	
30	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue-green	dark blue-green white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	black black	
31	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 6 Fig. 6	orange yellow orange yellow	28)
32	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	Fig. 8 Fig. 8	black/red black/red	29)

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

The scrolls were rendered in oil paint to match the dyed silks of the cloth. Since the dyes seem rather lively on the silks and the oils are opaque, the painted scrolls appear rather darker than the base colors. Where this is noticeable, a special note has been made in the remarks on the individual regiments.

The motto "Non soli cedit," is lettered in gold (Note exceptions for the three silver regiments!)

The stones set in the golden crowns are white and the orb surmounting the central crown is golden, except for No. 2 and No. 5, where the stones, and No. 4, No. 5 and No. 8, where the orb is light blue. The oval bottom openings of the crowns (all five on each side) are filled red. It is a common misinterpretation to fill the tops in red. Instead, the color of whatever portion of the cloth upon which the crown rests should show through. Thus, for example, the upper arm of a flame cross will continue on and show between the upper arms of the crown.

The eagle is rendered in black, its beak, claws, and crown are golden, the eye white and the tongue red.

The sun is golden.

The capital, ferrule, and nails are golden.

Continued on page 54

FIGURES 5 AND 6/ The flame cross and the corner wedges. Misinterpretation of these secondary distinctions has given rise to numerous errors, rampant in current publications on Prussian colors, thereby further compounding other mistakes and misinformation.

FIGURE 7/ The corner flames, which first appear in the DS37.

FIGURE 8/ The combined distinction of Regiment No. 32.

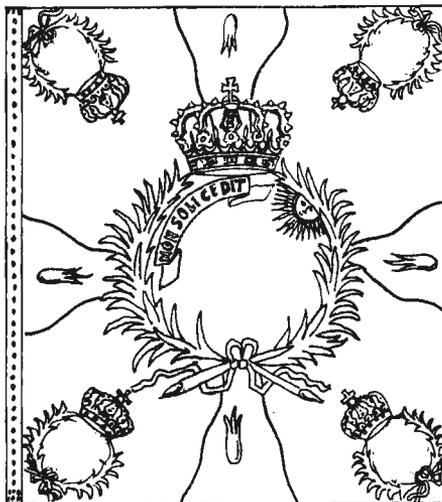


FIGURE 5

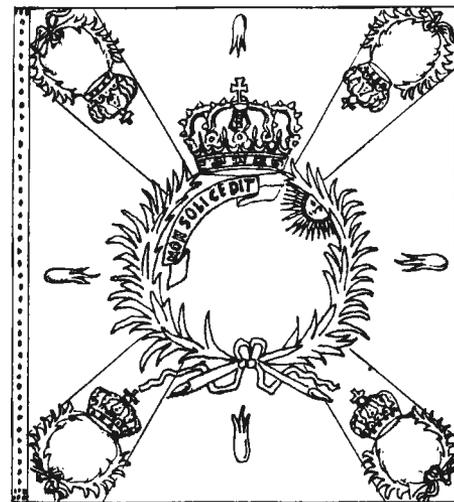


FIGURE 6

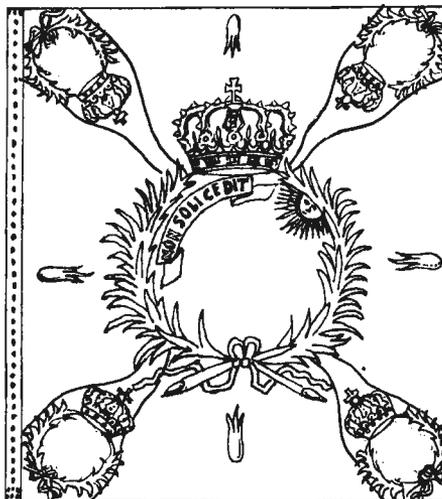


FIGURE 7



FIGURE 8

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

Streamers and tassels black and silver.

The staffs appear in various shades of brown, except where noted otherwise in the remarks.

Colonel's Colors

The base cloth of colonel's colors is white, while the base color of the ordinary colors will appear in the center medallion.

Where secondary distinctions (Figure 5 through 8) appear, they will be the same, both on the colonel's and the ordinary colors. However, when these distinctions are white on the ordinary colors, then they, too, will assume the color of the base cloth. For example: No. 8 is black with white center medallion and white

flame cross. Here, the colonel's color will be white with a black center medallion and a black flame cross.

This was done to avoid confusion which would result when the white flame cross would simply become indistinguishable from the white cloth at any distance beyond, say, thirty paces. It could then, for example, easily be mistaken for the colonel's color of No. 2 which was black and white without any secondary distinctions.

Another exception which arose with the occurrence of a black center medallion was the rendering of the eagle. Since a black eagle would not have been distinguishable against a black background, it was rendered in gold.

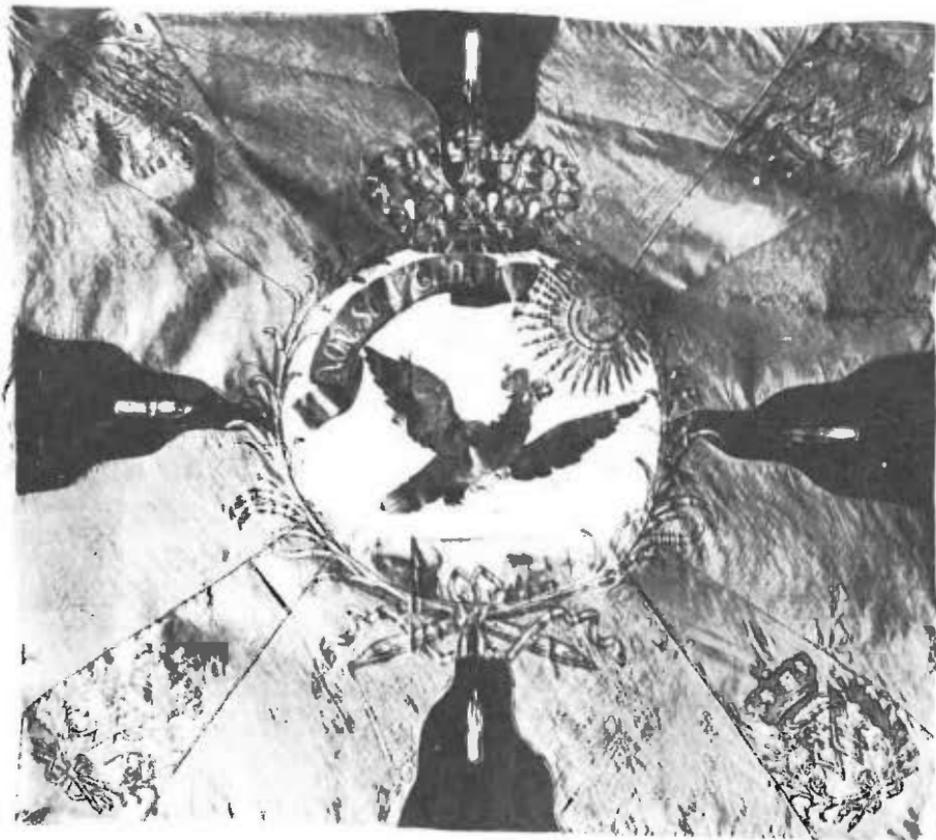


FIGURE 8A/ An ordinary of Regiment No. 32, surviving in a Viennese museum (Courtesy Biblio Verlag, Osnabrueck).

Footnotes

1. Jany, *Geschichte der Preussischen Armee*, Vol. I, p. 783; Biblio, Osnabrueck 1967 (Reprint).
2. Bleckwenn, *Brandenburg Preussens Heer, 1640-1807*, p.125; Biblio, Osnabrueck 1978.
3. Fiebig, *Unsterbliche Treue*, p. 86; Andermann, Berlin 1936.

4. Jany, *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 574.
5. Fiebig, *ibid.*, see footnote 3.
6. Bleckwenn, *ibid.*, p. 127.

7. The laying up of captured trophies in churches was not merely an act of official formality. When reading letters written by combatants of the era, one is at once struck by the expressions of deep religious faith. Far better publicized is the fact that the Lutheran hymn "A Mighty Fortress our Lord," once struck up by a grenadier, was taken up by the entire army on the battlefield of Leuthen. It has, since then, become known in German speaking countries as the "Chorale of Leuthen." Unlike the soldier of modern times, who seeks ground cover in action, the 18th century soldier was expected to stand up, facing the enemy squarely at point blank range, both to give and receive. One took, in fact, a simple peasant and

turned him into a duelist. Altogether too often, casualty returns of units in the thick of the action prove that the odds for survival in a game of Russian Roulette were far better than those for surviving a battle! Thus, "In God we trust" was not by any means an empty phrase, but rather an expression of sincere faith.

8. Fiebig, *ibid.*
9. Jany, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 350.
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 601.
11. Lehmann, *Die brandenburgisch-preussischen Fahnen und Standarten im Artilleriemuseum der Peter und Pauls Festung zu St. Petersburg*, in *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch* 1902, p. 115.
12. Jany and Bleckwenn, *Die Dessauer Spezifikation von 1729*, Biblio, Osnabrueck 1970.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 20, see also footnote on this page.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Melzner, *Die Dessauer Spezifikation von 1737*; Biblio, Osnabrueck 1974.
17. See footnote 2.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

THE ERA OF FREDERICK THE GREAT

Where the Dessauer Specifications provided a firm anchor for the preceding period, the years of Frederick's reign are characterized by the fact that he was not interested in propagating information about his army. Whenever he heard of someone attempting to publish general quarters listings, uniform plates or regimental histories, he usually attempted to suppress them. And in this, he was generally successful even beyond the borders of Prussia. He held a very limited view of which people, in his words, had "need for such information."

Frederick himself was a prodigious worker. Virtually every decision concerning even the minutiae of the day-to-day grind was made by him personally. For this reason alone, he probably ranks as the first soldier, in the narrowest sense of the word, among the great captains in history.

Monarchs frequently exhibited a propensity for appearing in military uniforms. Not just Kaiser Wilhelm II — all of them! After all, if a monarch believed in himself and in his calling, and most of them did, he saw himself both as the symbol and the head of his state. And the military uniform, itself symbolic of the state's armed might, was a physical manifestation of the power wielded by the monarch. In the days of the absolute monarchies, a soldier did not wear the military uniform of his nation's armed forces, he wore the "king's coat." And the more king's coats there were, the bigger the monarch's voice, be it in internal or international politics.

With most, however, the wearing of the uniform was largely a matter of appearances and showmanship. One monarch might be known to appear during the final stages of a siege. Told by his generals that a fortress was about to fall, he would appear and "take command" so that he might preside over the ceremonials attending the surrender. Others might accompany their armies into the field but leave the commanding to their generals. And when, at times, they did attempt to command, they might upset the apple cart. Since such a possibility always existed, no general was thrilled at the prospect of having his sovereign underfoot when the shooting began in earnest.

Thus, notwithstanding the plethora of paintings depicting sovereigns in full military regalia, those who were actually capable of exercising command in the field can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Ranking foremost among these were, no doubt, Frederick and Napoleon. Yet, there is as much about them that is similar as there is which is not.

Napoleon was, in reality, a highly capable and genial military adventurer who had elevated himself onto a throne. Frederick, despite the trials and tribulations with his royal father, was destined to rule on the day he was born. From this factor alone arise many of the dissimilarities between the two, quite apart from the differences in their psychological profiles.

Like Napoleon, Frederick was quick, intelligent, astute and confident as a field commander. Both men were brave, both were fighters and both knew how to gamble for high stakes.



PRUSSIAN INI

Unlike Napoleon, Frederick also commanded the army at home. Not only did he pay close attention to every detail concerning the internal conditions of his army, he took an active part in the role of a subordinate commander. No colonel did anything on behalf of his regiment that Frederick himself did not do in his capacity as the colonel of his guards. He took an active hand even in his secondary role as commander of the

colonel's company, knew the name of every man on its muster rolls, saw to his own replacements, handled promotions and was as accessible to his men as any company commander in the Prussian army. In the narrower sense of the word, this made him the better soldier of the two.

Both Frederick and Napoleon shared some common weaknesses as well. Confident in their



Frederick the Great at Zorndorf, 1758

ANTRY COLORS

THE CONCLUSION OF A TWO-PART STUDY BY RICHARD RIEHN

own abilities, they often underestimated the caliber of their opposition. Neither possessed an adequate general staff structure. Frederick could get away with it because he operated on a smaller scale and because the rest of his military machine was functioning so smoothly. Napoleon had a general staff, but it could never rise above being a mere administrative body.

Both looked with suspicion upon the most

talented and capable of their subordinate commanders. Napoleon because he sat uneasily upon a throne of his own making, which might just as well have been claimed by someone else. It was not simply a matter of ego, it was also a political necessity. Frederick, born to rule, had no such excuse to back up the dictates of his ego. As an absolute monarch, and a confirmed cynicist, he cast a baleful and jealous eye on

Seydlitz, who was prone to disobey orders and still come up winning. Some thought Frederick's younger brother, Prince Henry, to be an even better general and, no doubt, Frederick was smart enough to see the grains of truth in this. It made for a strained relationship throughout their lives.

Napoleon had to persuade and command loyalty through the power of his personality where Frederick could simply command obedience. Napoleon could make brilliant and grandiose plans only to have all come to naught because the chains in his command had so many weak links. Frederick had inherited a far stronger chain from his father and he maintained it well. Nothing escaped his eye on campaign because it was practiced to see everything in garrison. Owing to the circumstances attending Napoleon's rise in the military hierarchy, he put a great deal of faith into the fine art of improvisation. Frederick did not believe in it at all.

Year after year, Frederick inspected his army. This was a serious matter. Every officer slept uneasily until it had passed and offered fervent prayers of thanksgiving for his deliverance when the sky hadn't fallen on his head in the process.

As Commander in Chief, Adjutant General and Inspector General rolled into one, Frederick would frequently amend or change orders and regulations via the medium of VOCCO (Verbal Order of the Commanding Officer). Often, these were not written down. Everyone concerned would remember, because they knew the king would. If something was set down on paper, it would often take the form of a cryptic remark in telegram style, causing latter-day historians all sorts of difficulties when they tried to decipher them.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of Prussian army records were lost. In Frederick's time, record keeping was entirely governed by pragmatic considerations. Once the use for something had passed, it could be thrown away. During the Seven Years' War, Frederick ordered that old records be used to wrap cartridges for the infantry. More was lost simply through carelessness during the nineteenth century. By the time the Historical Section of the General Staff embarked upon a program of historical publications during the late nineteenth century, only fragments remained. And most of these either went up in flames with the Potsdam Archives in World War II or are presently not accessible.

Yet, much did survive in secondary locations and in stray holdings. Much came to light in the archives of formerly West Prussian territories and more even in the archives of Anhalt, Hesse and Brunswick, because the princes of these states had served actively in the Prussian army.

In the course of a century of study, many pieces of a mosaic were unearthed which Dr. Bleckwenn has spent a lifetime in piecing together. And the results of his efforts have been, for the past decade, appearing in print under the aegis of Biblio's monumental series, "Das Alt-preussische Heer 1713-1807."

As far as the history of Prussian colors and standards is concerned, this has already resulted in a picture which, in conjunction with surviving museum stocks, is complete in its essentials.

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

The majority of the changes concerning colors which took place between the years 1786 and 1807 concerned their distribution rather than their appearance. For this reason, the following roster includes all formations as well as some changes which were made after Frederick's reign. Organizational changes will be aired in appropriate sections appended to this roster.

What has not been included are some temporary formations, most notably those resulting from the unsuccessful attempt to press the Saxon army into the Prussian service.

THE 1740 REGULATIONS

Although no specific document is known, Frederick ordered the new pattern for the infantry colors as soon as he ascended the throne. The new regiments (Nos. 33 to 40) raised in 1740 received the new pattern from the very start. The old regiments, however, campaigned with the old FWR and *Non soli cedit* colors during the First Silesian War (1740/41); some hadn't even received their new stands when the second war broke out in 1745.

Apart from the appropriate changes in cypher from FWR to FR, the most notable change is the new center medallion without the sun, displaying only a now-armed eagle and a new motto: PRO GLORIA ET PATRIA.

The dimensions of the colors also decrease from a median of 150cm to about 140cm, while the rectangle is now upright rather than horizontal.

Owing, no doubt, to the increased number of regiments, the secondary distinction in the form of corner flames appears more often and heraldic considerations dictate the increased use of silver emblems which appeared only on three sets of colors in Frederick William's time.

THE COLOR OF THE COLORS

The Baroque was characterized by the strong

juxtaposition of unbroken colors, i.e. red, blue, and white, set against metal. The description made of the colors in various listings usually knows little better than to distinguish between light and dark red, to cite just one example. This, however, can range from vermilion to crimson. Surviving colors must be viewed with reservations because fugitive dyes and the passage of two centuries have not simply caused them to fade but turn into often indeterminate hues of questionable chroma. Even when parting seams which were protected from light, one often gets but yet another variety of the indeterminate. What can be most misleading here is where, in the case of mixed dyes, one constituent has been more sensitive than another. It can turn what was once blue into a cast of green and what was once green in the direction of yellow; black can go to purple, and so on.

Thus, the best hint we may often get about the original appearance of the colors can come from the matching linen strips sandwiched between the wrapping and the nails fixing the colors to the staff. Finally, there are the scrolls in the center medallions, which were executed in oil paint to match the base color of the cloth. However, existing manuscripts also warn us that these scrolls could, at times, run somewhat darker than the dyes they were supposed to match.

Supporting what can be gleaned from surviving originals are a few contemporary manuscripts, illustrating the colors in tempera, and inventory listings, made when the originals were not nearly as old as they are now.

Yet, even gouache or tempera are not safe from the ravages of time. The whites, containing lead, are turning from gray to black and if the white was mixed with a color, it will change that as well. Even so, by comparing and matching what was gathered from a variety of sources, it was possible to arrive at some carefully thought out solutions and conclusions. These conclusions, then, have been set down in the previously mentioned Biblio Series in Part Three, Volume III, "The Uniforms of the Prussian Infantry

1753-1786," by Dr. H. Bleckwenn, with graphics by F.G. Melzner. This magnificent volume, in its turn, has furnished me with the color descriptions as given in the following roster.

Whenever it was possible or advisable, the information was couched in terms more useful to the figure painter. For example, rather than speak of yellow, red or dark brown, the staffs of the colors are described as being ochre, sienna or umber. This is not only more convenient but probably also more accurate as well, since these earths have been used to make the commonest varieties of brown paints since the Middle Ages.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Apart from the change in the design of the central medallion, the most notable change is in the wreaths, which are now made of laurel leaves and the FR cyphers in the corner medallions. Also, the eagle is now armed with a sword and a bundle of thunderbolts in his claws. Thus:

Wreaths, crowns, cyphers, flames in the corners, and lettering on the scroll in the specified metal color.

The stones in the crowns are white and the orbs surmounting the crowns are now light blue throughout, bottoms filled red.

The scroll bearing the motto in metal color is in the base color of the cloth.

The eagle is black (except on black center medallions, where it is rendered in metal, with golden crown, beak, claws, sword hilt, and thunderbolts. The sword blade is silver, the tongue red.

The nails fixing the colors to the staff are of the color of wreaths and cyphers.

The capital and ferrule are golden throughout, notwithstanding the metal painting on the colors. The capital is perforated showing the crowned FR.

The banderol black and silver, as before.

THE COLORS OF THE 1740 PATTERN

When using this listing, the supplementary remarks appended should be consulted under the appropriate regimental number.

House Number	Type	Cloth & Scroll	Center Medallion	Metal Painting	Secondary Distinctions	
					Type	Color
1	Colonel's Ordinary	white orange	orange white	silver silver	Fig. 1	-
2	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	gold gold	Fig. 1	-
3	Colonel's Ordinary	white lemon yellow	lemon yellow white	silver silver	Fig. 1	-
4	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale crimson	pale crimson white	gold gold	Fig. 2	yellow yellow
5	Colonel's Ordinary	white golden yellow	golden yellow white	gold gold	Fig. 2	vermilion vermilion
6	Colonel's Ordinary	white white	blue blue	gold gold	See remarks	See remarks
7	Colonel's Ordinary	white blue	blue white	silver silver	Fig. 4	dark vermilion dark vermilion
8	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	gold gold	Fig. 2	black white
9	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale green	pale green white	gold gold	Fig. 2	pale crimson pale crimson
10	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale green	pale green white	gold gold	Fig. 1	-
11	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	gold gold	Fig. 2	dark red white

House Number	Type	Cloth & Scroll	Center Medallion	Metal Painting	Secondary Distinctions	
					Type	Color
12	Colonel's Ordinary	white sea green	sea green white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	sea green white
13	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	silver silver	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	crimson crimson
14	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark purple	dark purple white	gold gold	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
15	Colonel's Ordinary	silver/white silver/white	silver blue/silver	gold/silver gold/silver	Fig. 8 Fig. 8	- -
16	Colonel's Ordinary	white orange yellow	orange yellow white	gold gold	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	orange yellow white
17	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	dark red white
18	Colonel's Ordinary	white cornflower blue	cornflower blue white	silver silver	Fig. 3 Fig. 3	vermillion vermillion
19	Colonel's Ordinary	white crimson	crimson white	gold gold	Fig. 7 Fig. 7	crimson white
	Colonel's Colonel's	white crimson	crimson white	gold gold	Fig. 6* Fig. 6	crimson white
20	Colonel's Ordinary	white deep green	deep green white	gold gold	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
21	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	gold gold	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	black black
	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	gold/silver gold/silver	Fig. 11 Fig. 11	yellow yellow
22	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	vermillion vermillion
23	Colonel's Ordinary	white white	white blue	silver silver	Fig. 1* Fig. 1*	- -
24	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale green	pale green white	gold gold	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	pale green white
25	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale green	pale green white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	yellow yellow
26	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	silver silver	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	yellow white
27	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 2 Fig. 2	red/yellow red/yellow
28	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	blue blue
29	Colonel's Ordinary	white blue	blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	yellow yellow
30	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark green	dark green white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	black black
31	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	dark blue white
32	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 5 Fig. 5	black/red black/red
33	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	silver silver	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
34	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	silver silver	Fig. 6* Fig. 6	light blue white
	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	silver silver	Fig. 7 Fig. 7	light blue white
35	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	silver silver	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
36	Colonel's Ordinary	white medium gray	medium gray white	gold gold	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
37	Colonel's Ordinary	white light green	light green white	gold gold	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
38	Colonel's Ordinary	white red	red white	gold gold	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -
39	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	silver silver	Fig. 4 Fig. 4	yellow white
40	Colonel's Ordinary	white pink	pink white	gold gold	Fig. 9 Fig. 9	- -
41	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale yellow	pale yellow white	silver silver	Fig. 1 Fig. 1	- -

House Number	Type	Cloth & Scroll	Center Medallion	Metal Painting	Secondary Distinctions Type Color
42	Colonel's Ordinary	white orange	orange orange	gold gold	Fig. 4 orange Fig. 4 white
43	Colonel's Ordinary	light green white	white light green	gold gold	Fig. 1 scroll lt. green Fig. 1 scroll white
44	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 red Fig. 4 red
45	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 orange Fig. 4 orange
46	Colonel's Ordinary	white pale yellow	pale yellow white	gold gold	Fig. 3 black Fig. 3 black
47	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	gold gold	Fig. 3 light blue Fig. 3 light blue
48	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark red	dark red white	silver silver	Fig. 4 light blue Fig. 4 light blue
49	Colonel's Ordinary	white brown	brown white	silver silver	Fig. 1 - Fig. 1 -
50	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark blue	dark blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 crimson Fig. 4 crimson
51	Colonel's Ordinary	white yellow	yellow white	silver silver	Fig. 4 light blue Fig. 4 light blue
52	Colonel's Ordinary	white dark (apple) green	dark (apple) green white	silver silver	Fig. 2 vermillion Fig. 2 vermillion
53	Colonel's Ordinary	white light green	light green white	silver silver	Fig. 4 vermillion Fig. 4 vermillion
54	Colonel's Ordinary	white black	black white	gold gold	Fig. 2 vermillion Fig. 2 vermillion
55	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	silver silver	Fig. 2 yellow Fig. 2 yellow
56	Colonel's Ordinary	white green	green white	silver silver	Fig. 3 purple Fig. 3 purple
57	Colonel's Ordinary	white rose red	- -	gold gold	Fig. 10 - Fig. 10 -
58	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	silver silver	Fig. 4 yellow Fig. 4 yellow
59	Colonel's Ordinary	white light blue	light blue white	gold gold	Fig. 4 light blue Fig. 4 white

Remarks for the 1740 Pattern

- Staff: Brown ochre.
- According to Lehmann, "Preussische Fahnen," Vol. 1, p. 168, the staff on the 1769 issue was white. In the black center medallion, the eagle is rendered in metal color, i.e. gold.
- Staff: Yellow ochre.
- The crimson is rather flat, no doubt the result of mixing dyes. Staff: Burnt umber or Van Dyke brown. 1774: Black.
- Staff: Burnt Sienna.
- To commemorate No. 6 as the direct descendant of the old king's guard, this unit was continued at battalion strength and its uniforms frozen as they were at the time of Frederick William's death. Thus, the colors also remained as they were, continuing to exhibit the palm fronds instead of the new laurel wreaths. However, the center medallions displayed the new design with the motto: PRO GLORIA ET PATRIA. the corner medallions also with FWR instead of FR, blue on ordinaries. Sulpher yellow staff.
- There is no authoritative source for the color of the staffs; probably brown.
- Note black medallion will have eagle in gold. The 1772 issue, laid up in Berlin in 1810, had dark brown (umber) staffs. One example, however, of earlier issue, laid up in Kolberg and probably used by a provisional unit during the Seven Years' War, had a white staff.
- Staff: Burnt umber. The green of the cloth a shade to yellow.
- Staff: Brown ochre. The cloth, described as pale sea-green, is a medium pea-green with a cast of gray.
- Staff: Burnt sienna. The red of the cloth a medium burgundy.
- The staffs were probably dark brown (umber), in congruence with the musket stocks, which can be documented for 1759. Only for the colonelcy of Ludwig IX of Hesse-Darmstadt (to 1757) can the vermillion staffs be proven. The cloth is slightly lighter than No. 10. Add a touch of white instead of light gray.
- Staff: Brown ochre. Here, the eagle in the black center of the colonel's color is rendered in silver!
- Staff: Burnt umber. The dark purple is a flat, brownish burgundy or crimson.
- These were the only embroidered infantry colors in the Prussian army, made of two layers of white cloth with silver stripes laid back to back (like the cavalry standards). The modeller must keep this in mind when he wishes to do such a figure with the color draped naturally. Owing to the weight of the cloth and the massive double thickness of embroidery, the center medallion was not given to bend easily, causing the color to drape in a wide triangle when held upright, showing almost the entire medallion. On the colonel's color, the center medallion is made of silver brocade, on the ordinaries of blue cloth worked through in silver. Consult Fig. 8 for the distribution of the gold and silver in the wreaths. On both types of color, the device band is silver brocade, lettered and edged in gold. Staffs: Bright yellow.
- Staff: Burnt umber. The cloth is among those pinned down only with some difficulty. Call it orange-yellow (light chrome yellow) rather than yellow orange.
- Staff: Sienna. 1761 replacements: Black. The dark red is best described as a medium burgundy, i.e. crimson (carmine) lightened very slightly.
- The color of the staff is not known. However, as for all the later issues, they were almost certainly black. For the cornflower blue, try Winsor Newton periwinkle blue, slightly opaqued with white.
- Staff: Sienna. The Maltese cross (Fig. 7) moved from No. 19 to No. 34 in 1763, when Prince Ferdinand of Prussia, brother

of the king, became the Grand Master of the Protestant Order of St. John. Conversely, No. 19 then received the pattern of No. 34 (Fig. 6) by way of exchange. This was the pattern originally carried by No. 15 (Crown-prince Frederick) up to 1740. The burgundy color scheme of the regiment remained the same and the colonel's color, in conformance with 1770/74 documentation, had only four wedges, i.e. horizontal and vertical, as with the old crown prince. Note also the handling of the secondary distinctions: Burgundy wedges on the colonel's color.

of the old crown prince (No. 15) before 1740, where all ten colors of the regiment had been white and the colonel's color was distinguished merely by having only four instead of eight blue wedges. On the colors of No. 34, however, only the colonel's color was white with blue wedges, while the ordinaries were light blue with white wedges, in conformance with the common color reversal, which also extended to the secondary distinctions whenever these were white. It can not be determined if the colonel's colors of No. 34 also had only four wedges as the old No. 15 before 1740 and No. 19 after 1763. However, it seems unlikely that the pattern of the colonel's color would have changed from four wedges for No. 15, to eight for No. 34, only to go back to four for No. 19. Quite probably, the

20. Staff: Umber. The green of the cloth is a rich emerald.
21. Staff: Umber. The cloth of the old issue is a medium burgundy. The issue as in Fig. 11 was made in 1802 (see text). It was identical to the traditional pattern, except that it bore the Duke of Brunswick's initials in silver lettering in place of the horizontal grenades. Another notable exception was the mixture of metals in the treatment of the emblems. While all the wreaths, lettering and grenades were silver, all five crowns and the cyphers in the corners were golden.
22. This was the color scheme which was probably first carried by the Giant Grenadiers (see Part I) and came to this regiment sometime after 1713. Staff: Black.
23. This regiment received its white stands of colors, similar to No. 6, in 1747, honoring its performance in the Battle of Soor in 1745. The pattern is entirely in conformance with that shown in Fig. 1. However, both on the colonel's and ordinary colors, the corner medallions are blue.
24. The black staffs are already documented for the Seven Years' War. The green is soft, with a yellow cast.
25. Staff: Brown ochre. The green as before, but still more yellow-hued.
26. Staff: Black, at least since 1755. The yellow of the cloth has a greenish cast, i.e. sulphur or lemon.
27. The color of the staff is not known. An unusual feature of these colors were the secondary distinctions: The vertical arms of the flame cross were yellow, the horizontal arms vermilion.
28. Black staffs already in DS 37.
29. Black staffs since the Seven Years' War.
30. The color of the staffs is unknown but Dr. Bleckwenn assumes them to be black as with the preceding group of erstwhile fusilier regiments, which became regiments of foot or Musketer Regiments after 1740. The green of the cloth with an olive cast.
31. Staff: Black. This color scheme came to the regiment in 1743, while the old scheme went to the newly raised No. 45.
32. Staff: Black. The double secondary distinctions, dark vermilion corner wedges and black flame cross can be traced to the two independent battalions which became the parent units of this regiment.
33. Staff: White. Blue as No. 18.
34. The pattern before 1763 (Fig. 6) was as that

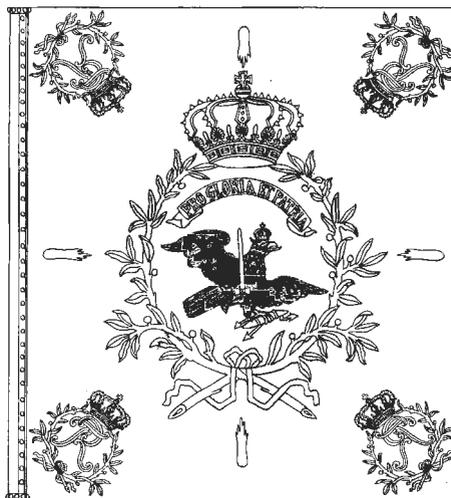


FIGURE 1. Infantry color without secondary distinction.

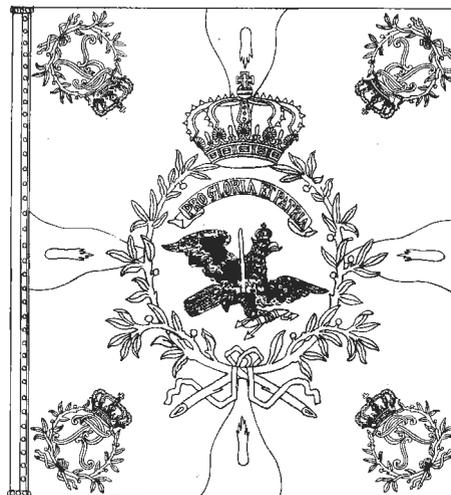


FIGURE 2. Color with flame cross.

colonel's color, here too, had only four wedges forming a standing cross. The color scheme did not change when the Maltese cross came to No. 34. Staffs: Yellow.

35. Staff: White.
36. Staff: White. Fiebig describes the medium gray as being lilac gray.
37. Staff: White. The cloth similar to No. 25.

38. Staff: Probably white, although there is some confusion because some stands re-issued in 1809 were later laid up again with black staffs. The red cloth is a rich, dark vermilion.
39. Staff: Yellow. This may be interpreted as being indicative of the Brunswick connections of the regiment rather than of privileged status.
40. Originals in Ludwigsburg, Vienna, and Leningrad still document this pattern which, while common during the first Prussian king's reign, had become a singular occurrence under Frederick the great. Staff: White.
41. Staff: White. The yellow of the cloth is a pale *paille* or straw color.
42. Staff: White. This is an exceptional instance where the color of the center medallion remains the same both on the colonel's and the ordinary colors.
43. Staff: White. Here, the center medallion of the ordinary is also of the base color, but the colonel's color is a complete reversal, i.e. all white. Only the scroll on the colonel's color appears in the regimental green.
44. Staff: Umber.
45. Staff: Umber.
46. Staff: White.
47. Staff: White.
48. Staff: White. The red of the cloth a rich burgundy.
49. Staff: White. This regiment began life as an engineer unit. At that time, it carried a special

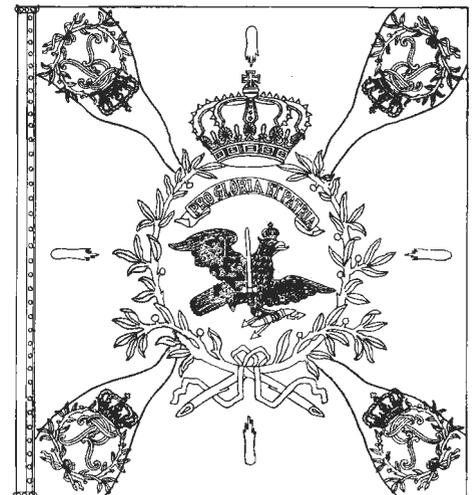


FIGURE 3. Color with corner flames.

pattern of colors. The regular issue probably came in 1759 after the losses of its original colors and its conversion to an infantry regiment.

50. Staff: Sienna. The regiment was raised in 1773.
51. Staff: Sienna. The regiment was raised in 1773.
52. Staff: White. The regiment was raised in 1773.
53. Staff: White. The regiment was raised in 1773.
54. Staff: White. The regiment was raised in 1773.

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

55. Staff: White. This regiment was raised in 1774. Use cerulean blue for this color.
56. Staff: White. The Ansbach regiment was taken into Prussian service in 1796. It received standard-pattern colors by 1797.
57. Staff: white. Add white to carmine or crimson to achieve the pink rose of the cloth. The detailing of the eagle is the same as for the standard patterns. FWR cyphers.
58. Staff: White. FWR in the corner medallions.

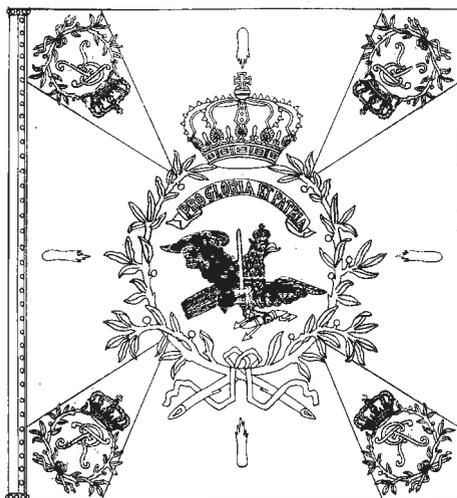


FIGURE 4. Color with corner wedges.

59. Staff: White. FWR in the corner medallions.

THE REIGN OF FREDERICK WILLIAM II 1786 - 1797

The year 1787 marked the beginning of several changes in organization. Even though these did not really touch the core of any of the old kings' institutions, they did have some effect on the colors:

The Reduction of Colors

By AKO of 23 May 1787, the number of colors carried in each regiment was reduced from ten (one per company) to four (one colonel's and one ordinary in the 1st, two ordinaries in the 2nd Battalion). None were carried by the depot battalions, the newly created fusilier battalions or the grenadier companies.

Under this new system, one color in each battalion (the colonel's in the 1st) was designated the "Avancier Fahne" (advancing color), while the other became the "Retirier Fahne" (retiring color).

Ostensibly, the advancing color was to serve as the *point de vue* when going forward, while the other was to fulfill its function during a retrograde movement. From a practical point of view, this baroqueish bit of frippery had a military value of nil. Possibly, it was just too much to contemplate so drastic a step of going from five to a single color per battalion in one giant step. Even then, the company color was already a tradition reckoned in terms of centuries. Moreover, in the 2nd battalions, which carried two ordinaries, there was absolutely nothing to distinguish one from the other. Needless to add, it didn't last long.

Yet, looking through the literature on the

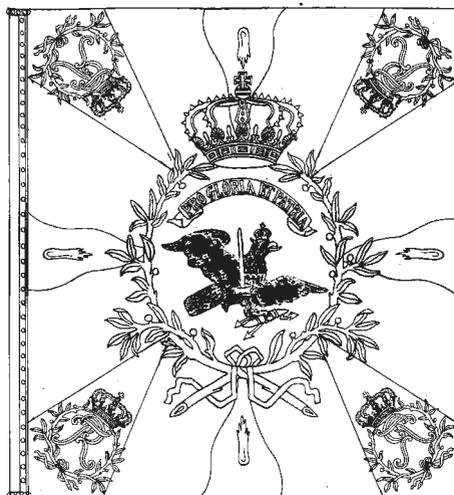


FIGURE 5. Color with flame cross and corner wedges, unique to the colors of No. 32.

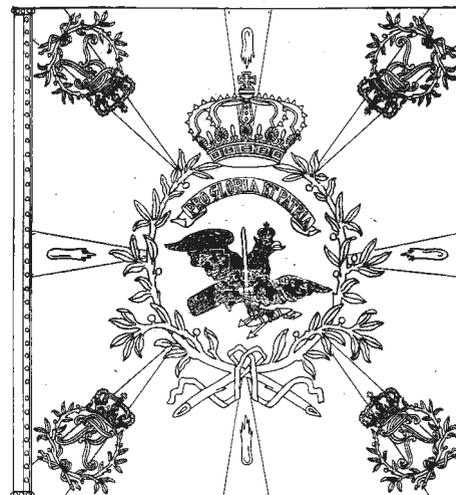


FIGURE 6. Special pattern for No. 15 (Crown Prince) to 1740, then to No. 34 (Prince Henry of Prussia) to 1763, then to No. 19.

subject, especially covering that point in time, where several colors were handed around to new units, there is much laborious repetition of whose "Retirier Fahne" went to whom. This is idle chatter. The only thing of importance is the pattern, that is to say, was it a colonel's (Leibfahne) or an ordinary (Ordinaer or Regiments Fahne) which was handed on? And this is the way the subject is treated in what follows.

The Metamorphosis of the Prussian Fusilier

By tradition, the fusilier was a light infantryman who stood one cut above the ordinary soldier in the line. In Prussia, for a long time, the exact opposite was the case.

While Frederick I still had a Fusilier Guard, Frederick William I knew only musketeers, his soldiers of the line, and grenadiers, his elites. When he raised the first fusilier regiments in 1723, they were made up of the shorter men culled from the line regiments. Similarly, the shortest muskets were weeded out of the production and handed over to them. Thus, by designation, under Frederick William I, and by practice under Frederick the Great, they were troops of the second line.

To give them a more imposing appearance, they received the fusilier cap, the shields for which were produced from the same dies as were the grenadier caps. Thus, at a distance of several hundred paces, it would be difficult for an opponent to assess if he was facing the best or the worst of what the Prussians had to offer.

Every colonel and company commander, of course, constantly sought to "improve the stock," that is to say, the height of his company. Thus, by 1740, when Frederick the Great ascended the throne, the confluence of increased population, re-apportionment of recruiting districts and army expansion, made it possible to upgrade the existing fusilier regiments to regiments of foot, while new fusilier regiments took their place at the bottom of the ladder.

That is not to say that all fusilier regiments were useless as field units. While some never served with the field armies, others did and a few had their big moments, notably at Leuthen.

This is where things stood in 1787 when, along with the reduction in colors, the old distinction between fusilier and foot regiments was

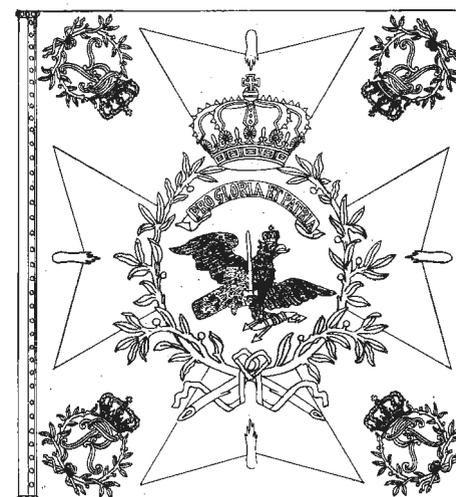


FIGURE 7. Special pattern for No. 19 to 1763, then to No. 34.

dropped and replaced by the universal designation of Infantry Regiment. The sole exceptions to this were the Regiment Garde (No. 15) and the Grenadier-Garde-Bataillon (No. 6).

At the same time, independent fusilier battalions were formed which, unlike their predecessors, were truly light infantry. In time, their number rose to twenty-four and they proved themselves entirely equal to the French during the debacles of 1806/7. They did not, however, at any time during their existence, carry colors.

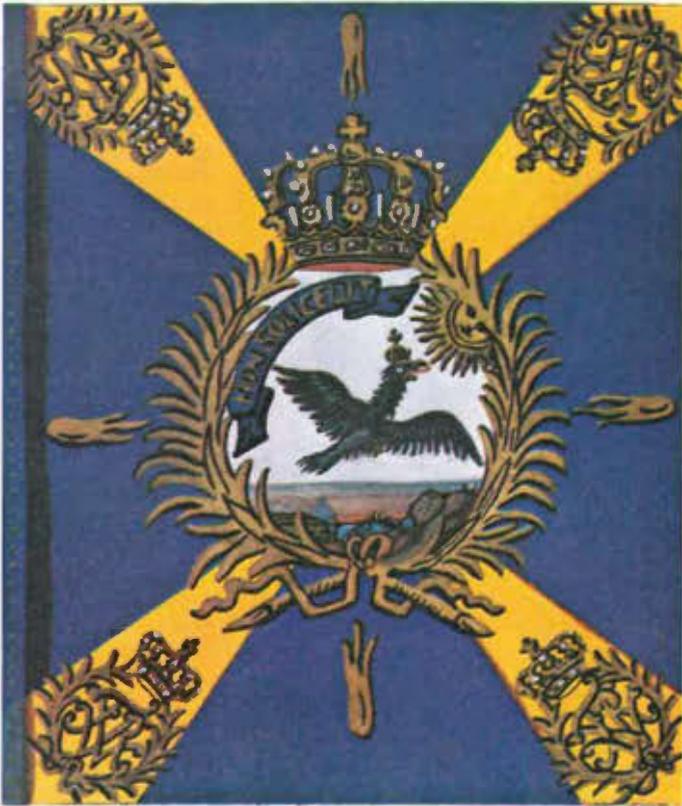
After the reorganization of 1808, the fusilier battalions were integrated into the line regiments as third battalions, intended to perform on the regimental level, as the French elite companies were intended to do on the battalion level.

Unit Designations

In order to understand much of what follows, it is necessary to be acquainted with the Prussian system of unit designations.

Once units became identified by number rather than the commander's name, it has been Prussian practice to designate companies by Arabic numerals, battalions by Roman numerals, regiments by Arabic again.

Since each regiment after the reorganization



The color of the 29th Regiment, 1729 (left) and the ordinary color of Regiment 1, 1740, illustrate the differences between early Prussian colors and those of the post-Frederick I period. By 1740, the design of the



medallion has changed considerably: the elaborate landscapes and the sun are gone and the eagle is now armed. The FWR cypher has changed to FR and the wreaths are now composed of laurel leaves.

of 1808 consisted of three battalions, the third being the fusilier battalion, it was the practice to designate the muskietier battalions as I and II, while the fusilier battalion was marked by the letter F. By way of example:

II./3. meant IInd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment. Or, F/12. meant Fusilier Battalion, 12th Inf. Regt.

At the same time, 8./2. identified the 8th Company of the 2nd Inf., the companies being numbered consecutively through the regiment.

A final point worthy of mention is the fact that, in German usage, a period following a number makes it an ordinal number.

Example: 3 = three; 3. = third; 15. = fifteenth; etc.

New Issues under Frederick William II

Since a general re-issue had become necessary late during Frederick's reign, no further issues appear to have been made to the old regiments. At least, no evidence has been found of colors dating from this period — other than those given to new regiments — with the FWR cypher.

When the former Ansbach Bayreuth Regiment passed into the Prussian line as No. 56, it received colors of the traditional pattern after little more than a year. These, however, displaying the FWR in the corner medallions.

A distinct deviation from the norm arose when No. 57 received the colors as shown in illustration No. 10. This, however, was to remain an exception because No. 58 received an issue which conformed to the traditional pattern again.

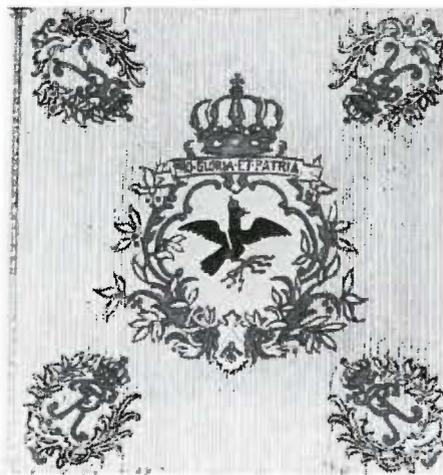


FIGURE 8. Special pattern for No. 15 (Garde Regiment), the only embroidered infantry color in the Prussian army. Cloth is embroidered with vertical silver stripes. The entire center medallion, as well as all leaf work, is silver. The outlining of the leaf work, the arabesques framing the center, as well as the crowns, cyphers and lettering on the silver scroll are golden, the nails on the staff silver, capital and ferrule on the staff golden.

THE REIGN OF FREDERICK WILLIAM III 1797-1840

The long reign of this monarch divides itself into two parts, separated by the defeat of 1806/7.

Concerning the history of the colors, the first part is punctuated by the new issue, in 1802, of a set of colors honoring the Duke of Brunswick's

nearly thirty years of colonelcy of the 21st Regiment. Apart from reflecting the Brunswick colors, light blue and yellow, these colors also had the singular distinction of bearing the initials C.W.F. — H.z.B. (Carl Wilhelm Ferdinand — Herzog zu Braunschweig) in place of the horizontal grenades to either side of the center medallion. Another unusual feature of these colors was the use of mixed metals in the emblems (see appropriate note appended to the listing of the 1740 pattern). (Ill. No. 11)

The End of Frederick's Army

The battles of Jena and Auerstaedt gave rise to much Apocrypha which did not really abate until Foucart's study of the 1806/7 campaign appeared during the 1880s, followed by Lettow-Vorbeck's account of the Prussian side some ten years later. Unlike previous accounts, both studies were based on the evaluation of army records.

Much has been made of the Prussian parade ground tactics and of the fact that the Prussian command was made up of superannuated men, headed by the 86-year old Duke of Brunswick. And despite the grains of truth in both schools of thought, both are in need of qualification. More might have been done on the Prussian side, had it not been for incredible command failures at the very top level. Even so, in victory, Davout survived a battering attended by losses reminiscent of the Seven Years' War and it never sat well with Napoleon that he, with the main army, had actually faced the smaller portion of the Prussian army.

Still, the defeats of Jena and Auerstaedt were

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

not so much the source of the catastrophe as were the events which followed during the withdrawal. Just as the troops had been committed in piecemeal and disjointed fashion, so did they march off the battlefield with no common point of assembly. One by one, the various columns then surrendered to the pursuing French. Only here and there did some of the commanders allow their troops an opportunity to fight. And it was the king's displeasure over these surrenders without a whimper which was to have far-reaching consequences for the continuing tradition of nearly all of the old regiments. Even where substantial portions of the rank and file had escaped from their French captors and made it back to assembly areas in East Prussia and Silesia on their own, he summarily disbanded all but those units which had not become involved in a surrender. And this included all but those units which had not been part of the army in the West.

Thus it came to pass that only twenty-eight old colors (and forty-nine cavalry standards) were available for reissue or still stood in the ranks at the time of reorganization. With the exception of a few which had been laid up (about nine), this is all that remained of the Frederician colors. Relatively few had been lost on the battlefield. The rest, along with colors which had long been laid up, fell into French hands through the capitulations of the towns and fortresses.

Of these, all but seven colors and three standards went up in flames in front of Notre Dame in Paris on 30 March 1814, just hours before the Allies entered the city.

The Reorganization of 1808

The Convention of Paris limited the new Prussian army to twelve infantry regiments, each consisting of three battalions (two musketer and one fusilier) and two grenadier companies. Of these, only the musketer battalions each carried two colors; one colonel's and one ordinary with the first and two ordinaries with the IIInd Battalion.

Unlike Frederician times, when the grenadier battalions formed up only during wartime, they now became a permanent institution.

Since No. 8 was the guard at the time of the reorganization (still ranked strictly on the basis of longevity, as practiced in the Dessau Specifications), its musketer battalions were considered grenadier battalions and, unlike the old Nos. 6 and 15, had no (flank) grenadier companies. Instead, the Leib Regiment (No. 9, The King's Own) had four grenadier companies, which were formed up in the Leib Grenadier Battalion.

The twenty grenadier companies of the remaining ten infantry regiments were formed into five grenadier battalions which bore the names of the provinces where the parent regiments had been raised.

On 1 July 1813, the Garde Regiment was pulled from the line and ranked separately at the head of the muster rolls. With No. 8 thus becoming vacant, Nos. 9 through 12 moved one up while the newly vacant No. 12 was not filled until the general expansion of 1813.

Thus, the numbering system employed in what follows will reflect the above changes, i.e. with the guard taken out of the line.

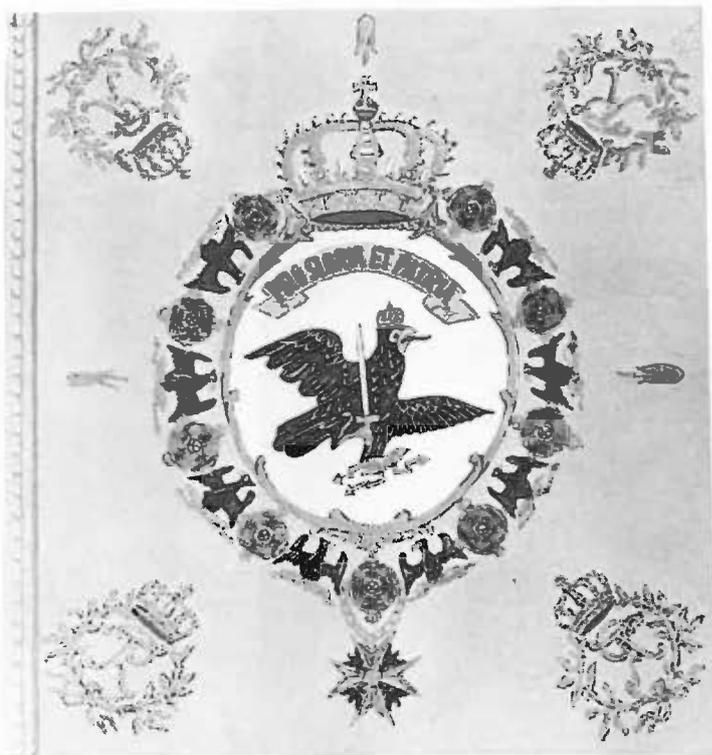


FIGURE 9. Special pattern for No. 40. The Black Eagle chain is composed of black eagles, alternating with perforated golden medallions consisting of crowned pairs of the letter F set back to back in the four compass directions. The badge a blue cross, framed golden with four black eagles set into the corners.



FIGURE 10. Pattern unique to No. 57.



FIGURE 11. Pattern unique to No. 11 and the only one other than the Guard to show mixed metals in the emblems. The leaf work is executed in silver, while the crowns and FWR cyphers are golden.

Regulations Pertaining to the Colors

On 10 May 1811, it was ordered that while all Ist and IIInd Battalions were to be allowed to retain both their colors, only one was to be taken on campaign in time of war. In keeping with this, the Ist Battalion was to take the colonel's color, while the IIInd Battalion was to take one of its ordinaries, i.e. whichever had been designated its *Avancier Fahne*. This regulation was in force when the expeditionary corps was mobilized for the Russian campaign in 1812.

On 28 March 1812, it was ordered that the twelve ordinary colors left behind by the battalions departing for the Russian campaign were not to be laid up but were to pass, instead, into the hands of the six grenadier battalions.

When full mobilization came in 1813, all musketer and grenadier battalions which were still in possession of two colors, were ordered to take only one of these into the field.

On 20 August 1814, it was finally ordered

that henceforth each musketer and grenadier battalion was to carry only a single color during peacetime as well.

On 28 September 1814, the fusilier battalions were entitled to carry a color.

As of 13 December 1814, colonel's colors were no longer issued to line regiments.

To implement all of these changes, colors were to be taken from existing on-hand supplies, which had become redundant through the above mentioned orders. Here, however, a number of errors were made which complicates the picture of who carried what during the 1813/15 campaigns. We will, however, attempt to present an accurate account of things as they actually were.

Before getting to the colors themselves, a few words must be said about the new formations which came into existence during the Liberation Wars.

New Formations

During the cease-fire in July 1813, the reservists as well as draftees gathered at the regimental depots of the old regiments were formed up into Reserve Infantry Regiments, bearing the numbers 1 through 12. At the same time, a 12th Regiment of the Line was formed to replace the number which had become vacant when the guard had been pulled from the line.

Ultimately, together with other formations, i.e. Freecorps and troops from Berg, the reserve regiments were incorporated into the line as Nos. 13 through 31.

These regiments had no colors during the campaigns of 1813/15. The AKOs authorizing colors for these units were not published until 3 June and 28 September 1814 and actual issue did not commence until sometime after the order of 15 June 1815, covering Nos. 13 through 26. Those for Nos. 27 through 31 did not come through until October and December. Thus, none of these colors could have been present in the line either at Ligny on 16 June or at Waterloo on 18 June 1815.

Similarly, the Landwehr did not have any colors during the campaigns. These were authorized on 3 June 1814, but issue did not commence until the 15 June 1815 order.

The Jaeger were also, for the very first time in their history, granted the right to carry colors. While the Garde Jaeger got theirs on 31 May 1815 in Berlin, the other battalions did not see theirs until October and November as well.

Yet, the French did get to see quite a few of these new colors since many were handed over to their regiments while they were still in France. One of the largest ceremonies of this kind took place on the Champ de Mars in Paris on 3 September 1815, after the ceremonial nailing of the colors had taken place on the previous day. On this occasion, apart from the delegations from each unit involved and various dignitaries, including the Tsar of Russia, the Duke of Wellington had also taken his turn at driving home one nail on each staff of the ten new colors.

The Colors Carried During the 1813/15 Campaigns

Of the forty-eight colors required for the new army, only twenty-eight of the old army were still available. Thus, between 1808 and 1811, twenty new colors were prepared for issue.

The old colors were distributed as follows and the 1740 Table may be consulted regarding their pattern and color schemes:

From the Reign of Frederick the Great

- No. 1 retained the colors of the old No. 2.
- No. 2 retained the colors of the old No. 8.
- No. 5 retained the colors of the old No. 16.
- No. 6 retained the colors of the old No. 52.
- No. 10 received ordinary colors of the old No. 38.
- No. 11 received ordinary colors of the old No. 33.

From the Reign of Frederick William II

- No. 7 retained the colors of the old No. 58.

The new Issues under Frederick William III

While the new issues for the Guard (Fig. 12)

THE DISTRIBUTION OF COLORS DURING THE 1812/15 CAMPAIGNS

Number	Title of Unit	Ist Bn.	IInd Bn.	Fus. Bn.
	1st Foot Guards	C	O	O
	2nd Foot Guards (formed 19 June 1813)	O/1 FG	C/9	C/9 ¹
	1st Grenadier Regt. Kaiser Alexander (of Russia)			
	Leib-Grenadier Battalion)	O/8		
	1st East Prussian Gren. Bn.) formed 14 Oct. 1814	O/1		
	2nd East Prussian Gren. Bn.)	O/4		
	2nd Grenadier Regt. Kaiser Franz (of Austria)			
	Pommeranian Gren. Bn.)	O/2		
	West Prussian Gren. Bn.) formed 14 Oct. 1814	O/7		
	Silesian Gren. Bn.)	O/11		
1	East Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
2	Pommeranian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
3	2nd East Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
4	3rd East Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
5	4th East Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
6	1st West Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
7	2nd West Prussian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
8	Leib-Infanterie Regiment (King's Own) (Kolberg Distinction) At first called 1st Brandenburg Inf. Regt.	C	O	
	At first called 1st Brandenburg Inf. Regt.			
9	Kolberg Infantry Regiment (Kolberg Distinction)	O	O	
10	1st Silesian Infantry Regiment	C ²	O ²	
11	2nd Silesian Infantry Regiment	C	O	
12	Brandenburg Infantry Regiment (raised in 1813 but did not receive colors until Oct. 1815)			

O = Ordinary Color C = Colonel's Color (Consult preceding sections for patterns)

O/1 FG = Ordinary Color of First Foot Guards O/2 = Ordinary color of 2nd Infantry Regt.

- 1) When this regiment was formed during the cease-fire in 1813, it was immediately issued with colors for the two grenadier battalions. I received an ordinary (*Retirier Fahne*) from the I/1st Foot Guards, while II, the erstwhile I/9, brought its own colonel's color with the Kolberg distinction. A similar, so-called Kolberger *Leibfahne* (Kolberg Colonel's Color) was issued to the fusilier battalion on 28 September 1814. This, together with the color issued at the same time to F/1st Foot Guards, was the only issue to any fusilier battalion made before the cessation of hostilities in 1815!
- 2) This regiment lost both its colors at Etoges on 14 February 1814 (the only ones to be lost during the 1813/15 campaigns). As may be seen from previous listings, these colors stemmed from the time of Frederick the Great (No. 38). Since like replacements were no longer to be had, the regiment received a new issue of ordinaries in the standard pattern (no more colonel's colors for the line) in September 1815.

were essentially of the traditional pattern, the issues for the line (Fig. 13) present the eagle in the center medallion in an entirely new styling. Apart from the cypher FWR, the styling of the crowns and wreaths has also undergone some change. Yet, in summation, these are of a nature which may easily escape the notice of the casual observer and have further contributed to the confusion which is rampant in modern published works on the subject in other than the German language.

Most characteristic of the new color scheme is the universal use of the orange center medallion with the light blue ribbon bearing the PRO GLORIA ET PATRIA in metal color. Indeed, in their standard scheme of black and white, reflecting the armorial colors of Prussia, their appearance has become entirely uniform but for those battalions whose colors bear the Kolberg distinction (Fig. 14).

With the exception of the 1st Foot Guards, where the metal (except for the embellishments of the eagle) is silver throughout, the crowns, wreaths, cyphers, grenades and lettering of the motto are golden on all colors.

As before, the crowns are studded with silver pearls and stones, the bottoms filled red. The orbs on all five crowns are light blue.

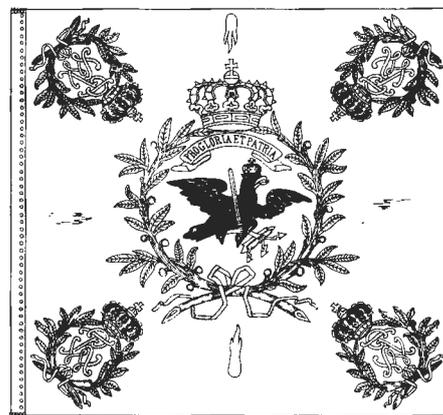


FIGURE 12. M1808 for the First Foot Guards.

On all colors, the eagle is black with a golden crown, beak, claws, sword hilt and thunderbolts. The sword blade is silver, the eagle's tongue red.

All center medallions (except the colonel's color of the 1st Foot Guards, which is of silver brocade) are orange, both on the colonel's and ordinary colors; the device band light blue with golden inscription. *Continued on page 50*

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COLORS

Continued

The colonel's colors for Nos. 3, 4, 8, and 9 are white with black corner wedges. All the ordinary colors black with white corner wedges.

To commemorate the defense of Kolberg in 1807, those units deriving from the defending garrison, i.e. Nos. 8 and 9 as well as II and F/2nd Foot Guards bear the Kolberg Shield, that is, the so-called Kolberg Colors as shown in Fig 14. The shield was light blue. The edging, as well as the inscription COLBERG 1807 was in gold.

The staffs of the guard colors were yellow, those of the line, i.e. 3, 4, 8, and 9 black.

The capitals, ferrules and nails are in metal color; silver for 1st Foot Gurds, gold for all others.

Up to this point, the story of the colors is as simple as may be expected. The confusion begins when the number of colors per unit is reduced and the extras are handed around to the grenadiers and the fusiliers. For this reason, a special listing follows which enables those interested to fix the type carried by those units which had colors. It must, however, be pointed out that this list covers only the period of the Napoleonic Wars, since corrections were made afterwards to straighten out the errors. This process, however, was not complete until 1823.

The reader's attention is also invited to certain types of so-called Prussian colors carried by Freecorps and Volunteer units which have appeared in some recent publications. These colors were not official and their appearance in

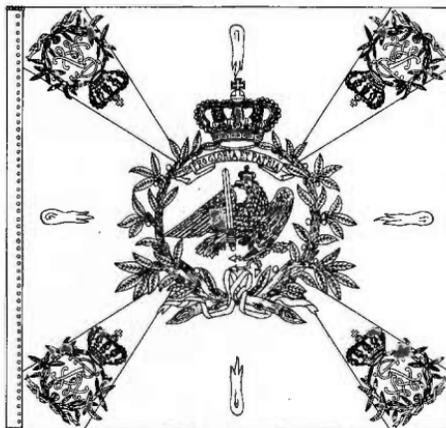


FIGURE 13. M1808 for the Line.

the front, once these units became connected with the Prussian army, was not tolerated.

As a footnote to the Napoleonic Wars, an 1823 survey, which finally corrected some errors made in the secondary distribution of colors between 1811 and 1814, states that of the forty-eight colors present in the front during the reorganization:

thirty-two were in the hands of the original 12 regiments

two were lost during the 1813/14 campaigns

six were laid up in the Berlin Armory

eight had changed their original owners, i.e.

moved with their battalions into new regimental formations (2nd Foot Guards and the

two Grenadier Regiments, "Alexander" and

"Franz," made up of the original six grenadier battalions).

□

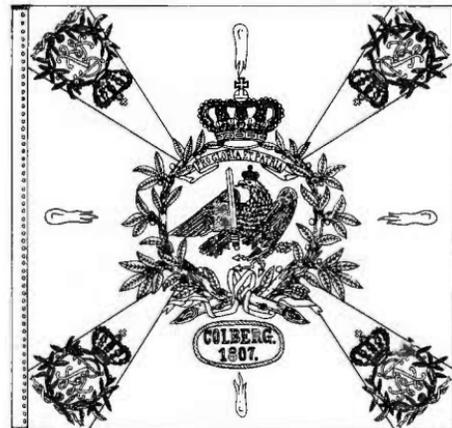
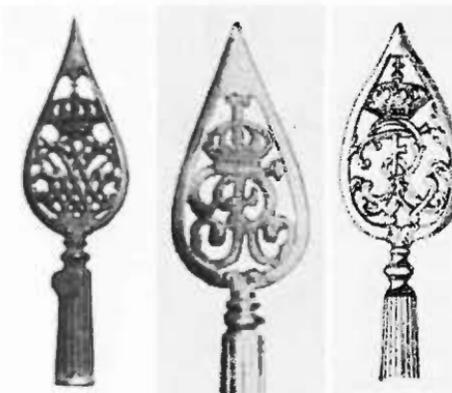


FIGURE 14. M1808 Line pattern with the Kolberg distinction.



Left to right, the staff capitals used during the reigns of Frederick I, Frederick the Great, and Frederick III.