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Korrekturlesen ....................... Eric Zienta
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Please note, there are a few notes for things to add and also a few formatting things. Some text is “greyed-out”—meaning it needs to be re-written—just a note on that so you didn’t think it was in error. Yes, we know, sometimes we have repeated things in sections... oh well. Maybe it’s important, maybe it will get fixed in a future edit.

Credits to come. We also will be crediting photos, just not time yet. And YES, we know, some are form books... we are using them under the Digital Millenium Copyright Act in that we are NOT making a profit. Again, we will duly credit them :)

Comments? rudiweiss@ir23.org
The Complete Soldat

While the procurement of the equipment on the U&E list allows participation as a German Soldat, the realistic portrayal of a World War I German „Frontkämpfer“ demands more!

Most of these accessories were items of general issue and their use will accent and strengthen the impression of both the individual and the unit. Remember, in Great War reenacting, we strive to continually upgrade and better your impression because in so doing we honor the memories of those who fought in the Great War! Complacency has no part in the accurate portrayal of a WWI Soldat.

Your impression will be greatly enhanced with the addition of the following articles (this means you need to acquire them as soon as possible after you finish completing your “A-List.”)

1. I.D. disk (Erkennunsmarke)
2. Soldier’s paybook (Soldbuch)
3. Drinking cup (Trinkbecher)
4. Field pack, Model 1895 (Tornister M.95)
5. Zeltbahn accessories and bag (Zeltausrüstung und Zeltzubehörbeutel)
6. Greatcoat (Mantel)
7. Soldier’s flashlight (Taschenlampe)
8. Spiked helmet (Pickelhaube)
9. Fatigue uniform (Drillichanzug)
10. German Army blanket (Decke)
Identity Disks

(Erkennungsmarke)—The Erkennungsmarke was oval shaped and made of zinc. It had a multitude of information on it, such as name, home address, birth date and the individual’s unit. When a soldier was transferred to a new unit he kept the same tag, which was simply altered to show the new unit data.

Like anything else “German,” there is no ONE type of Erkennungsmarke. Some types are of solid construction, whilst others are have three slots cut down the middle. In the case of the slotted type the info is repeated on the tag and if the soldier is killed it is broken in half. As with the U.S. system, one half stays with the body and the other half is sent back to headquarters. The German Soldat called his ID tag a „Hundemarke“ (literally dog tag), just like U.S. soldiers.

Get the type your unit uses or, barring that, one that you like. Again, there is no “one” type of German Erkennungsmarke—don’t let anyone tell you different. Each member should wear the disc suspended by a twisted black and white cord, or in the „Brust Beutel,“ a leather bag with a neck cord. Veterans have indicated that an alternate method that was used was to attach the Erkennungsmarke to the trouser suspenders. ¹

¹ Information comes from German WW1 Indentity Tags/Disks by Peter Meinlschmidt
Original Erkennungsmarke and neck pouch (front and back)

Tag for a soldier who died. Below, back of same tag.

Tag for another soldier who died: Franz Behnke.
Soldier’s Paybook and Front Pass

*(Soldbuch und Kennkarte)*—The Soldat was required to carry the following documents with him:

**Soldbuch**

Each Soldat was issued with a Soldbuch which virtually contained his entire military history. It held pertinent data such as name, rank, unit information and training as well as home, birthplace and family info. It also listed his height, weight, build, etc. Promotions and awards were recorded in the Soldbuch.

When a man started active duty, he would turn in his Militärpass and receive his Erkennungsmarke (dogtag) and Soldbuch. The Soldbuch was the basic ID document that the soldier would carry while active duty. The often used term “paybook” for the Soldbuch is some what misleading, because no pay is actually recorded inside the document. Rather the book gave the soldier the authority to draw pay, in fact the original intent of the document was to allow the man to draw pay from a unit other than his own.

Inside, the Soldbuch contains an array of information that included the soldiers’ current and past assigned units, pay rate, awards, equipment, weapons issued, clothing, Erkennungsmarke number, and a little medical history.

**What You Need**

A Soldbuch should be issued to you by your unit and filled-in with your [persona’s] particulars. IF, your unit doesn’t do this, there are people who will fill them in for a small fee; Steve Fischer and Lou Brown, being two who come to mind.

**Kennkarte**

The Kennkarte was the Soldat’s pass which allowed him to be in the front lines. The Kennkarte was issued by the Soldat’s unit and was changed frequently. The GWA usually issues you a Kennkarte when you check in at registration at the events. Do not lose your Kennkarte!

**More text and art...**
Drinking Cup

(Trinkbecher)—German soldiers were issued the Trinkbecher, a small ovular drinking cup which had either a folding wire or a fixed handle.

According to regs, the proper carrying place for the Trinkbecher is in the Brotbeutel. Many reenactors however, carry their Trinkbecher hooked to the canteen (which is seen in a lot of period photos). Remember though, this is a good way to lose the $40 or so that you have invested in your repro Trinkbecher (guess what real ones cost nowadays...) — The KAISER paid for their cups, we pay for ours....

The 1907 pattern Trinkbecher of wartime manufacture in enameled steel is probably the best for field use, as it is the sturdiest type of this cup and therefore least likely to get squashed in your Brotbeutel.

* WWII canteen cups aren’t the same as WWI and therefore are NOT acceptable.
Framed Pack, Model 1895

(Tornister, M.1895)—Every German Soldier was issued a Tornister, inside of which he carried the articles that allowed him to fight and live while in the field. Tornistere (pl.) were, for the most part, made of hairy calfskin, light brown in color and bordered with light-colored leather. Saying this though… realize that this is the German Army and all colours of calf-skin were used, as well as two-tone ones AND ersatz canvas-bodied Tornisterie. The Tornister is made with an interior framework of wood and has several compartments, intended to protect the different kinds of articles it carries and also to facilitate the distribution of the load—the posterior face of the knapsack is slightly concave to fit well to the back. Its lower extremity is supported upon the middle of the waist belt.

Dimensions of the M.1895 Tornister

- Height of frame ..................(3 sizes)… 0.295, .310,. 335
- Width of frame .......................................................... 29
- Depth at bottom ...................................................... .050
- Depth at top ........................................................... -.027

The interior of the Tornister is entirely lined with impermeable ochre (red-brown) canvas and it comprises:

One compartment for clothes, “L” (Wäschbeutel), in which are carried a shirt (Hemd), socks (Strumpfe), a handkerchief (Handtuch) and a pair of drawers (Unterhosen)

Two small pockets for cartridges, “P” (Patronenbehälter), at the bottom of the flap, each intended for a box of 3 clips (Ladestreifen), which totals 15 cartridges per side

One ration pocket, “V” (Lebensmittelbeutel)

One case, “E” (Zeltzubehörbeutel), for the shelter-tent accessories.

The middle of the lower part of the Tornister has a pad or cushion, “F,” which forms a shelf on which rests the box of preserved meat (Fleischkonserve); around it are the brushes (Bursten), Ankle boots (Schnürschnüre), and sewing and washing accessories, all assembled in a bundle.
Each shoulder-strap of the Tornister is composed of two straps; one, the main strap “B”, hooks directly to, by means of a brass hook “C,” the Tornister to one of the two cartridge boxes (Patronentaschen) which are carried over the stomach. The secondary strap “D”, is attached with a movable pivot to the main strap at the height of the armpits and passes under the arms and is attached by a triangular eyelet “T” to a hook “A,” which is riveted to the lower part of the knapsack.

The shoulder straps are attached to the Tornister by screw-nuts “S”; to adjust the straps to the size of the man, the nut is unscrewed and the rivet taken off and engaged in one of the other holes “H” bored in each strap—being placed higher up or lower down, according to whether one wishes to lengthen or shorten the shoulder straps.
Around the Tornister three small straps (Mantelriemen) “MR” serve to hold the overcoat in place. The Tornister must have all loops around the edge of the frame for the greatcoat roll and the four loops on the upper back flap for the messkit. In addition, you will need three greatcoat straps “MR” with buckles (Mantelriemen) for the greatcoat/Zeltbahn roll and two messkit straps (Kochgeschirr Riemen) for the messkit.

The Tornister used may be the pre- or early-war version made of hairy calfskin and canvas or the later-war ersatz types made entirely out of canvas with a leather binding.

Although excellent reproduction Tornisters are available (with a rather large outlay of cash—$300+), most reenactors use a non-collector-grade original Tornister with most of the straps and tabs replaced with new leather. There are many types of Third Reich political Tornisters which are nearly identical to WWI issue and as such, are equally acceptable for use at GWA events.*

Nice pix to the right showing the Tornister all rolled. Only thing wrong is they put the messkit on wrong—a German Soldat would know that the lid is always to the right: “Deckel nach rechts.”

more here (couple photos)
Zeltbahn accessories and bag

(Zeltausrüstung und Zeltzubehörbeutel)—As the unit pitches its Zeltbahnen at some events, the Zeltbahn should be accompanied by a pole bag containing three poles (Zeltstock), three tent-pins (Zeltpflock) and 1 long and 3 short tent ropes (Zeltleine).

Tent poles may be original issue German, Swiss, converted DDR or U.S. models. Good repro tent poles may be used.

While original early-war wood or later-pattern aluminum tent pegs may be used, the use of original tent pegs is NOT recommended, as they are likely to be bent or broken after repeated use. Repro tent pegs are a much better option. Both aluminum and wood types are available.

As tent pegs are easily lost, another option is the use of the Bundeswehr “hook” type aluminum pegs. Although of slightly different design, they are cheap, work well and are readily available.

Zeltausrüstung
Greatcoat

(Mantel)—The preferred Mantel is of the 1915 feldgrau pattern, however, the M.1908 model is also acceptable. Reproductions must be a good copy of the original item. Features of the Mantel include a single breast front and should be lined with proper pockets. It must also exhibit correct pattern buttons for that model. Mantel shoulder straps should be unpiped and have the regimental numeral chain-stitched in red on them (or the cypher applied). More on M.1908 Mantel
Front view of M.1908 Mantel (repro). Photo courtesy of our Kameraden in the DSM 1870-1918 e.V.

Rear view of M.1908 Mantel (repro). Photo courtesy of our Kameraden in the DSM 1870-1918 e.V.
M.1915 Mantel

(Einheitsmantel)—Introduced in late 1915, the new overcoat was intended to be identical for mounted and dismounted troops and for other ranks and officers. The coat was feldgrau (field-grey) and had a large fold over collar in green cloth (Abzeichtentuch). The collar was closed with two set of hooks and eyes and could be worn in the upright position reaching up to the mouth and was thus slightly higher than the previous model.

The coat had fold-over cuffs, which were often removed because of the weight. Six zinc crowned buttons in brown paint closed the front of the coat. The Mantel had two side pockets closed with 7” (18cm) flaps. The shoulder straps were those of the Bluse and had a width of 1,8”(4.5cm). The cotton liner had an internal breast pocket at the left side. The rear was made larger and more comfortable to wear compared with the earlier pattern, with two folds of cloth at the back seam. The corner ends had a small metal hook which could be attached to a metal or cloth loop sewn onto the back of the coat. This allowed the flaps to be worn folded back, similar to the French or Belgian overcoats.

German troops will have shoulder straps with the numeral (chain-stitched) or cypher (appliqué) in red wool on them and can be piped or non-piped.
Original photo of a group of Soldaten all wearing the M.1915 Mantel

18mm 23mm
Soldier’s Flashlight

(Taschenlampe)—These flashlights were widely used by German troops during the war and today they are still rather useful items to have when in a bunker or in the field. A correct Taschenlampe has two leather straps or a wire loop to button it onto the tunic or greatcoat.

You may use an original WWI German Taschenlampe or a pattern that closely resembles originals. Your Taschenlampe may be modified to use standard U.S. batteries, since European batteries of the correct size and voltage are sometimes hard to find.

There were numerous different types of soldier’s flashlights made during WWI—only a few of which are illustrated here.
Spiked Helmet

(Helm)—This is the classic German spiked helmet that most people identify with the German Soldier of World War I. In WWI reenacting, it is worn only for “walking-out” or at early-war (1914-1915) events. Although the official German term for the spiked helmet was „Helm“, the Prussian Frontsoldat’s slang for it was „Pickelhaube“ with other states having their own unique names (i.e. Württembergers—Kübel=tub; Badeners—Melkkübel=milk tub, Bavarians—Zipfelhauben=night cap).

Either a leather or „ersatz“ felt version Helm may be used as long as it meets the following criteria: It should have a Prussian front plate. Also, the hardware must match (i.e: it must have all brass fittings or all gray metal fittings); it must have a chinstrap and the hardware for this must also match the helmet hardware; and the cockades must be of the correct color combination for Prussian troops (i.e: National colors of black-white-red and the Prussian colors of black-white-black).

When worn in the field the Pickelhaube must have a correct cover. The regimental number may be appliquéd with wool or painted on the front of the cover. Numerals should be in dark green color or „Abzeichen“ cloth and approximately 2½ inches tall (red was only for very early war).

*Enlisted personnel shall not wear officer Pickelhauben!*

- add all plates
Inner view of the Pickelhaube
Photo courtesy of Der Kaiser's Bunker

Outer view of the line Infanterie Pickelhaube
Details and nomenclature of the Helm for „Mannschaften“

Details and nomenclature of the Helm for Offiziere
Pickelhaube Überzug
Helm Covers for „Mannschaften“
Fatigue Uniform

(Drillichanzug)—The Drillichanzug was intended to be worn while on work detail to preserve the expensive wool field uniform (still a mighty good idea!). These cotton suits were widely used on fatigues or off duty in rear areas and dugouts. Photographs indicate that as the war went on, many of these uniforms were dyed grey or feldgrau. Shown on the following pages are some photos of original and reproduction Drillichanzug jacket (Drillichjacke) and pants (Drillichhosen).
A couple of interesting photographs of Soldaten wearing the Drillichanzug. Notice the prisoners in the photo above.
Original feldgrau Drillichjäcke

Original feldgrau Drillichjäcke
Repro Drillichanzug photo courtesy of our Kameraden in the DSM 1870-1918 e.V.

Repro Drillichanzug photo courtesy of our Kameraden in the DSM 1870-1918 e.V.
**Blanket**

(*Decke*)—The Decke was an item issued when billeted in barracks, fortresses, bunkers or semi-stationary positions. When on the march or in the field, the Soldat was expected to use his greatcoat in lieu of a Decke.

The German issue Decke was made of grey wool and exhibited a series of contrasting stripes at each end. Occasionally the initials **DR** (*Deutches Reich*) were printed on each end of the Decke as well.

Plain grey woolen blankets are acceptable for use in most units — check with yours. Military-surplus wool blankets in other colors may be used as long as they do not have any obvious markings stenciled or embroidered on them.
NCO and Officer Equipment

The following is a list of optional equipment reserved for members with NCO or Officer Rank:

Visored Mütze
(Schirmmütze)—The Schirmmütze is like the Feldmütze in that early models had a red band and later ones were of the „Einheits“ pattern.

The wear of the Schirmmütze is allowed only by Officers and NCO’s—this means Unteroffizier and above; although Gefreiters were allowed to wear a Visored Mütze for walking out back in Germany or in the Etappe (rear area), they weren’t allowed this privilege at the Front! Good reproductions are a must and all repro Schirmmützen must pass approval by the Kompagnieführer.

Please note: In the Medical Corps and the Train Troops (not in the Infantry or other units) Mannschaften wore the “Dienstmütze”. This was just a sloppy Krätzchen with visor and chinstrap as replacement for the Pickelhaube. But that thing looks different than a real good tailor-made Schirmmütze.
Add other NCO Officer stuff??