

Uniform history - research

Some principled considerations for possible debate by
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Like so many of CHAKOTEN's readers, every time a new issue comes out, I can rejoice at the contributions to the history of the military uniform that are always presented. I often admire the freedom with which the information is given, or rather the authors' assumption that one is able to correct what is reported! It sounds creepy - but nevertheless: A long life of uniform research has taught me how difficult it is to list the composition of a certain troop's uniform in a given period or even in a given year.

The matter is probably the simple one, that there has only been exceptional congruence between what was regulated that year and what was actually worn.

I often therefore ask myself - what exactly are we being informed about here - which of the two possibilities are being talked about - and are we talking about something clear on the whole, because it has also been the exception that something was completed, implemented uniformly or simply implemented according to the current regulations or implemented according to the previous regulations.

I can visualize the difficulties I have faced in my endeavors to give the posterity something historically correct to adhere to, just for Denmark's army in this century.

Until 1923 - officially - each type of weapon had its own uniform in Denmark.

In addition, the guard troops, both of the infantry and of the cavalry, had their own regimental uniforms for field use, (in addition to ceremonial use - but we ignore the latter). From 1923 all differences in the uniforms disappeared. The whole army was dressed in the same colour, cut and material and with the same equipment with the following exceptions: Unmounted troops had long trousers and half-length boots, Mounted breeches, short laced boots and gaiters.

Officers etc. were given uniforms of finer cloth, breeches and riding boots, lapel jackets, brown, wide waist belts with shoulder straps and - for garrison use - sun hats.

But only after 16 years did this uniform become common. extradition - namely for alerting and exit use for the so-called "I. contingency force", which was set up by the recalled class of 1938 from 8 May to 15 July 1939. For daily service, however, this force was still dressed in the light gray uniform of 1915, in many places with black cloak M/1906. In the 1920s and 1930s, when Denmark's official army uniform is khaki (yellowish brown) M/1923, only self-dressers are seen in it, while non-commissioned officers and privates until 1931 wore either single-breasted blue uniform M/1910 or double-breasted blue M/1889.

The royal However, the Lifeguard (on foot) wore grey-green uniform M/1903 (1903-17) with black cape 1889 and the cavalry light blue M/1910. During the same period, self-dressers literally wore whatever they wanted of uniform designs that had once been mentioned in a uniform regulation of 1903, 1910, 1915 or 1923. Usually in a wonderful mixture and confusion.

This is how the paradox has

arisen: it has only been exceptionally possible since 1903 to see a Danish troop wearing the current uniform both for self-dressers and dressed personnel, and in such a way that the cloak corresponding to the uniform was worn. That was the case for a few months of "Sønderjysk Kommando's" existence in the summer of 1920, as the entry into the recovered duchy for the infantry - it turned

say 2 battalions - carried out in M/1915 (light grey) with all personnel in the same uniform and cloak (officers etc. however with breeches and boots and uniform of finer cloth). It only lasted a short time. As quickly as possible, the officers put blue clothing back into use - and soon after, additional blue clothing was sent "for wear" to the crew for daily duty.

At the outbreak of war on 1 September 1939, the army was dressed partly in the 1923, partly in the 1915 uniform - in several places with 23 trousers for the 1915 coat of arms. The coats were either light gray or black - they had to be worn out - and the entire army owned only 5000 khaki coats 16 years after its introduction.

Thus, on 2 April 1940, we let our troops in Southern Jutland go into battle with black cloaks (!), which had been condemned to field use. 1st time in 1903, 2nd time in 1915 and 3rd time in 1923, when we introduced respectively grey-green, light gray and tan uniform.

Only the guard at the royal mansions managed to be dressed in tawny uniforms 1923 with tawny (khaki) capes 1923 from the summer of 1940 to 29 August 1943.

After the 1939-45 war, in 1945-50 the army was dressed in a mixture of Swedish-made grey-brown-green blouse uniforms and British khaki blouse uniforms, until in 1950 uniform clothing of exclusively Danish-made, yellow-brown blouse uniforms with yellow-brown capes and - for the first time first time in the army's history - officers etc. in the same uniform as the crew both in terms of cut, colour, fabric and equipment. Only the stars on the shoulder patch indicated the difference. This uniformity was short-lived. In 1961, they began issuing uniform 1958 - the much-sung "battle uniform" - not so much one that indicates a fight against the king's enemies as a fight against the uniform itself, which apparently has a world record for errors and unusability for war use. The uniform has 34 major and minor faults, which are now in full swing to be corrected.

In terms of uniformity, this uniform also meant confusion that should have been avoided: it was adopted in 1958 in a yellow-brown color, but in 1961 the tests had been completed which showed that this color had now become inappropriate and it had to be changed to less infrareflective olive green color.

This gave the army the same uniform in two colors, and since the uniform was immediately mass-produced, it will be many, many years before uniformity returns.

But in this century, the army has only been uniformed (dressed in uniform uniforms) in the years 1950-61, of which 8 years (1950-58) are the only ones where there has been agreement between the regulations and the one in use. It is a meager result - and it tells a little about the difficulties of uniform research.

Now things have probably been unusually malignant here at home with our total lack of uniform cult and understanding, our unbridled individualism and the complete lack of understanding of the tactical and camouflage requirements for a soldier's uniform, which is probably a consequence of the fact that we have not been on campaign for more than 100 years. Elsewhere, however, it has also been wrong - especially in Sweden and Norway!

This draws attention to the fact that when mentioning all the history of uniforms, one should clarify what is actually being talked about - the regulated or the worn.