

Heer enlisted shoulder strap embroidery

Description

Particularly in the early years, members of the German Army wore unit designators on their shoulder straps and boards. Officers and most NCOs used metal cyphers. Enlisted men and some junior NCOs utilized embroidered devices, which is the type of designator covered here. As the embroidery was done freehand, there is naturally a variety in the sizes and styles encountered. On examples having multiple designators (usually a letter over a number), the upper designator will usually be larger than the one below.

The most commonly encountered embroidery was done by machine in a style of intertwined loops called **chainstitching**. While some were fairly crude (as with the red 6 below), some were quite detailed (as in the case of the Gothic A).

Usually only found on dress tunics (and at extra cost to the owner), was **hand embroidery**. These were frequently done over a cardboard template.

Least common is the **machine embroidery**, probably because it would have required more skill.



Standard chainstitched number



Hand embroidered number



Chainstitched Gothic A with secondary border color



Machine embroidered intertwined Latin GD



Chainstitched Gothic K



Hand embroidered Gothic B



Chainstitched Roman numeral



Chainstitched numeral with secondary border color

Prepared by Dave Suter - 07/24/05

For those interested, a more detailed article covering all aspects of German shoulder boards and straps can be found at http://www.wehrmacht-awards.com/uniforms_firearms/uniforms/shoulder_boards/index.htm