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British Battle Insignia (1) : 1914-18 (Men-At-Arms, 182)



Synopsis

The British soldiers who marched off to fight in World War I in 1914 wore only regimental insignia, yet by the time of the armistice in November 1918, insignia in the British Army had undergone a considerable change. Now visible was a bewildering display of coloured devices on uniforms, helmets, vehicles, guns, signboards and flags. Regimental badges remained but were joined by divisional insignia. These were rarely seen in the front line. Instead the 'battle patch' had appeared for combat use. In this beautifully illustrated book Mike Chappell looks at the colourful variety of insignia used by the British Army during the Great War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book has great illustrations on colourful insignia examples used by the British Army in World War One. However note that the front cover contains a full illustration of a bombardier wearing a rare pannier item meant for carrying up to 4 18-pdr shells. It differs in minor details from the sculpted effigy of a RA gunner on a famous bronze memorial. One key difference is that the artillery shells are placed in the panniers fusehead side downwards for stability, as it is easier to hold the shell from the rim of the cartridge case, when extracting it from the pannier especially if it wet and slippery. Also if they are wet it will protect the fuse from water and mud which could upset the mechanism. If the fuse is upper, the bottom of the cart case is down, and so is the detonator, so having it fall fuse down is much safer from accidental detonation!! The fuse is safe until it spins out of the barrel and the safety device is de-activated. Good to sometimes check against other sources.

Like all Osprey books this is an excellent reference with good information. Especially good reference for those interested in reenacting.

The British Army discovered early in the First World War that it would be fighting by divisional formations, and that it needed a way to identify its troops on the battlefield without giving away too much information to an observant enemy. The result was a resort to unique battle insignia for the duration of the 1914-1918 conflict. As author and illustrator Mike Chappell explains in "British Battle Insignia (1): 1914-1918", this took the form of various unique divisional signs and other patches to distinguish regiments and specialties. As the author also explains, there was no army-wide standard for signs and patches, which led to both a great deal of creativity and much post-war confusion on what was worn or not worn, by whom, and when. The text is much enhanced by a terrific set of color plates that depict the uniforms and insignia, and by a nice selection of period photographs. This Osprey Men-At-Arms Series book was first published in 1986 and may be a bit dated now.

Recommended to students of the British Army and its militaria.

Arrived in excellent condition and gave me the WW2 uniform information I required for the research project I am undertaking.

perfect ...

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