Men-at-Arms

The ‘Hermann Göring’ Division

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THE 'HERMANN GÖRING' DIVISION

INTRODUCTION

In each branch of the German ground forces during World War II there was one major combat unit which more than any other could truly be considered to have earned the title of an elite, and which was allowed to grow and develop into a much larger and more powerful force than was ever originally envisaged. In the Army this was the Infanterie-Regiment 'Großdeutschland'; in the Waffen-SS, the 'Leibstandarte-SS Adolf Hitler'; and in the Luftwaffe it was, without doubt, the Regiment 'General Göring'.

Hermann Göring was immensely proud of the unit which bore his name, and justifiably so. This force grew from its humble origins as a 400-man police detachment into a full armoured corps, and developed an enviable reputation for combat reliability.

The Luftwaffe was effectively a 'Naz' creation, being formed in 1935, two years after Hitler had come to power. Hitler himself once declared, 'I have a National Socialist air force, a Prussian army and a Christian navy'. Despite the 'National Socialist' tag, the premier ground combat unit of the Luftwaffe—though it no doubt had many committed party supporters within its ranks—fought a relatively clean war, unlike many other combat units which owed strong political allegiances. Indeed, one of the 'Hermann Göring' Division's greatest claims to fame during World War II was not a military exploit at all, but the saving from almost certain destruction of the historic treasures of the Beneficentine abbey at Monte Cassino.

PRE-WAR ORIGINS

In February 1935, immediately after the National Socialist party was voted into power, Captain Hermann Göring, a Great War fighter ace and long-time collaborator with Adolf Hitler, was appointed to the position of Prussian Minister of the Interior, a post that gave him control of the Prussian State Police and brought him general's rank. He immediately set about creating a new detachment, to be staffed from policemen whose reliability and loyalty to the National Socialist regime was unquestionable. Just over 400 men were taken on strength of the new unit, to be commanded by Major der Schutzpolizei Wecke. The unit, based in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin—the notoriously lawless working-class area—was named after its commander, as Polizei-Abteilung zV Wecke ('Police Special Duties Battalion Wecke'). Within just one month the new unit was in action against armed Communist cells in Berlin. In July 1938 the detachment was renamed as
The driving permit of Jäger Wilhelm Bauml from 1 Abteilung, Regiment 'General Göring'; these documents were printed on tough cloth material. Note the white edge-piping in the collar of his four-pocket service tunic, and the distinctive white collar patches. (Private collection)

At the time when Regiment 'General Göring' was transferred to the air force, orders were given for the raising of a parachute battalion. All volunteers for this unit, which was heavily oversubscribed by eager applicants, were concentrated in L/Jäger-Bataillon. At the end of 1937 attempts to disguise the intended use of these troops were abandoned and the volunteers, along with 15.Pionier-Kompanie, were renamed as IV. Fallschirmjäger-Bataillon ('Parachute Rifle Battalion'). These units remained part of Regiment 'General Göring' until March 1938, when they were detached and sent to the training grounds at Stendal to form the cadre for the first of the Luftwaffe's parachute units, I./Fallschirmjäger-Regiment 1.

The Regiment. 'General Göring' – like the Army's elite Infanterie-Regiment 'Grossdeutschland' and the premier Waffen-SS regiment 'Leibstandarte-SS Adolf Hitler' – recruited throughout Germany, accepting only candidates of the highest calibre and in peak physical condition. They occupied a brand new purpose-built barracks complex at Berlin-Reinickendorf, constructed to the highest standards and with the most modern of facilities. The complex boasted over 120 buildings and included gymnasiums, swimming pools both outdoor and indoor, sports areas and even its own post office. 'General Göring' troops, in their distinctive uniforms with white collar patches and special unit cuffband, soon became a regular sight on the streets of Berlin.
Extract from the Soldbuch (pocketbook) of a soldier of the division, showing the man passing through Eretz, Israel, on 16 September 1943. The photograph shows a man with a machine gun and a backpack, possibly a soldier of the 16th Division. The division was involved in the Battle of El Alamein.

Troops of the regiment took part in many of the great press military parades through Berlin. They provided guards for Reichsminister Göring's headquarters, the changing of the guard often being performed with all due ceremony including the presence of the regiment's own Musikkoops. The regiment also undertook guard duties at Göring's private retreat, the sumptuous Kastenhall estate (named after his deceased first wife).

Among the criteria for acceptance into the regiment were the following: age of 18-25, minimum height of 1.68m (5ft 6in), German citizenship, eligibility for military service, fitness for active service, Arya ancestry, unmarried status, clean police record and no charges pending, and confirmed open support for the Nazi-Socialist state. During the war years a further requirement was added: that the potential volunteer must sign on for a minimum period of 12 years' service. Such conditions were broadly analogous to those also demanded by the 'Großdeutschland' and the 'Leibstandarte'. Clearly, however, as the war progressed the scale of combat losses would mean that such restrictive criteria could no longer be maintained in any of these elite formations. Many Luftwaffe personnel were, in effect, simply drafted into the Air Force.

Heinrich Göring's Division from other units to make up combat losses.

Prior to the outbreak of war, personnel from Regiment 'General Göring' participated in the so-called Blauwexe ("Blue Wax") operation. The regiment took part in the annexation of Austria, where it remained for several weeks on duty in Wiener Neustadt, in the occupation of the Sudetenland and the march into Prague, after which it undertook guard duty at the strategically important Skoda vehicle works. By the end of World War II in 1945 the regiment had grown considerably, and had the following establishment:

Regimentstab
Musikkoops
Sudetzabattier (artillery HQ battery)
I.(schwere) Flak-Abt (heavy AA artillery battalion)
II.(leichte) Flak-Abt (light AA battalion)
III.Schützverband (searchlight battalion)
IV.(leichte) Flak-Abt
Wachbataillon (Gward, i.e. infantry battalion)
Reichswacht (mounted squadron)
2. Wachkompanie (infantry)
10. Wachkompanie
11. Wachkompanie
Reserve-Schützen-Abteilung (replacement / training battalion)
(schwere) Eisenbahnen Flak-Batterie (heavy railway AA battery)
(leichte) Flak-Batterie (light battery)
WARTIME DEVELOPMENT

An early model StuG III armoured assault gun of the "Hermann Göring". Note that the crew display cuffbands and the Luftwaffe-style white collar patches; from comparison of tones it is hard to tell if they are wearing the Army-style black Panzer vehicle uniform or the field-grey assault artillery equivalent. (Robert Noel)

The deadly (oben) guns ('eighty-eight') which equipped the heavy battalions of the Flak units proved equally effective in the anti-aircraft and ground roles during the May–June 1940 campaign in the West, where the Regiment 'General Göing' earned the praise of the Army units with which it served. This crew are wearing the Zeitungsm camouflage doctor-hat rigged as a rain poncho, and field camouflage on their helmets. (Josef Charla)

Blitzkrieg, 1940

Most of the regiment remained in Berlin during the Polish campaign of September 1939, providing anti-aircraft cover to the Reichshaustapf and guards for Göring's headquarters. Elements of the regiment did take part in the spring 1940 campaign in the West; detached troops participated in the invasions of Denmark and Norway in April, while the bulk of the regiment waited near the Dutch border for the order to move against France and the Low Countries. The detached elements, under the command of Hauptmann Kluge, were created with a company from the Wachbataillon together with a 2cm self-propelled Flak-Plütze and a Kradchützen-Kompanie. They took part in the seizure of the airfield and radio station at Ebeltoft and the securing of the coastline of Jutland. Subsequently they were transferred by sea to Oslo, where they fought alongside the Army first in the advance to Trondheim, then north up into the Arctic Circle to take the port of Bodø and relieve the pressure on the beleaguered Gebirgsjäger further north at Narvik. After successfully completing its allotted tasks, Hauptmann Kluge's detachment was transported home to Berlin.
For the May/June 1940 campaign the Regiment 'General Göring' was divided into a number of small independent Kampfgruppen, operating in close cooperation with the rapidly advancing Panzer spearheads of the Army. The achievements of its Flak units were particularly appreciated; the superb 8.8cm dual purpose guns of the heavy batteries took a deadly toll of Allied tanks, many of which had heavier armours than their German counterparts. In Holland the unit took part in the crossing of the Maas and the advance into the eastern parts of Belgium. There it crossed the Albert Canal against stiff resistance and took part in the capture of Brussels, before entering France. Once on French soil it fought in Flanders, and in a remarkable action at Mortemel Wood, where 'General Göring' 8.8cm guns engaged French tanks at ranges of literally only a few yards. The regiment was rewarded for its excellent performance by forming part of the honour guard of the Führer-Begleit-Kompanie for the formal armistice ceremony at Compiegne on 21 June 1940. After the successful conclusion of the Western campaign troops from the regiment provided Flak defences in bunkers along the Channel Coast as well as contributing to the anti-aircraft ring around Paris. Eventually, in late 1940, the Regiment 'General Göring' returned to Berlin.

To the East, 1941

When war erupted in the Balkans in April 1941 the regiment was despatched to Romania for intended attachment to 12. Arme; it was to be held in reserve, however, not seeing any combat although it did provide AA defences for the strategic Romanian oil fields at Ploesti. Prior to the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 the regiment had been moved into positions along the River Bug, the dividing line between German- and Russian-occupied areas of Poland. Here it formed part of II Flak Korps, itself attached to Panzergruppe von Kleist. Fighting alongside II. Panzer-Division, the 'General Göring' took part in the initial breakthrough and the advance via Radziszow, where the Flak crew once again excelled themselves in action against Soviet tanks. Then they drove onwards towards Dubno, and participated in the encirclement of Kiev and Bryansk in the Ukraine. These were hard-fought battles, and the regiment took significant casualties, but once again reinforced its growing reputation for steadfastness in combat. At the end of 1941 the regiment was returned to Germany for rest and refitting; at the same time, however, a newly formed II. Schützen-Bataillon was sent to the Eastern Front, where it was eventually all but eliminated in extremely heavy fighting around Juchnow and Anisowo-Goroditsche.

Meanwhile, back in the Reich, the Flak elements moved into positions near Munich where they contributed to the city's anti-aircraft defences for a short period, before being moved once again to locations near Paris, remaining there into the spring of 1942.

'Heremn Göring' Brigade & Division: Tunisia and Sicily, 1942-43

In May 1942 work began on upgrading the Regiment 'General Göring' to brigade status under the command of Generalmajor Paul Curtius, and during this period the unit served on general occupation and security duties in France. The main order of battle of the new brigade was as follows:

An Oberfeldwebel from the division in tropical service dress with the tropical uniform; the 'broad-edged WOOD' version of the final pattern HEINRICH GÖRING cufftitle is just visible on his lower right sleeve. The "reporting book" tucked into the tunic front identifies him as 'vor Späthe' - the first recruit of his company. (Robert Neus)
Stabkompanie
I.Schützen-Regt (Infantry - 4 companies, numbered 1.-4.)
II.Schützen-Regt (4 companies, 5.-8., plus 9th Infantry Gau Co) III.Schützen-Regt (3 companies; 10th Motorcycle, 11th Armoured Engineer, 15th Anti-Tank)
Flik-Regt: I.Flak-Abt (5 heavy & 3 light batteries)
II.Flak-Abt (5 heavy, 2 light & 1 howitzer batteries)
III.Artillerie-Abt (3 batteries)
IV.(Flieger) Abt (3 batteries, provided Flak cover at Hitler’s headquarters)
Manikorps
Wachbattalion (3 companies)
Ersatz-Abteilung

In October 1942, while the brigade was being worked up in Brittany, the decision was taken to expand the formation even further, to divisional size. The forming up of various divisional elements was carried out at numerous locations in France, Holland and back at the regimental depot in Berlin. It was at this stage that many volunteers from the Army, and up to 3,000 new volunteers from the paramilitaries — including remnants of Fallschirmjäger-Regiment 5, which had been decimated during the battle for Crete — were taken on strength. The new formation was named the Division ‘Hermann Göring’, and was intended to be formed along the same lines as an Army Panzer division. To that end a number of experienced Army tank crews were drafted in, with an equal number of Luftwaffe personnel being detached to the Army for training with Panzer units. On paper, the main combat units were now:

Grenadier-Regt 1 & 2 ‘HG’ (each 3 battalions plus an infantry gun company and an antitank company)
Jäger-Regt ‘HG’ (the former FJ-Regt 5 — 2 batts)
Panzer-Regt ‘HG’ (2 batts)
Flak-Regt ‘HG’ (3 batts plus Flieger-Flak-Abt)
Artillerie-Regt ‘HG’ (4 batts plus VSturmgeschütz-Abt, later transferred to Fl-Regt ‘HG’ as III.Abts)
Aufklärungs-Abt ‘HG’
Panzer-Förster-Bdt ‘HG’
Panzer Nachrichten-Abt ‘HG’
plus the usual range of support and service units.

In November 1942, in retaliation for the French garrison’s failure to put up sustained resistance to the Allied landings in Morocco and Algeria, Germany moved into the hitherto unoccupied areas of southern France. The bulk of the new division was located in the area around Marseilles, where it continued its training and working up. Those sub-units nearest to being fully formed were gradually moved down into Italy while the remainder stayed in the south of France.
Meanwhile, in November 1942, the paratroopers who were in the process of transferring from Fallschirmjäger-Regiment 5 were moved directly to North Africa and assigned to support 10. Panzer-Division in Tunisia. The bulk of the ‘HG’ Division, still not fully organised, was dispatched piecemeal to Tunisia in February/March 1943 under command of Oberst Schmid, who was promoted to Generalmajor shortly thereafter. It was under the title Kampfgruppe Schmid that these elements, finally totaling something between 7,000 and 11,000 men, fought the British, US and French forces, with considerable effect; they quickly earned a reputation for aggression as the attack and retarysh under fire, despite often being committed to battle dispersed and attached to various Army units. It was under the title of Division ‘Hermann Göring’ that, in April 1943, they commenced in official Wehrmacht communiqués for their ‘exemplary fighting spirit and intrepid valor’. Some 400 ‘Hermann Göring’ soldiers were killed in the Tunisian battles; and when the German forces in North Africa were finally forced to surrender on 12 May, almost all of the remainder of the battle group including its most experienced veterans, went into captivity.

However, Generalmajor Schmid and a few of his men had escaped to the Italian mainland, on the Reichsmarschall’s express orders, before the final surrender; and these survivors joined a newly reformed division now entitled Panzer-Division ‘Hermann Göring’. The new division was built around those scattered elements that were still working up in France. Holland and Germany, which were now gathered in the Naples area. Efforts were made to mould these troops into cohesive fighting units were made at full speed; the Germans fully expected an Allied landing attempt on Sicily, and over the next few weeks ‘Hermann Göring’ troops were gradually assembled on the island until, in June 1943, the division was ready for action in its new positions around Catania. The major component units of this extremely powerful new armoured division were as follows:

Divisionstab (divisional HQ)

Panzer-Regt ‘Hermann Göring’ (2 tank & 1 assault gun bns)
Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 1 ‘HG’ (3 hrs mechanised infantry)
Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 2 ‘HG’ (3 hrs mechanised infantry)
Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abt ‘HG’ (armoured recce bns)
Flak-Regt ‘HG’ (2, later 3 bns)
Panzer-Artillerie-Regt ‘HG’ (5, later 4 bns plus 21, 281, 210)
Panzer-Fox x Bt ‘HG’ (armoured engineers)
Panzer-Nachrichten-Abt ‘HG’ (armoured signals)
Feldersatz-Bataillon ‘HG’ (replacement training)
Divisions-Feldkommab ‘HG’ (battle school company)
Nachschub-Abt ‘HG’ (supply bn)
Instanzsprech-Abt ‘HG’ (repair workshop bns)
Verwaltungs-Gruppe ‘HG’ (administration troops)
Sanitäts-Abt ‘HG’ (medical bn)

Operation ‘Husky’, the Allied invasion of Sicily, commenced on 10 July 1943. Surrounded by Italian units, most of which were of third line quality and too happy to surrender, the ‘HG’
Division and the Army's 15. Panzergruppe-Division fought well, despite coming under devastating fire from Allied naval vessels offshore; they even managed an initially successful counterattack at Gela in the south of the island. They held their line tenaciously, but despite reinforcements—in the shape of 29. Panzergruppe-Division flown in from mainland Italy, and elements of 1. Fallschirm-division from France—overwhelming Allied superiority saw the Germans being pushed incautiously north-east towards Mtèrata. The 'Hermann Göring' provided rearguard cover for other German units being evacuated to the Italian mainland, and was indeed one of the last elements to leave Sicily. Despite the heavy fighting in which it had been involved, and the intensive Allied bombing of the port of Messina through which it was withdrawn, the bulk of the 'HG' Division's personnel and most of its heavy equipment were successfully evacuated—an extraordinary achievement. It is perhaps indicative of the fighting qualities of the 'Hermann Göring' that in his post-war memoirs Gen. Riehenbauer maintained that 'Garde' and panzer-groop-units deployed in Sicily were amongst the best that the US forces encountered throughout the whole war. He also commented on the tenacity of the defenders, stating that each German position could only be taken once; its defences had been utterly destroyed.

Italy, 1943–44

The division was then moved to the area around Naples for an intended period of rest and refitting. Almost immediately, however, the 'Hermann Göring' was put onto the alert for further action. On 3 September the British 8th Army landed in Calabria and on the 8th the Italian government surrendered. This came as no surprise, and German quickly implemented contingency plans to occupy strategic points and disperse the Italian armed forces. The following day, 8th Army landed at Salerno and successfully established a beachhead. German efforts to eliminate this foothold lasted for nine days at firm the 'HG' Division's efforts met with some success, but the sheer weight of firepower available to the attackers from Allied ships gradually forced the Germans to give ground. The division pulled back into Naples, where it held on tenaciously until finally relinquishing the devastated port on 1 October, withdrawing to positions on the line Volturno-Termoli.

Here once again the 'Hermann Göring' and its brother-units of 15. Panzergruppe- Division put up a spirited defence, gaining essential time for the main forces on the Gustav Line to be prepared; this system ran right across Italy from Gaeta on the west coast to Ortona on the east, with its western end blocking the Liri Valley, the gateway to Rome. German delaying tactics were highly successful: runners destroyed bridges, mined roads and...
demolished buildings while infantry, guns and armour fought stubborn rearguard actions. The Allied advance was slow and costly and every day won by the defenders brought closer the onset of winter weather, which would compound the Allies' difficulties. With the coming of the autumn rains the bulk of the Hermann Göring was then pulled back to rest in new reserve positions around Ploesti, but some elements — mainly the Flak and Panzer-Antiaircraft regiments — remained at the front, involved in heavy winter fighting before they too were relieved in January 1944.

During this period the division was involved in a controversial episode. The ancient Benedictine abbey on Monte Cassino was facing the almost certain destruction of countless priceless treasures if — as seemed unavoidable, given its strategically dominating position as the western anchor of the Gustav Line — the building found itself in the centre of the combat zone. The commander of the division's Repair Workshops unit, Oberstleutnant Schlegel, approached the abbot to offer his assistance in transporting the treasures to safety in the Vatican. The sounds of battle were drawing ever nearer, and the abbot eventually accepted the offer. At first all went well, and over three weeks those truckloads made the journey to Rome safely. Then an Allied radio broadcast accused troops of the division of looting the abbey (not an unreasonable suspicion, given the Reichsmannhal's reputation as a plunder of Europe's art treasures). But Schlegel had failed to secure permission for his humanitarian project from his divisional commander, Generalleutnant Gouraud, who knew nothing of what was going on, and the lieutenant-colonel's unauthorized use of military personnel and vehicles on what was essentially civilian business could have resulted in his court martial and even execution.

A detachment of Waffen-SS field police raced to the abbey intent on arresting the 'thieves', and had to be persuaded by the monks that Schlegel was helping them, not robbing them. Fortunately for Schlegel, Gen. Gouraud fully endorsed his actions, and the remaining treasures — including the sacred relics of St Benedict — were transported to safety. In grateful thanks the monks celebrated a special mass, and presented Schlegel with an illuminated scroll recognising his efforts. (Nevertheless, he was arrested by the Allies after the war on a charge of looting, and held in prison for seven months before the intervention of Field Marshal Alexander himself secured his release.)
As the Allies continued to push against the mountainous defences of the Gustav Line, the Hermann Göring was released from the reserve and moved south to face the British 8th Army on the Garigliano river. On 22 January 1944 the Allies took the German completely by surprise with a landing at Anzio, north of the Gustav Line's western end, and successfully established a small bridgehead. This force was supposed to penetrate inland rapidly, drawing German troops away from Cassino and the Gustav Line; instead, not realizing that the road to Rome lay virtually open before him, the US Gen. Lucas hesitated. The very able German Gen-O.C. Italy, Generalleutnant Keitel, quickly sent units racing to the Anzio front, among them elements of the HG Division, the bridgehead was successfully contained, and put under such pressure that it was the Allies who had to shift men there from the Cassino sector. The 'Hermann Göring' fought effectively on the German, left flank near Cassino, opposite the US 3rd Division and two unlucky Ranger battalions, before being withdrawn to Tuscany to refit. In February 1944 the 'Hermann Göring' was redesignated as a Fallschirm-Jäger Division ('Parachute Armoured Division'), though this was a purely 'paper' change involving minimal alteration to its structure or capability. In April, Generalleutnant Conrath handed over command of the division to Generalmajor Wilhelm Schmauk.

In May 1944 the Allied break-out from the Anzio-Nettuno bridgehead coincided with Gen. Alexander's long-delayed capture of Mount Cassino and subsequent advance up the Liri Valley. Rome was now threatened, and so was the retreat from the Gustav Line of the German 12th Army. Caution was thrown to the wind, and the 'Hermann Göring' advanced to march to the Velluti sector of the front in broad daylight despite the danger from Allied air superiority. It was a decision that cost the HG Division dearly; the German columns were attacked relentlessly by fighter-bombers, in a foretaste of what would happen to German armoured units again the following month in Normandy. Although the division initially succeeded in holding up the Allied advance it was eventually forced into retreat, pulling back at the start of June to positions on the Anzio river east of Rome; once again, however, the HG Division's exemplary conduct in the face of overwhelming odds earned it a specific mention in the official Wehrmacht communiques. By July the division had been forced back to positions south of Florence, and it was from there, on 15 July 1944, that the 'Hermann Göring' was pulled out of Italy altogether. It entrained for transfer to Russia, where a break-through by Soviet tank armies was threatening the whole central sector of the front - the massive reserve known as 'the salient of Army Group Centre'.
**'Hermann Göring' Parachute Armoured Corps: Eastern Front, 1944–45**

On 27 July 1944 the division reached the Eastern Front, and was sent into action north-east of Warsaw. Here the 'HJ' Division, along with 5. SS-Panzer-Division 'Wiking', controlled the Soviet 3rd Tank Corps—which had broken through near Wolomin-Radzymin—and cut the enemy to pieces. This success was an important boost for morale at a time when the German armies in the East seemed to be suffering nothing but reverses, and once again the division found itself singled out for praise: Generalfeldmarschall Model reported that it was thanks to the courageous engagement of the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division 'Hermann Göring' that Warsaw could still be held. On 8 August the division was thrown into a counter-attack against a Soviet bridgehead which had been established over the Vistula between Warsa and Młynów. The halting of the Soviet armoured forces at the gates of Warsaw also dashed any last hopes that the Polish Home Army might have had, when they rose against the German occupiers on 3 August, that the Red Army would come to their assistance.

In the weeks that followed the 'Hermann Göring' remained in the Warsaw area, defending the Vistula line against Soviet incursions alongside troops of IV SS-Panzerkorps (the division played a key part in the operations against the Warsaw Ghetto). It should be mentioned that even at this stage of the war, and enjoying high priority for new equipment, such as a highly regarded formation such as the 'Hermann Göring' still had a number of obsolete PzKpfw IIIs in service, which had long since been outstripped by even the earliest models of the Soviet T-34. On 1 October 1944 the order was given for the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division 'Hermann Göring' to be expanded into a Fallschirm-Panzerkorps. This was to be achieved by raising a new Fallschirmjäger-Infanterie-Division 'Hermann Göring', using intact of fresh troops from both the Army and the Luftwaffe (with the virtual elimination of much of the air force, many untrained specialist personnel were simply drafted as infantry). In the event, the process turned out to be much more difficult than had been anticipated, as the division was involved in extremely heavy fighting during the retreat through Poland. Replacements were urgently needed to make up combat losses in the existing division, making their use for the raising of the new Panzergrenadier formation problematic.

On 5 October 1944 a massive new offensive was opened by the Soviet 3rd Byelorussian Front, which launched 19 infantry, six

Extract from the Wehrpass of a 'Hermann Göring' veteran, showing his participation in combat at Sokolno and on the Sangro and Rapido rivers in September 1943-January 1944, his transfer to the 'Nebelwerferbataillon' (i.e. Aunz) in January, and his return to the Quatre Bornes to fight at Cassino. In two separate battles, in January/February and March, (private collection)
tank and two artillery divisions against the weakened Germans. Just
days later the 'Hermann Göring' was pulled out of the front line, but only
to be rushed north to help defend East Prussia as the Red Army
approached the Baltic port of Memel. In mid-October the Swedes began
a push on Königsberg, and to counter this threat ‘Hermann Göring’
corps units were thrown into the fray alongside 5. Panzer-Division and
the Führer-Beobachtungs-Brigade. Despite their piecemeal deployment the
rapidly assembled German force smashed into the Soviet 11th Guards
Army and forced them into retreat. In 14 days of furious fighting the
‘Hermann Göring’ units, now defending German soil, held off
everything the enemy could throw at them. With the Russian offensive
in the area blunted the fighting deteriorated into static trench warfare.

It was to be January 1945 before both divisions of the ‘HG’ Corps
were considered ready for commitment. Command of the corps
remained with Generalmajor Schmitz, who was promoted General-
leutnant on 30 January 1945. The principal order of battle of the new
corps was planned as follows, although this establishment was never
fully achieved:

Generalkommando
Korpskommando
Fallschirm-Panzer-Sturm-Bd ‘HG’ (mech inf bn)
Fallschirm-Panzerkorps-Frontier-Bd ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Panzerkorps-Nachrichten-Abt ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Flak-Regt ‘HG’
Nachschub-Abt ‘HG’
Instandsetzung-Abt ‘HG’
Verwaltungs-Bd ‘HG’
Sanitäts-Abt ‘HG’

Fallschirm-Panzer-Division 1 ‘Hermann Göring’:
Divisionstab
Fallschirm-Panzer-Regt ‘HG’ (2 bns)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 1 ‘HG’ (2 bns)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 2 ‘HG’ (2 bns)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Artillerie-Regt 1 ‘HG’ (3 bns)
Fallschirm-PanzerRaidschafft-Bd ‘HG’ (light in)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Frontier-Bd 1 ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Panzer-Auflärungs-Abt 1 ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Panzer-Nachrichten-Abt 1 ‘HG’
Feldersatz-Bd 1 ‘HG’
Sanitäts-Abt 1 ‘HG’

Fallschirm-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 2 ‘Hermann Göring’:
Divisionstab
Fallschirm-Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 3 ‘HG’ (3 bns)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Grenadier-Regt 4 ‘HG’ (3 bns)
Fallschirm-Panzer-Artillerie-Regt 2 ‘HG’ (3 bns)
Fallschirm-Sturmgeschütz-Abt ‘HG’ (5 cns)
Fallschirm-PanzerTruppen-Bd 2 ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Panzerplunder-Bd 2 ‘HG’
Fallschirm-Panzer-Auflärungs-Abt 2 ‘HG’

Hauptmann Orchard
Tucherschütz, awarded
the Knight's Cross on 10
December 1944 when serving
as commander of 2 Kompanie/ 2.
Fallschirm-Panzer-Regt ‘HG’ on the
Eastern Front. It is interesting
that at this late date he still
wears on his black Panzer
jacket the black, white-edged
deadly-head collar patches,
and silver or white collar piping.
Before the corps could be sent into action as a cohesive formation, however, the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division and the Flak-Regiment from the corps level troops were withdrawn and sent to the area around the River Ruhr, near Muenster, where a Soviet breakthrough seemed imminent. Here, once again, the spirited fighting of the division succeeded in holding back the enemy and almost certainly averted a catastrophic collapse. Fighting alongside other elements of 8. Armee, the "Hermann Göring" tank and assault gun crews took punishing losses but also inflicted a severe mauling on the Red Army. One particular Panther tank commander, Feldhessel Rosito of the Panzer-Regiment 4, Kompanie, knocked out 13 enemy tanks within a few hours of combat; he was decorated with the Knight's Cross on 14 January 1945. The regiment's 4. Kompanie also scored significant successes, knocking out 47 enemy tanks and 30 anti-tank guns over six days of heavy fighting. Once the fighting in this sector had died down somewhat the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division, "HG" was moved to the area around Gumbinnen, where efforts were made to complete the formation of the new corps. This was now operating with Panzergrenadier-Division "Großdeutschland", two infantry and two Volksgrenadier divisions. Both the German units and the Soviet troops opposing them were exhausted, and for a while the fighting was limited to relatively static warfare. The Germans were well aware, however, that a fresh enemy offensive was inevitable. Meanwhile, the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division and the first battalion of the Flak-Regiment were once again detached from the corps and, with some support elements, were ordered to Radom in Poland.

On 12 January a fresh Soviet onslaught fell upon the entire Eastern Front and the remaining elements of the corps were pushed inexorably back into East Prussia by massed Red Army tank forces. Within just ten days the enemy had cut off the whole of East Prussia from the rest of Germany, and the German 2., 3. and 4. Armee were encircled. Although the trapped "Hermann Göring" units were still inflicting punishing losses on the enemy and earning glowing praise, they too suffered heavy casualties, and many elements of the "HG" corps were almost completely wiped out. On 25 March 1945 surviving units were evacuated from Balga and Kahlhof across the Oder-Neisse to Pillau; from there they were
Members of the occupational military police troop on the Eastern Front, 1941. The trooper can be seen wearing the 'Heimwehr' pattern Feldhose trousers in the left pocket. The right-hand man, with his right hand on his hip, is carrying a Luger pistol, 9mm Parabellum. (see Plate HL)

Only selected men were from the regiment and division were issued with 'Heimwehr' camouflage smocks; the remainder wore uniform items in Wehrmacht 'splinter' camouflage material, both in the Zeitfeld warm by the KBO on the Ebersbach Front, 1944–45. (Josef Chantl)

evacuated by sea, the majority to Seimertinsee but some to Denmark. It is estimated that some 75 per cent of the corps' strength at the beginning of the Soviet offensive had been lost in just ten weeks of bitter fighting.

The evacuated troops were reassembled near Berlin before being marched eastwards once again, to the area around Königsbrück, where they met up once again with the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division 'HG'. The tank division had been unable to reach its designated operational area at Radom, which had already fallen to the Soviets, and had therefore remained attached to the German Army's premier formation, the 'Großdeutschland' (it is a measure of the utter confusion on the collapsing Eastern Front that some 'GD' units had also become separated and had attached themselves to the Fallschirm-Panzerkorps 'HG'). Cut off and surrounded, the 'Großdeutschland' and 'Hermann Göring' troops fought their way westwards to the Oder, which was successfully crossed on the night of 31 January 1945 on a bridge erected by the 'GD' pioneers.

The Fallschirm-Panzer-Division fought its way through Upper Silesia and, near Kodersdorf, the first battalion of the tank regiment, equipped with the excellent PzKpfw V Panther, engaged 1st Polish Armoured Division – a Soviet-raised formation fighting with the Red Army. In a brief but furious battle the 'Hermann Göring' Panthers destroyed 45 enemy tanks and captured 13 more in the space of just 20 minutes. The captured T-34s were quickly taken over by German crews, hastily marked with German recognition symbols, and sent back into action against their former owners.

By late April 1945 the Fallschirm-Panzer-Division was in action around Berlin in one of the last successful battles in the East. As the Soviets were driven out and the city recaptured, even if only briefly, by now riddled, the 'HG' Corps repelled a Soviet armoured assault near Königsbrück, and when the final breakthrough was announced, the corps was still in action against the Red Army near Dresden, knowing what would await them in Soviet captivity, the troops were...
ordered to make their way as rapidly as possible westwards to surrender to the US Army; but they were cut off when Soviet armoured units. The vast majority of surviving personnel from Fallschirm-Panzerkorps 'Hermann Göring' passed into Soviet imprisonment from which many never returned. It was not until 1956 that those who had survived captivity were finally released.

One significant element of the Panzerkorps was missing when the end came: Jf. Abteilung of the Panzer-Regiment 'HG', which was still at the Army training grounds at Fließendorf for conversion onto the Panther tank. In the final stages of the war it was absorbed into a rapidly formed Panzergruppe consisting of disparate elements which were still undergoing training at Fließendorf, and sent directly to the Eastern Front, where it was wiped out around Allenberg and Geseeking.

Satellite units

The fate of the various 'HG' satellite units, and in particular the replacement and training battalions, is not without interest:

Ersatz u. Ausbildungs-Abteilung, Regiment & Brigade

The main replacement and training depot of the 'HG' formations was moved to Utrecht in Holland on the successful conclusion of the campaign in the West. As the regiment expanded into first a brigade and then a division, the Ersatz unit grew apace, and additional depots were opened at Amersfoort and Hilversum. A number of 'HG' troops from these training depots saw action during the Allied airborne offensive, Operation 'Market Garden', in September 1944.

On the enlargement of the division to corps status, the Fallschirm-Ersatz u. Ausbildungs-Abteilung 1 & 2 were transferred to Ripsin in West Prussia to constitute the cadre around which a new Ersatz u. Ausbildungs-Brigade 'HG' would be built. Despite this substantial transfer of manpower the replacement units in Holland continued to grow, aided by an influx of personnel from numerous Luftwaffe ground staff units which had been disbanded. The 'HG' personnel in Holland, even at this late date, numbered in excess of 12,000 men, including a Grenadier-Bataillon, a Pionier-Bataillon, a Flak-Ausbildung, a Panzer-Ausbildung and an Artillerie-Ausbildung. As the Western Front began to crumble, these units, formed into a Sturm-Regiment 26V ('Assault Regiment for Special Duties'), fought their way eastwards, retreating into Germany itself. These elements finally surrendered to US forces near Bonn.

Meanwhile, at the Eastern Front, the Ersatz u. Ausbildungs-Brigade 'HG' gradually fell back to Grauden, and formed part of the garrison defending this city, which had been declared a 'fortress'. Although powerful in terms of numbers, the unit was formed largely from inexperienced recruits or conscripts, the voluntary nature of the 'Hermann Göring' having been abandoned long since. Fortunately, despite Hitler's orders that such fortresses be defended to the last man and last bullet, the brigade commander ordered that the most recent and least trained recruits be sent home; these lucky few escaped the Soviet captivity which awaited their comrades when Grauden finally surrendered on 7 March 1945.
With the E.A. Regt. in the West and the E. U.A. Bde. in the East now both gone, the few remnants were scraped together into a purely nominal ‘brigade’ which was sent to the Oder front. It went into battle around Berlin, and inevitably took severe punishment before ending the war near Mückenburg.

**Wachregiment/ Begleit-Regiment**
The original Guard Regiment was dissolved in April 1944 and replaced by a new unit, the Begleit-Regiment ‘Hermann Göring’, consisting of a Panzergrenadier-Bataillon, a Flak-Abteilung, and the Eisenbahn-Flak-Begleit-Brigade – the latter consisting of railway wagons mounting anti-aircraft weapons. In July 1944 the regiment was sent to East Prussia where it was engaged in combat against the Red Army until September. Withdrawn from the front, the regiment was dissolved once again and many of its personnel were assigned to Fallschirm-Panzergrenadier-Regt 1 and the Fallschirm-Flak-Regiment. A new but very short-lived escort unit, the Begleit-Bataillon ‘Reichsmarschall Göring’, was itself disbanded in March 1945.

**Wachbataillion, Regiment ‘General Göring’**
A special guard detachment from the Wachbatailllon of the Regiment ‘General Göring’ was assigned to duties at the Reichsmarschall’s estate at Kandhall, some 30 km north of Berlin. Given the number of high-ranking dignitaries who visited, this was an important, high-security task. It was also a popular duty, as it gave the soldiers the chance to see many famous personalities close up, and the Görings themselves took a keenly interest in the soldiers from their ‘personal’ regiment. Over time, the original phalanx-sized detachment grew to company strength. The unit remained on duty until the bitter end (which was more than the Reichsmarschall did); when the Red Army were literally on Göring’s doorstep, demobilization levels entire complex. The last guards departed on 20 April 1945.

**Musikkorps**
One element of the ‘HC’ units deserving special mention was the Musikkorps; this prestigious military band was another feature which the Luftwaffe’s premier formation had in common with the ‘Großdeutschland’ and the ‘Leibstandarte-SS’. In fact the Musikkorps...
of the Regiment 'General Göring' was larger than either its Army or SS equivalent. It was raised around a cadre of Army musicians drafted into the Luftwaffe in 1935 and under the command of SS-Obermusikmeister Paul Hase, who also taught music at the University of Berlin. The Musikkorps soon developed a reputation second to none for the quality of its performances, and was extremely innovative, introducing instruments such as the saxophone which at that time were unheard of in military bands. The Musikkorps even visited the troops at the front, providing a much-appreciated boost to morale with concerts in the field. Eventually, however, as military reverses mounted, the need for handmen was overtaken by the need for front line manpower. The Musikkorps was disbanded and its personnel absorbed into the Feldgendarmerie element of the 'Hermann Göring' Division.

Corps administrative staff Those soldiers belonging to the administrative staff of the Fallschirm-Panzerkorps 'HG' who were still at the home depot in Berlin were thrown into the final defensive battles for the capital in May 1945, and were totally annihilated.

Though Hermann Göring showed himself to be unworthy of the loyalty of the men he commanded, both in the air and on the battlefield, there is no doubt that the units which bore his name became one of most impressive military formations to emerge during the period of the Third Reich. Their aggression in the attack and steadfastness in defence earned the men who wore its white collar patches the respect of their enemies in Tunisia, Sicily, Italy and on the Russian Front. Their obese marshal might embellish his flamboyant personal uniforms with decorations which he did not deserve, but a total of 62 members of the units wearing his cufftitle earned the coveted Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross for combat gallantry. Of these, six soldiers were decorated with the Oakleaves, and one with the Oakleaves with Swords.

UNIFORMS

Police uniform As initially formed, the 'Göring' unit normally wore standard Landespolierte uniform. For the first few months of the unit's existence this was the old dark blue Prussian police uniform, but in July 1933 they were the first to receive the new green uniform with dark brown collar facing and 'Police green' piping. A special cuffband was introduced in December 1935 for wear on the left forearm, of dark green cloth with Russia brad edging and the inscription L.P.G. General Göring. The lettering was embroidered in silver-grey thread Gothic
script for enlisted men, bad silver-grey braided edging for NCOs, and 'silver' (aluminium) wire hand-embroidered lettering and braiding edging for officers.

One interesting piece of insignia worn at this time by the 1st Company (known at that time as 1. Hohnschaft, the company strength being 100 men) was the so-called 'Southern Cross' (see Plate A1). This consisted of a white cloth left oblique shield edged in black and with a black cross quartering the white field; the upper left quarter was red and bore five white stars arranged in the pattern of the constellation. This was a tradition emblem commemorating those Police personnel who had served in German East Africa. When the Regiment 'General Göring' transferred to the Luftwaffe the honour of wearing this tradition badge was relinquished to another Police unit.

At the time the Regiment 'General Göring' was transferred into the Luftwaffe a transitional uniform was worn, featuring basic Police tunic, trousers and cap, but with the addition of a Luftwaffe-style cloth national eagle badge on the right breast, and Luftwaffe insignia on the peaked service cap. The L.P.G. General Göring cuffband was also carried over onto this transitional uniform.

Luftwaffe uniforms

The basic uniform of the 'General/Hermann Göring' units was the blue-grey service dress of the Luftwaffe - trousers or breeches worn with either the four-pocket Rock (tunic), the popular Fliegerbuchse (flyer's blouse), or the double-purse Waffenrock; and with either the service dress peaked cap, the Fliegerhutmeister sidecap or, from 1943, the peaked Einheitsfeldmütze field cap.1

Headgear

The service dress headgear was the peaked (waxed) cap (Schildmütze or Dienstmütze) of the standard pattern worn by all Luftwaffe branches. For officers this had a blue-grey wool crown and a black woven moebur band; the glossy black peak was usually made from a material known as Vulcanfiber, with leather edge binding and officers wore double plaited aluminium wire chin-strings attached by pebbled aluminium buttons. Enlisted men and NCOs wore essentially the same cap though of inferior materials, with a black leather chinstrap attached by black metal buttons. Standard Luftwaffe insignia were in stamped white metal for enlisted ranks and embroidered aluminium wire for officers; the national emblem on the crown, above the national ocalde surrounded by a wreath and supported by stylised wings on the band. For the 'General/Hermann Göring' units the enlisted ranks' pattern featured white Waffenfarbe piping to the crown seams and both edges of the band, while officers' caps bore the universal aluminium wire piping, or gold-coloured for generals. Both officer and enlisted patterns of the service cap could be worn with a white woolen crown between April and September.

After the service cap the most popular form of headwear was the underd Fliegermütze, a blue-grey sidecap with a

1 See MAX VON S. Luftwaffe Air and Ground Crews 1935-45 for general 1936-1940 'Luftwaffe uniforms, and charts of rank insignia.'
turn-up "curtain" or "turban". Normally the upper edge of the turn-up was piped in aluminium braid for officers and was unpiped for lower ranks; there are, however, recorded examples of a Fiegermitte with white piping worn by personnel of 'General Hermann Göring' units — though it can be assumed that these strictly non-regulation types are only limited use. The national emblem was worn on the front of the crown, in white or silver thread depending upon rank, above the national cockade on the turban — for officers this padded boss was outlined in silver thread.

In 1915 the issue of the Einheitsfeldmütze 'universal field cap' began in most of the German armed services, intended to replace all the other forms of field cap then in use not only by military but also by civil, political and police organisations. Based on the ski or mountain style cap, this had a long cloth peak and a turn-up "curtain" flap, its ends fastening at the front above the peak by two buttons — this could be lowered and fastened over the chin in cold weather. The Luftwaffe version was in the usual blue-grey wool; officers' caps had aluminium braid piping to the crown seams. Enlisted ranks' caps were normally unpiped but, once again, a few examples are known with white piping to the crown for 'Hermann Göring' units. National insignia were at first as on the Fiegermitte, but the cockade tended to be hidden by the front flap and a smaller one-piece insignia was later produced on a trapezoid cloth backing.

Service dress
The four-pocket M1035 Rock was a single-breasted tunic with four pebble-finish aluminium front buttons, an open collar, turn-back cuffs, and four pleated patch pockets with straight, buttoned flaps — the officer's private purchase version, of better materials and cut, might have slightly scalloped flaps. All ranks wore the Luftwaffe's 'flying eagle' version of the national emblem on the right breast, in white or aluminium thread according to rank. Non-commissioned ranks from Unteroffizier upwards wore 1cm wide aluminium braid (Treene) edging the collar; in January 1944 this metallic braid was ordered replaced by dull grey artificial silk.

A lightweight white linen version was available for wear by officers during the summer months (April to September); this tunic had all insignia removable to facilitate cleaning, the national emblem being a pinback white metal version. No such tunic was provided for NCOs and enlisted men, but for walking-out dress these ranks sometimes wore white trousers with the blue-grey tunic — see Plate C3.

The M1035 Fliegerbluse was a hip-length, close-fitting, single-breasted jacket with a concealed fly front; although it was capable of being closed at the neck by a book-k-eye the collar was normally worn

Stabfeldwebel Heinz Grissa, from Parchimeger forlag 1 '171'. He wears the four-pocket service tunic with NCO breast braid to the collar and white piping to the outer edges. The first pattern endeavouring cuffbands can just be seen on his right forearm; below it (just obscured by the edge of this print) are the double aluminium breast stripes indicating his status as Hauptfeldwebel — company first sergeant. Note that he wears the Luftwaffe Ground Combat Badge on the left breast pocket. Grissa began his service in aircrew and, after serving in the PAC 1936, he returned to flying duties with a night fighter squadron. Ironically, although he wears no cap here, his paybook specifically lists the award of the Oberschutz Combat Cross of the Luftwaffe — see captions, page 47. (Private collection)
pressed open, particularly by officers, who would typically wear a shirt and tie under this garment. There were no external pockets, the enlisted ranks’ blouse had adjustable cuff fastenings and, like the tunic, had provision for metal bell-bottomed hooks. Although collar ‘trousse’ was displayed by NCOs, this first pattern enlisted ranks’ blouse bore no national emblem, since it was categorised as working clothing; the eagle was, however, worn by officers. From May 1940 internal skirt pockets were authorised, for officers with curved ‘shelves’ for access and for enlisted ranks with external buttoned flaps. From October 1940 the national emblem was added to the right breast for all ranks.

The Waffenrock tunic was introduced in late 1935 and was intended ultimately to replace both the Rock and the Fliegerbluse. It was essentially similar to the four-pocket tunic, having the same cuffs and pockets; however, it had five front buttons and was intended to be worn with the collar closed at the neck (though it was capable of being worn open). While seen in some photographs of officers, the M1940 Waffenrock was never as popular as the M1935 tunic or, particularly, the Fliegerbluse.

As first manufactured or authormed, all three of these prewar garments had the collars piped — in branch-of-service colour (Waffenfarbe) for all enlisted ranks, with silver cord for officers and with gold cord for general officers; the basic distinguishing colour for ‘General Hermann Göring’ personnel was white. The ‘trousers’ and NCOs’ colour piped piping was discontinued from March 1940; nevertheless, piped tunics and blouses continued to be worn late into the war.

Rank and branch of service were indicated on collar patches and shoulder straps — see ‘Insignia & Waffenfarbe’ below. Senior privates (junior NCOs, in British and US terms) also wore one to three silver-grey braid rank chevrons on the upper left sleeve, and enlisted ranks wore specialist qualification or ‘trade’ badges on the forearm — usually the left. The appointments — i.e. rank — of Hauptfeldwebel (‘Ober Scharführer’), i.e. company’s senior NCO, was marked by two rings of Tresse set 50mm apart on the tunic sleeve 50mm above the top of the cuff or in equivalent position on tunics without a turn-back cuff.

At some time in 1944, issue became quite a four-pocket field blouse, very similar to the M1943 field blouse used by the Army, in shoddy ‘field grey’ wool of a rather brownish hue. The unpleated patch pockets had straight flaps; there were six front buttons, but from photographic evidence it seems to have been worn most often with the top button undone. No collar patches were worn with this blouse. The national emblem was machine-embroidered on field grey backing, and it is believed that the shoulder straps used were the standard blue-grey wool type. This blouse was worn with matching trousers and M1943 field cap.

The grey-blue wool double-breasted greatcoat had two rows of six buttons; it could be closed at the neck but — in contrast to the Army equivalent — was usually worn open with the first three buttons left undone. It had two slanted hip pockets with buttoned flaps, and a buttoned integral rear half-belt for adjustment. Again unlike the Army, in

An enlisted man from the division wearing the shoulder Fliegerbluse In the pre-March 1935 version, with white collar piping. The metal ribbon just visible on his left breast commemorates the occupation of the Sudetenland, with alight for the capture of Prague, indicating that he is a veteran from the pre-war Reich ‘General Göring’. Shirt cuff and tie were not usually worn with service dress by enlisted men, but he has put one on for this portrait. (Robert Hume)
Insignia & Waffenfarben

The standard Luftwaffe system of distinguishing rank and branch of service was by collar patches and shoulder straps. Briefly, shoulder-shaped patches in the appropriate Waffenfarbe were worn on both sides of the collar in mirrored pairs. For enlisted ranks these were not normally piped around the edges, but in this the 'General/Hermann Göring' units were an exception. The junior enlisted ranks were identified by one to four silver-grey alloy styled double wings – Doppelschwinger – pinned to the patch. NCOs by one to four wings differentiated by their additional collar. Tresse. Junior ranks' shoulder straps were in blue-grey edged with Waffenfarbe piping; NCOs' straps also had aluminium braid Tresse around the inner edges, and one to three silver-grey alloy stars.

Officers' collar patches were piped around the edges with aluminium cord; rank was indicated by one to three styled double wings above an oakleaf spray for subalterns, and from one to three wings within an oakleaf garland for field officers, all embroidered in aluminium wire. Junior officers' shoulder boards were of silver wire in a lengthways bordered effect, with one or two gilt stars; those of field officers, of interwoven tripled cord with one or two stars. All officers' shoulderboards up to the rank of Oberst (colonel) were set on an 'underlay' of appropriate Waffenfarbe.

General officers' distinguishing colour was white throughout the Luftwaffe; Generalmajor, Generalleutnant and General wore from one to three wings within an oakleaf garland, all embroidered in gold wire on white collar patches edged with gold cord; and interwoven shoulder boards of gold/silver/gold cords on white underlay with appropriate gilt stars.

The systems of Waffenfarbe adopted by the 'General/Hermann Göring' units were complex, and changed over time. Their traditional Waffenfarbe colour was, as already mentioned, white. This was worn as piping to the service cap, to the toque or bouse collar where applicable, as the base colour for collar patches, and as piping or underlay for shoulder straps or shoulder boards. White was also used as piping around the black collar patches worn on the black Panzer jacks in place of the regular rose-pink piping normally worn by armoured units, and subsequently as backing to the later-pattern white Panzer collar patches (see 'Panzer uniforms' below).

As the 'Hermann Göring' expanded through regiment, brigade and divisional status and eventually to a full corps, the regulations on Waffenfarbe use changed several times. Initially the white collar...
patches carried Waffenfarbe-coloured edge-piping but were worn in conjunction with white-piped shoulder straps. Later the white collar patches were worn unpiped, but the Waffenfarbe colours replaced white on the shoulder straps. Just to confuse matters further, textures of both styles seem to have been used simultaneously; in practice it was obviously difficult for front line troops to keep up with the changing regulations when it might be months before they received adequate supplies of new insignia. The various systems of Waffenfarbe are represented here by three illustrative examples from different periods:

Regiment 'General Göring', c.1936-38
Color patches:
Officers: White, silver cord piping
Enlisted ranks: Jäger-Bl: White, green piping
Nazi ranks, IV. (Pure) Bl: White, yellow piping
Shoulder straps:
Officers: White underlay
Enlisted ranks: White piping

Division 'Hermann Göring', pre-April 1943
Color patches:
Officers: White, silver cord piping
Enlisted ranks: Jäger-Bl: White, white piping
Grenadier-Regt: White, white piping
Panzer-Regt: White, pink piping
Pionier-Regt: White, pink piping
Verwaltungstruppe: White, golden-brown piping
Verwaltungstruppe: White, black piping
Nachrichten-Abt: White, light blue piping
Verwaltungstruppe: White, light blue piping
Feldgendarmerie: White, light blue piping
Shoulder straps:
Officers: White underlay
Enlisted ranks: White piping

Division & Corps 'Hermann Göring', post June 1943
Color patches:
Officers: White, silver cord piping
Enlisted ranks: White, pink piping
Shoulder straps: Colours worn as underlay for officers and piping for enlisted ranks.
Divisonstrs: Pink

An unusual post-1940 Pilgrihalsr, lacking the distinctive white collar piping the unit shoulder has not yet been seated - and indeed, may never have been in some cases. Letters, the white '19' collar patches were also removed in living too conspicuously in the field.

Pamper: Pink
Panzerjäger: Pink
Grenadiere: White
Wachregiment: White
Jäger: Green
Feldjäger: Golden-yellow
Artillerie: Red
Flak: Red
Nachrichen: Golden-brown
Pionier: Black
Nachrichen: Light blue
Verwaltung: Light blue
Feldjäger: Orange-red

Military specialists (Wehrmachtbehörden) attached to the division wore the standard Luftwaffe administrative officials' insignia with dark green collar patches, dark green underlay to the shoulder straps, and an intermediate piping to the shoulder straps indicating their specialist
(continued on page 33)
1933-36
1: Meister, Landespolizeigruppe 'General Göring', 1933
2: Hauptbeauftragter, Regiment 'General Göring', 1938
3: Major, Regiment 'General Göring', 1936
1938–40
1. Unteroffizier, Flak-Abteilung;
   France, June 1940
2. Obergefreiter, Panzerpioniere;
   Austria, 1938
3. Jäger, Jäger-Bataillon;
   Berlin-Richterdorf, summer 1938
1941-42
1: Unteroffizier standard-bearer
2: Hauptmann, parade dress, 1942
3: Flieger, Marks-korps, 1942
1942-43
1. Feldwehr, Sicily, 1943
2. Leibstandarte, Sicily or Italy, summer 1943
3. Oberkommando
   Führer-Flak-Abteilung, 1942
1943-44
1: Kanonier, light flak battery, Italy, 1943
2: Grenadier, Ardennes, early 1944
3: Feldwebel, Panzer Regiment,
    Italy, summer 1943
TANK CREWS

1. Oberleutnant, early mixed uniform
2. Unteroffizier, later uniform
3. Major, naval-style leather jacket
ASSAULT GUN CREWS
1: Hauptmann, Luftwaffe blue uniform
2: Oberleutnant, Luftwaffe blue uniform
3: Feldwebel, Army field-grey uniform
EASTERN FRONT, 1944-45
1: Infanteriebataillons, Frontlagermarken, Sommer 1944
2: Panzerjäger, Frühling 1945
3: Panzerjäger, Winter 1944/45
branch. Ordinance officers and medical officers likewise wore the Waffenfarbe of their specialist branch rather than the colours specific to the ‘Hermann Göring’ – respectively, bright red and dark blue. These were worn as the base colour for the collar patches and underlay piping to the shoulder straps.

**Cuffbands**

The cuffbands worn on the lower right sleeve by the Luftwaffe ‘General/Hermann Göring’ units came in three different patterns.

The first pattern, introduced in March 1936, was made from mid to dark blue cloth, the actual shade of which could vary from batch to batch. The inscription General Göring, in Gothic ‘Fraktur’ script, was machine-embroidered in silver-grey yarn for enlisted men and NCOs, and hand-embroidered in aluminium wire for officers. Further rank differentiation was found on the bands worn by NCOs, which had Russia braid edging. This pattern was worn by many soldiers right through to the later stages of the war, even though it was ordered replaced by the Hermann Göring title by August 1942; no doubt those originally issued with it wished to advertise their status as ‘old stagers’.

The second pattern was introduced in May 1942, and saw the inscription changed to Hermann Göring. It was manufactured in the same materials and with the same Fraktur script as its predecessor. It was, however, very short-lived, being replaced shortly after its introduction with the final pattern. Original examples are very rare.

The third and final pattern retained the inscription located to upper case block letters, HERMANN GÖRING. This final pattern is interesting in that it was manufactured in two forms. The basic pattern, like its predecessors, was embroidered onto a mid to dark blue band, but an alternative version was also produced using a black wool band, presumably for wear on the black Panzer pocket worn by armoured vehicle crews.

**Führer-Flak-Abteilung** Those soldiers from the ‘General/Hermann Göring’ units who were attached to Hitler’s headquarters, either in the Flak detachment on Hitler’s train, or in the guard detachment, wore a special cuffband on the lower left sleeve, with the inscription Führerflakabteilung. The first pattern had the lettering in gold Gothic script on a black band, and was made in both machine-woven and embroidered versions. This was superseded in January 1943 by lettering hand-embroidered in aluminium thread in a more stylised script.

**Feldgendarmerei** The divisional military police wore on the lower left sleeve the Army-style machine-woven Feldgendarmerei cuffband with pale grey Gothic script on a medium brown artificial silk band.

**Awards and decorations**

Although there were no specific awards intended solely for the ‘Hermann Göring’ units, there were several that are their very name were awarded for
more often within the division than in most other Luftwaffe units. The most important of these are mentioned in the captions to the accompanying photographs and colour plates (and are covered in detail in MAK 385, World War II German Battle Insignia). Members of the ‘602’ unit were naturally eligible for the full range of German gallantry decorations.

**Gorget**

The standard bearers in I. & II. Bld., Regiment ‘General Göring’, wore a gores quite different from those worn by standard bearers in other Luftwaffe units. The half-moon shaped metal plate bore in its centre a silver Police star embellished with a swastika, flushed on either side by draped banners in gold. In each corner was a fixed gold button; and the plate was suspended by a chain of interlinked circular rings. (For this, and the special standard-bearer’s sleeve badge, see Plate C1.)

Other subunits employed the standard Luftwaffe pattern gorget in matt silver with the Luftwaffe ‘flying eagle’ superimposed over the draped banners, all in a contrasting ‘antiqued’ silversgrey effect; the suspension chain comprised alternate open and closed square links.

Although not introduced specifically for the military police personnel of the ‘Hermann Göring’ unit, the special Luftwaffe version of the Feldgendarmerie gorget has so far been identified in wartime photographs only from this unit; other Luftwaffe ground units, such as parachute regiments, used the Army pattern gorget. The Luftwaffe version was basically similar to the Army type, having a silversgrey painted finish; a dark grey scroll bore the inscription ‘Feldgendarmerie’ picked out in luminous paint, below a large Luftwaffe eagle also painted in luminous finish (see Plate H1).

**Panzer uniforms**

Black Panzer vehicle uniform was worn by members of the Regiment ‘General Göring’ and the ‘Hermann Göring’ Division who served with the tank and armoured reconnaissance elements. The jacket worn with this uniform was of the Army pattern, cut from black wool with a slanted front edge and central rear seam, and was normally worn open at the neck, though provision was made for it to be fully closed in cold weather. The cuffs were split, with adjustable button fastening. Despite the fact that it was rare for anything other than a belt and pistol holster to be worn with this jacket, metal belt support hook fittings were provided.

Initial issues were taken from Army stocks and still had the Army-style pliss piping around the collar. This quickly gave way to white piping for enlisted ranks, with many officers using the same silver cord piping as
worn on their blue-grey service tunic. In 1943 the site of the collar was reduced slightly, and at around the same time the white collar piping was deleted. The eagle and swastika national emblem worn on this uniform was embroidered onto a black backing, though shortages often resulted in the standard blue-grey backed insignia being used. A special version of the HERMANN GÖRING cuffband embroidered on a black base was also introduced for wear on the black Panzer clothing, but once again the standard version on dark blue backing was more often used in its place. Shoulder straps were made in black wool with white piping for use on these jackets.

The 'death’s head' collar patches worn on the black uniform came in several versions. Army Line Panzer jackets often came with the standard pink-piped black patches already attached; indeed, it appears that many of the Army Panzer personnel drafted into the 'Hermann Göring' continued to wear their Army collar patches after transfer, in some cases even on the tropical tunic (see below). These Army patches were soon replaced by insignia of similar appearance and size but with white piping replacing the rose-pink. Subsequently,
A fascinating portrait of a Gefreiter of Panzer '90 wearing the black Fleegemittel. Under magnification the white piping around the jacket collar is revealed as "twill" cord. The white collar patches are from the blue-grey service uniform, complete with Drapenabzeichen of rank. (Robert Band)
field cap with an SS-pattern metal death's-head pinned to the left side.

Just as in the Army and Waffen-SS, members of Sturmmilitärer, Sturmgeschütze, and some Panzerjäger and Panzergranadier units of the Hermann Göring wore a field-grey version of the Panzer clothing. The jacket was identical in cut to the black pattern, with slanted front pocket and central rear seam. Early examples had white piping allied to the collar edge, replaced by silver cord piping for officers. This piping was deleted, as from the black jackets, around the end of 1943. The national emblem was embroidered on a field-grey backing, and the standard blue cuffband was worn. Shoulder straps were normally of the standard blue-grey Luftwaffe type, but it is possible that field-grey Army straps were also seen.

Of particular interest is the extraordinary range of collar patches which have been recorded for use with the field-grey Panzer jacket within various ‘HG’ units. These include the following – note that in this context ‘Army-style’ means the elongated type of patch as worn on the black Army Panzer jacket, ‘Luftwaffe-style’ means the smaller rhomboid shape as standard on other Luftwaffe uniforms; and ‘death’s-head’ means the normal pin-on white metal alloy Panzer badge as seen on Army patches: Field-grey Army-style patch, white piping, death’s-head Blue-grey Army-style patch, pink piping, death’s-head Blue-grey Army-style patch, red piping, death’s-head White Army-style patch, red piping, death’s-head White Luftwaffe-style patch, red piping, death’s-head White Luftwaffe-style patch, no piping, death’s-head White Luftwaffe-style patch, silver cord officer’s piping, death’s-head Green Luftwaffe-style patch, red piping, death’s-head Green Luftwaffe-style patch, pink piping, death’s-head Green Luftwaffe-style patch, yellow piping, death’s-head Green Luftwaffe-style patch, no piping, death’s-head.

A field-grey version of the M1943 field cap, exactly the same as that worn by the Army, was also used with this type of uniform. The insignia for this cap was normally a one-piece trapezoid-shaped patch of field-grey wool with the Luftwaffe eagle and national cockade.

It is also known that some Panzerjäger jackets were worn in Luftwaffe blue-grey. These fell into two categories: Army issue field-grey jackets which were later dyed blue-grey, and facenormade blue-grey examples. These blue-grey jackets were normally worn with the standard issue blue-grey Luftwaffe Fliegermütze or M1943 field cap (see Plate G).

Tropical uniform
Since elements of the division saw service in North Africa, and for many months in Italy and Italy, use of Luftwaffe pattern tropical clothing Major Hans Sandrock wearing the officers’ silver-piped version of the black Fliegermütze, with the Army-pattern field-grey assault leggings, white uniform worn within He StüBu-Abt 195. The jacket features the collar patches from the black Panzer jacket, and the collar itself appears in no piped silver. This photo was taken after the award of Sandrock’s Knight’s Cross in October 1944.
was widespread. These garments were made of a hard-wearing but lightweight cotton material, coloured a golden-tan shade which contrasted with the Army's olive drab Tropenzug. Long- and short-sleeved shirts both had long-pointed collars and two pleated patch pockets with scalloped flaps; buttons and loops were provided for attaching uniform shoulder straps, and a national emblem in white on a triangular tan backing was seen above the right pocket. These were also features of the four-pocket tunic, with pleated breast and 'belledo' skirt pockets; it had six front buttons and a hankerchief collar, but this was almost invariably worn open, without collar patches. There were two types of long trousers; the basic issue was plain, but photographs show much use of the M1942 Tropenstilbundhose — loosely cut and hagg; gathered at the ankle with a buckled strap, and with a large pocket on the front of the left thigh. Tropical shorts in matching material were also issued. The HERRMANN GWIRNZZ cuffband was often seen attached to the right forearm of the tunic. There is plentiful evidence for the use of the cloth-covered cork sun helmet in the 165th Division. The tropical version of the Fliegermütze was probably the most common headgear, but members of the division also made widespread use of the special tropical version of the Luftwaffe service cap, Tropenschirmmütze mit Neckenschutz. Made entirely from tan-coloured cotton, including the large peak, this had a wide, unstiffened crown, a tan leather chinstrap and a button-on protective neck flap; it was supplied complete with white-on-tan woven versions of
of the standard service cap badge. This was presumably intended to take the place of the Army's famous "Afrikamiter" peaked field cap, which does not seem to have been a general issue in Luftwaffe tan cloth — although they are often seen in photographs and high quality example covers, presumably privately purchased. Army caps were also acquired, bleached, and given Luftwaffe insignia.

**Camouflage clothing**

The 'Heeres Panzer' Brigade/Division was unusual in that it made use of Waffen-SS issue camouflage smocks and helmet covers from July 1942 onwards. These were only worn by some of the divisional elements, however, and were not general issue. The SS camouflage-printed items were worn during the deployment of divisional elements in North Africa, in Sicily and in Italy. They were thus worn in conjunction with both the tropical and the continental blue-grey uniforms; there is even evidence for the camouflage smock being worn with black Parzer clothing. The smock was a loose-fitting pullover garment with elasticated skirt, waist and cuffs, a lace-up neck opening and access slits in the flanks — it was originally designed to be worn over the personal field equipment, but seldom was. The helmet cover, unlike the Army's simpler drabgreen version, was provided with spring-loaded alloy hooks which clipped under the edge of the helmet at the rear and sides.

In 1945 the spotted pattern Waffen-SS items were replaced by the full range of 'splinter' pattern Luftwaffe camouflage clothing. The most commonly used garment thereafter was the three-quarter length camouflage jacket produced for the Luftwaffe Field Divisions. This single-breasted, slighly-rough garment fastened by five plastic buttons; it had no breast pockets, but two skirt pockets. No collar patches were applied, but it displayed the national emblem embroidered on either shoulder or camouflage cloth backing. Initial issues had shoulder straps cut from camouflage material, but blue-grey wool uniform straps were applied to later issues.
A special version of the Panzer Jacket was also produced in Wehrmacht splinter pattern camouflage material; this was based on the reissgreen lightweight denim type Panzer fatigue jacket and had the latter's large patch pocket on the left breast. The national emblem was as for the Field Division jacket. No collar patches appear to have been worn with this type, which was worn with trousers cut from matching material. An M1943 style field cap was also produced in splinter pattern Wehrmacht camouflage material.

Motorcycle coat

Like all other major field units, the ‘Hermann Göring’ made extensive use of motorcycles, especially in military police and reconnaissance units. A special coat, almost identical to that worn by Army troops, was issued for motorcycle cross. This was double-breasted, cut in blue-grey rubberised waterproof material with plain blue-grey wool facing to the deep collar. It had an integral waist belt and buttoned cuff fastenings, and could be buttoned at the skirt in such a way as to divide the lower part of the coat into ‘leggings’ for convenience when astride a motorcycle. Unlike the Army version, it was generally, though not invariably, worn without shoulder straps. NOCs wore a single stripe of aluminium braid along the facing edge of the collar. Although a range of special rank insignia was intended to be worn with this coat it appears to have been only rarely if ever used, most coats being worn devoid of insignia other than the NOC collar badge.

* * *

A rare award document showing the bestowal of the Iron Cross in both 1st and 2nd Classes on the same day - 17 August 1944 - to a doctor, Unterarzt Dr Erwin Henrich, on the battalion head- quarters staff of 8/Pionier- Grenadier Z. 195 and his award document for the Ground Combat Badge, dated just three days later. This gives some hint as to the intensity of the fighting during the division’s efforts to help stave off the collapse of Army Group Centre. (Mike Sischoff)
Command flags and pennants

The command flags used by the 'HG' units changed considerably during the formation's history. Due to constraints of space, the examples described below are simply a representative selection from the second half of 1943 onward.

**Corps commander**
Square command flag, quartered diagonally, with the top quarter black, the bottom quarter red and the left and right quarters white. In the centre was a gold Luftwaffe eagle.

**Divisional commander**
A triangular pennant striped horizontally, with equal red, above white, above black bands. A gold Luftwaffe eagle was superimposed on the white central band.

**Brigade commander**
A triangular pennant, striped horizontally, with black upper and lower bands, and a white central band on which was superimposed the gold Luftwaffe eagle.

**Regimental commanders**
A rectangular flag, striped horizontally, with black upper and lower bands and a central band in different Waffenfarben upon which was superimposed a silver Luftwaffe eagle. The colours of the central band were: e.g. Grenadier Regt, white; Panzer Regt, pink; Artillery & Flak Regts, red. In the top left hand corner of the flag were the letters 'HG' in white.

In the case of the Grenadier Regt the letters were preceded by the numeral '1' or '2' as appropriate. The Flak Regt flag also had the addition of an upward-pointing white arrow in the lower left corner.

**Battalion/Abteilung commanders**

Battalion-sized sub-units used rectangular pennants, striped horizontally, with a black central band on which a white or silver Luftwaffe eagle was superimposed. The coloured upper and lower bands were e.g. Grenadier units, white; Panzer, pink; Artillery & Flak, red; Supplies, light blue; Medical, dark blue. Once again the upper left corner carried the letters 'HG', this time in black and preceded by a Roman numeral indicating the Battalion/Abteilung number. The lower left corner of the Flak version once again carried an upward-pointing arrow, this time in black.

A slight variant of this style was used by some sub-units, having instead of a black central horizontal bar a black cross. The quartered fields created by this cross were coloured as follows: Panzer/Pioniere (armoured engineers), golden-brown; Panzer-Aufklärung (armoured reconnaissance), golden-yellow; Panzer-Nachrichten (armoured signals), silver-grey; Medical, dark blue; Supplies, light blue; Medical, dark blue; Medical, dark blue.

Typical examples of 'Hermann Göring' Division command flags. (Top left) Divisional commander - gold eagle, black, white & red bars. (Top right) Regiment - silver eagle, black. (Bottom left) Regiment - silver eagle, black & white. (Bottom right) Battalion - silver eagle, black & white.
THE PLATES

A: 1933-35
AR: Minister, Landespolizeigruppe ‘General Göring’, 1933
Although the Landesspolizei of the different German states were not formally unified into the national Schutzpolizei (Policewoman Police) until the following January, this NCO wears a service introduced ‘Police green’ uniform with brown collar facings and bright green piping. The status of this NCO is indicated by the blue band on his right arm, worn by the shoulder straps, its prestigious and by the oval cuffband LGD. General Göring’s name appears on the left sleeve, and 1st Company by the ‘Saxonia’ group stripes, here that at this time the distinctive Prussian-style som eagles badge had not yet been introduced. The NCO is the Karlsruhe.

One of the original members of Regiment ‘General Göring’, the first transitional uniform worn upon transfer from the Volkssturmm to the Luftwaffe. The bizarre mixture of space Policewoman Rybikov uniform with LGD General Göring cuffband, but with a Luftwaffe breast eagle added. The service cap has also lost its Police insignia and replaced with Luftwaffe badges substituted. The Police belt and dress straps are retained.

A2: Major, Regiment ‘General Göring’, 1936
A field officer of the regiment air arm transfer to the air force has been completed. He wears a modified Luftwaffe officer’s blue-grey service dress, with the early-style ‘corp-bleu’ breast eagle, this, and all other insignia, are in ‘silver’ (aluminium) thread. The insignia has been added to his shoulder stripes and has material of his collar patches is the raw white Luftwaffe of the uniform. The curved crest of the early ‘Tellerform’ type, lighter then and looking the elegant ‘yaddle’ shape of little idea. The Landespolizeigruppe Köln has seen worn on the tip of the right arm the inscription ‘General Göring’ in Gothic script, and with origami hands for officers.

B: 1936-40
B1: Inspektor, Flak-Abteilung; France, June 1940
By the outbreak of war the Fliegerabteilung had become the most popular form of service. The NCO of a heavy Flak battery, handling an 8.8cm Flak 18 Flak gun without visible pockets and sporting the white Luftwaffe steel(p) police helmet. Royal, however, that as this was still considered as a working rather than a prestige dress garment his side did not display his breast eagle.

B2: NCO, Luftwaffe Gebirgsjäger; Austria, 1938
This single privates of the Nachtfalke’s armoured car reconnaissance platoon wears the early pattern of Army Paratrooper ‘special’ black uniform, complete with the large, floppy beret covering his leather and rubber arm- elnet or Schuhmütze; a Luftwaffe breast eagle and cap
cockade have been added to the beret. His collar and shoulder straps carry the regiment's distinctive white piping; the collar patches are in Army style, also with the rose-pink piping replaced by white. The blue-green 'Goring cuffband is worn on the lower right sleeves — without brass edging, since he is an enlisted man — and the Stadttuchband of his rank on the upper left. He carries a steel box with a 9/35mm machine-gun ammunition.

B3: Jäger, Jäger-Bataillons, Berlin-Reinickendorf, summer 1935

The unibladed ranked stepping-out dress was the standard four-pocket service tunic with trousers worn loose over black cloth shoes; but during his summer months a white cutaway coat was worn on the peaked cap, and white trousers and gloves were provided for wear with the blue-grey jacket — we may be sure that the soldiers made the most of this dazzlingly flamboyant effect during their off-duty hours. His tunic collar and shoulder straps are piped in white, and membership of the Jäger-Btl is indicated by green piping around the edges of his white collar patches, (also used by Luftwaffe personnel pre-war) predominantly in brown leather, later backinned, and usually worn with a bright aluminium-enamelled buckle.

C: 1936–42

C1: Unter-offizier standard-bearer

On 13 September 1933 Landespolizeigruppe Westfalen was presented with the banner of the Preussische Landespolizei. This square banner in red-green silk was fringed with silver bullion. A large white central device, surrounded by a silver laurel-wreath tied at its base with a ribbon bow, bore a black Prussian eagle with yellow beak and claws and red tongue. Nothing, in its left talon a gold-foil shield with a silver blade and in its right a bundle of yellow lightning bolts. Above the eagle flew a silver-wrapped green scroll, with the legend "1900 GLORIA ET FORVM" in silver. This central motif was superimposed on a large white and the various versions of the national emblem worn by members of the division (from top left, clockwise): On this grey background for uniform gun units, camouflaged/orange-black-striped three-volume length field jacket and late war field blouse; on blue-grey Luftwaffe service uniform; on triangular tan backing for tropical shirt or tunic; and on black for Panzer jacket. Identical but smaller examples were made for use on headgear.

"mobile" eagle, the entire of each arm being slightly shortened. In each corner of the field was a silver flying comet, its tail pointing towards the centre of the banner. Initially Jäger-Battalion's banner felt hunts, just below the central motif, the 'Southern Cross' African national tradition was described above in the last silver 'Police uniform'. This Police-style banner remained in use with the 'Gendarmerie' battalions even after their transfer into the Luftwaffe.

The brown leather bandolier worn by standard bearers had white, heavily-embroidered aluminium thread edges, a mid-grey cloth slip and a brown leather 'loop' in which to wear the base of this flap. Around his neck the standard-bearer wears the garland of his appointment, in the Police style as used by L & K Garrison battalions rather than the normal Luftwaffe pattern.

The uniform is the standard four-pocket service dress, with white-piped collar and white color patches, and white-piped shoulder straps; aluminium NOC's Tresse edging the collar and straps. On his right sleeve a shield-shaped uniform with two facing depictions crossed examples of the standard. On the rear flanks he displays the first pattern Gewehr 88 cuffband in Gothic script with NOC's badge edged.

C2: Haupmann, parade dress, 1942

For this officer of a dress standards officers' service uniform is worn with breeches and riding boots, embellished with a silver brocade dress belt with black and red laces and a
A fine study of an Unródéb as in tropical dress - just
visible on his white-gold ten cloth shoulder stripes in the
coconut-brown Tóin which replaced olive-grey on tropical
uniforms. Shortcuts often led to use of blue-grey drapes from the
Europeana pattern. His tropical service cap has full
Berlin-Emperor insignia. (Robert Neer)
circular buckle with a gilt-brass eagle; silver edging on the
right shoulder; and the officers' pattern record, the
Fingerring, suspended from an interior belt via a slid
through the tuco.Dir shirt pockets. On such occasions the steel
helmet was worn rather than the service cap; special light-
weight alloy versions made sport fairly for parade purposes
were popular amongst senior officers - no the issue helmet
they were painted dark blue-grey and have a reserved
Luwaffe as a silver-grey decal on the felt side. Note the
collar and white collar patches both edged with thin
divider cord, the silver cord junior officers' shoulder
towards with white underlay and gilt stars of this rank and the
officers' broad-edged version of this third pattern.

D: 1942-43
D1: Feldwebel: Storly, 1943
This veteran senior NCO wears the tropical Fingerring, the
shortest-coated version of the Luwaffe tropical shirt (both
with riveted embosses in white on tan triangular tIDDing),
tropical short trousers rolled at the bottoms, are brown faced ankle
boots. The through shoulder strap of ten cloth with copper-
brown NCO Tresse have the white autor piping of all HG
units, and he has the Luwaffe around his combat belt
pinned to his left pocket. In the absence of collar
patches, with their Waffenfarbe piping, there is no way to
identify his rank branch of service. In tropical areas belts
buckles were often painted tan or when they were generally
worn on a black leather belt, though canvas webbing belts
became common later in the war for mechanics of aircraft.

D2: Leutnant: Briley or Italy, summer 1943
This junior officer wears the tropical face-plate in ear.
matching pale cotton shirt and tie, and the gauzy
Tropenober/offenhalsk (black, tropical girls blue) gauze
blouse at the white over short Tropenoberstacke with
lead canvas epaulet on brown leather, the tie has shoulder
boards of rank and a national emblem but has almost
instinctively worn without collar patches. The first
pattern divisional cuffband, in officers' broad-edged form, is
proudly worn on the right sleeve, it's combat awards are the
Ground Combat Badge, the Iron Cross 2nd Class, and - he
was the battalion ribbon of the 2nd Class. His hadjaar
is the tropical service cap for all Luwaffe ranks.
Incredibly known as the man as the 'Hermann Hoyer' cap -
the derivative reference to one of Göring's lowest in the
afwöld that if an enemy bomber flew over Germany.
you can call me Merri. The Luwaffe officer's brown belt
with silver frame buckle supports his cream triple
military pocket shoes for his MG42 sub-machine gun, and
his carries as a pair of Snipers M1940 Gewehr.

D3: Obergefreiter, Führer-Nachabteilung, 1942
This senior private is serving with the 'fuhrer of Führer's Own'
Dutch version of the Dutch REGIMENT 'Nederland' in Berlin, and the
basic uniform of a wartime Flak soldier fust wears breads various
special details. Although the breast eagle and patch
flaps mark his Rijkspolizei as being post-1940 manu-
facture, note that the white MG42 gloves still edge the coat,
and he is accidentally - fatigues across the neck. The
white collar patches with MG42 piping identify the division and
the rank up to尊重. He does not wear the pin-on
Flak Battal Badge, but on his lower left sleeve in the
wreathed, grated gauze badge of the qualified Flak gunner
with as retail rank's service. Above this he wears the
woven cuffband for Malerk headquarters units, inscribed
Führer-Nachabteilung in aluminum (Tross) script on black on
the right now this is balanced by the usual divisional
cuffband, and on its right shoulder and breast he displays
each of the Luwaffe's grinst marksmanship to baven.

E: 1943-44
E1: Kameraden, light Flak battery: Italy, 1943
The basic idea is the Flugboot with blue-grey sleeve
dress trousers and matching brown, the badges white
collar patches identify a 'Hermann Göring' Flak unit.
unit, and the magazino he carries narrows this down to a 2cml automatic cannon battery. Of special note are the Waffen-SS camouflage smock and helmet cover; of M1940 type and rare in the so-called "plane sleeve" garment, autumn/winter side exposed. The SS garments were not universally issued throughout the division, but only to selected sub-units. His gun crew duties do not oblige him to carrying full riflemen's equipment: the Knüppfe, belt, Y-straps, two field rifle or machine-pistol pouches, and - largely observed more than badged, water bottle, arming holes, spats, bayonet, and gasmask.

E2: Grenadier, Axis, early 1944
An infantryman from the division around the time of the battles for Anzio and Vettulino. He wears the special three-quarter length Luftwaffe camouflage jacket for ground troops. In standard Wehrmacht "splitter" pattern material, over blue-grey wool bouse and trousers, canvas anklets and ankle boots. His helmet is the later M1943 style with a "new" unlined edge, hands with a simple string netting cover. The division's white collar patches are neatly hidden, but he has attached uniform shoulder straps to the camouflage jacket, which was issued complete with the breast eagle. An M1924 stick grenade is thrust into his rifle belt.

B3: Feldwebel, Panzer-Regiment; Italy, summer 1943
Despite its regulation appearance, his cap is not Luftwaffe issue, but either privately purchased or a bleached army example which was once olive drab. Such personal initiatives were not uncommon in the Wehrmacht (see text, page 36). Warnke photographs show that some members of the diviesional tank regiment also wore an SS-pattern metal skull pinned to the left side of their cap - presumably in reference to the Panzer arm, elsewhere only indicated by the rose-pink piping on the visceral shoulder stripe.

F: TANK CREWS
This plate shows just some of the many variations in clothing and insignia worn by men of the Panzer-Regiment Hermann Göring:

F1: This Gefreiter wears a common mixture of garments comprising the black wool Panzer jackal with blue-grey Luftwaffe trousers tucked into marching boots. The jacket, worn buttoned across the neck, has the white piping to the collar found on early examples, but no collar patches - the metal death's heads are pinned directly to the collar. He wears the HERMANN GÖRING outstand and black shoulder straps piped in white. Note that the example of the black wool Panzer version of the Fliegermütze features non-regulation white piping. Away from his vehicle, he is armed with the MG40 normally carried in the burst, in addition to the P38 pistol in its "hard shell" first type holster.

F2: An Unteroffizier wears the later version of the tunic, without collar piping and with the Luftwaffe-style collar patches in white with attached metal death's heads. His shoulder straps are the later type with Panzer pip. Waffenfarbe piping. His NCO's braided-edged cufftitle is the special version embroidered on black exclusively for wear on the Panzer jackal. He also displays the Army-type Tank Badge. His headgear is the standard NCOs black-grey service cap, with white "NG" piping.

F3: This Major wears the rare leather version of the Panzer jackal. Although its cut closely resembles that of the wool
EASTERN FRONT, 1944-45

Sahara Desert, winter 1944

This senior NCO of the divisional military police wears an interesting light blue-gray flak jacket with a "dotted" collar and rank insignia. The insignia of the shoulder straps and the rank are made of a dark blue material, possibly wool. The flak jacket is fastened with brass buttons, and the sleeves are fastened with press studs. The NCO is wearing a dark blue jacket, a white shirt, and dark blue trousers. The NCO is holding a rifle in his right hand, and a pistol in his left hand. The rifle is a Mauser Gewehr 98, and the pistol is a Luger P08. The NCO is wearing a helmet with a chin strap, and a backpack is strapped to his back. The NCO is standing in the sand, with a rocky desert landscape in the background.

H2: Panzerjäger, spring 1945

This machine gun crew consists of two men. One of them is wearing a dark blue flak jacket with a white flak hood, and the other is wearing a dark blue flak jacket with a white flak hood. Both men are wearing dark blue trousers and a helmet. The machine gun is a Model 1937, and it is mounted on a tripod. The men are standing in front of a sand dune, with a rocky desert landscape in the background. One of the men is holding a rifle, and the other is holding a pistol. The men are wearing a helmet with a chin strap, and a backpack is strapped to their backs. The scene is typical of a desert battle, with sand dunes and rocky desert landscape in the background.

A detail close-up of the insignia on a "Hermann Göring" issue Panzer Jacket with white-flak collar patches and shoulder straps. The "Hermann Göring" shoulder straps are of a "chequered" pattern, exactly different from many modifications from the "Limanow" pattern weave used for Army Field Dress. (Helmut Wellen)
Three Luftwaffe awards cannot currently be traced as members of the division 'on paper', but for which no evidence exists of actual physical award (best Class Combat Cross, 1st Class Knight's Cross, and the oak-leaves to the Knight's Cross). Similar awards appear to have been worn in Army and Waffen-SS tank units.

(Opposite, above)
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The uniforms, equipment, history and organisation of the world’s military forces, past and present.

The ‘Hermann Göring’ Division

Each of Germany’s World War II armed services could claim one unit which earned a unique combat reputation, and which consequently was enlarged and developed far beyond the size originally planned. Hermann Göring, commander-in-chief of the air force, was determined that his Luftwaffe should share the glory of Germany’s land conquests, and gave his name to a regimental combat group of infantry and Flak artillery. This élite unit was steadily enlarged into a brigade, then an armoured division, and finally into a two-division corps, fighting with distinction in Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, and on the Russian Front. This concise history is illustrated with rare personal photographs and colour plates, detailing the very varied uniforms and special insignia of this crack formation.