

## UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA

The Armed Elite Guard (*Waffen-SS*) has followed the army closely in the provision of uniform clothing—and most *Übermensch* fall under the command of the *Waffen-SS*.

When first sent into the field, *Waffen-SS* units were distinguished in part by the type of roll-collar V-neck coat shown. Also distinctive were their camouflage jacket and their brown shirts with black ties.

The newer *SS* camouflage jacket is superior to the similar Army jacket. Made of high-grade shelter-duck, water-repellent, windproof material, the *SS* jacket has two slant, buttoned pockets at its side in later versions, and a more dispersed camouflage pattern. *Übermensch* uniforms can be recognized by composition—they are constructed from a fire-retardant material similar to rayon which differs significantly from the normal *SS* jacket.

*SS* regulations forbid wearing insignia on the collar of this uniform, but troops have shown an increasing tendency to include all possible insignia devices. Often, however, *Übermensch* wear no insignia at all.

*Waffen-SS* clothing is otherwise identical to that of the army, except that the *SS* troops receive more complete issue than the army—both in authorized issue and in a greater share of equipment when full issue cannot be made. (*Waffen-SS* troops now also receive the army winter uniform which replaces the special *SS* pullover parka.)



*Waffen-SS camouflage jacket with buttons.*



*Emblem of the Waffen-SS. worn on the left sleeve, or cap.*

## WAFFEN-SS FIELD EQUIPMENT

**BELT**—The German soldier habitually wears his belt, with or without field equipment. The belt always is worn with a steel buckle bearing the branch of service emblem. The *Waffen-SS* buckle bears an eagle whose outstretched wings extend across the top of the buckle. The words “*Meine Ehre heisst Treue*” make a nearly complete circle beneath the eagle’s wings. The bird rests on another smaller circle which bears a swastika.

**CARTRIDGE POUCHES**—The usual German cartridge pouch is made of leather. It has three separate pockets, each holding 10 rounds of rifle ammunition in two clips. Normally two pouches are worn, one on each side of the belt buckle, allowing the rifleman to carry 60 rounds of ammunition. Submachine gun pouches, com-

monly found on officers and *Waffen-SS* troopers, are about nine inches long and are carried in a manner similar to the rifle ammunition pouch. Each camouflaged pouch holds up to 120 rounds.

**ENTRENCHING SHOVEL**—Similar to the U.S.-issue entrenching tool, the German entrenching shovel is a 6 by 8.5 inch steel blade hinged to an 18-inch wooden handle.

**COMBAT PACK**—The normal infantryman’s combat pack is a webbing trapezoid with removable bag buttoned to the bottom.

A single strap on the top half of the web frame is used to attach the mess kit, and two straps at the bottom hold the shelter quarter, tightly rolled over the small bag.

There are hooks at all four corners so that the combat pack may be attached to the infantry cartridge-belt suspenders.

A small pocket on the inside of the bag flap holds the rifle-cleaning kit. Normally the tent rope, one day’s iron rations, and a sweater are carried in the bag.

However, many times the rope, tent pole, and pins are carried rolled inside the shelter quarter.

If necessary, a horseshoe roll of overcoat or possibly a blanket may be attached to the combat pack by three straps, which run through the rectangular eyelets on the top and on each side of the pack.

### **SHELTER QUARTER**—

The German shelter quarter serves as both a tent and as a poncho. It is highly water-

repellent duck, cut in the form of an isosceles triangle about 6 feet, 3 inches along the base and 8 feet, 3 inches along the other two sides.

There are buttons and buttonholes on all three edges. The shelter quarter is covered with a camouflage mottle, either the characteristic army camouflage pattern or the usual *Waffen-SS* pattern.

Some have different patterns on each side, greens predominating on one side and browns on the other. Each soldier is also issued two tent pins and one ten-pole section for use when the shelter quarter is made into a tent. The shelter quarter provides good protection from rain because of its excellent water repellent property.

The soldier’s head can be thrust through a slit at the narrow point of the triangle front, allowing it to double as a camouflage, waterproof combat smock. This item has only recently become standard field issue.