

Großherzoglich Hessisches Reserve-Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 116
1914 Basic Kit List.

October 2013

First of all the list below may look very daunting financially, but within the group we have spares of almost everything that constitutes the basic kit, so feel free to contact the leader of the German Section, Simon Worley, by [email](#) in advance of any show so you don't have to fork out enormous amounts of your hard earned cash straight away! This includes fibre glass pickelhaubes, jackets, boots (sizes 9-10), and the basic belt kit with ammunition pouches.

Other members of The Birmingham Pals may have items they are willing to sell.

If you are unsure about anything at all regarding authenticity, necessity or price then ask before you purchase!

The best book by far on WW1 German uniforms is
"Brassey's History of Uniforms World War One: German Army" by Stephen Bull.
ISBN-13: 978-1574882780
ISBN-10: 1574882783

It is best to start with an early war impression as this can be used throughout the period.

To see what the kit is supposed to look like visit this website of a US based group who have very kindly put up pictures of the kit:
<http://jr129-11tekompaniegwa.weebly.com/uniforms-and-equipment.html>

Breakdown of the German equipment:

We'll start from head to toe:

FeldMutz

This is "around the camp" head gear. It looks pretty sloppy yet is rather comfortable. We recommend <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/m10-imperial-mutze-with-badge-product,11625> as this comes with the national (Empire) cockades which the majority of us wear. However Prussian cockades are also acceptable and much easier to acquire if needs be.

Given that Hesse was such a small state (and that we portray a reserve infantry regiment) it fell largely to the state of Prussia to supply the rest of the German Army with kit once individual states ran out of their own supply.

Pickelhaube.

We recommend purchasing from Soldier of Fortune - <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/prussian-pickelhaube-product,10449>
(We acquired ours for £95 so at £80 above not a bad price for a Prussian plated pickelhaube in leather).

For a cover we recommend <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/pickelhaube-cover-product,9313>. Go for a cover WITHOUT Regimental numerals. (Germans largely abandoned these during the war as the enemy could easily identify their unit!) Also, having plain covers allows us to blend in with other units when necessary.

Uniform

You require a M1907/10 Tunic or a M1914 transitional tunic (the latter has no buttons on the cuff or rear for practical/economic purposes, however this model was not widely distributed during the war.)

Soldier of Fortune are able to supply suitable uniform: <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/shop-re-enactment-german-ww1-category,755> – They have now taken over selling Richard Underwood stock.

When the Hessians started in 2004 there were no mainstreams UK tailors catering for Imperial German. We began with converted Swedish Army 1950s tunics brought from SOF. However, in the last couple of years, SOF have been producing some decent WW1 German kit.

Shoulder boards.

IR116 had a white line (*litzen*) around the edge of the boards to denote the Corps. The Arabic numerals '116' in Red lining denoted the Regiment. (The Regular IR116 had a crown and a monogram to denote the Kaiser). [Felix Rover](#) has a good contact for these.

If you get a uniform that comes with blank shoulderboards it is possible to have "116" sewn onto them by some ladies in the group.

Under Shirt.

Any period shirt will do, ideally white cotton, but a British woollen greyback or similar is fine. It is possible to purchase the German shirts at <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/ww1-german-undershirt-product,12757>

Neck stock (*halsbinde*)

[Simon](#) has spares.

Webbing equipment

A dark brown leather belt – can be purchased from Soldier of Fortune, or can potentially be homemade.

Prussian or Hessian belt buckle (A two piece brass buckle rather than a plain late war buckle) <http://www.epicmilitaria.com/product.php/1618/ww1-early-prussian-belt-buckle-gott-mit-uns>

Shoulder straps (Bread bag straps.)

Do NOT buy 'Y' straps.

Ideally brown / tan. For example those at <http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/ww1-bread-bag-strap-brown-product,12703>

G98 7.92mm Ammunition pouches

For example:

http://schipperfabrik.com/store/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=117_118_128&products_id=309

Most of us use Czechoslovakian 1950s pouches in brown leather which look remarkably similar. (Just make sure they have the rings at the top of them to attach the bread bag strap to and they're of robust quality!!). Czech pouches should be available on ebay or can often be picked up at militaria fairs.

Bread bag

Brown canvas. These can be obtained from Soldier of Fortune, but they are a little pricey.

<http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/ww1-german-bread-bag-brown-product,12560>

Shovel cover

<http://www.sofmilitary.co.uk/ww1-german-shovel-cover-product,12747>

For this you may be better off looking at a militaria fair for a shovel cover complete with shovel.

Bayonet frog

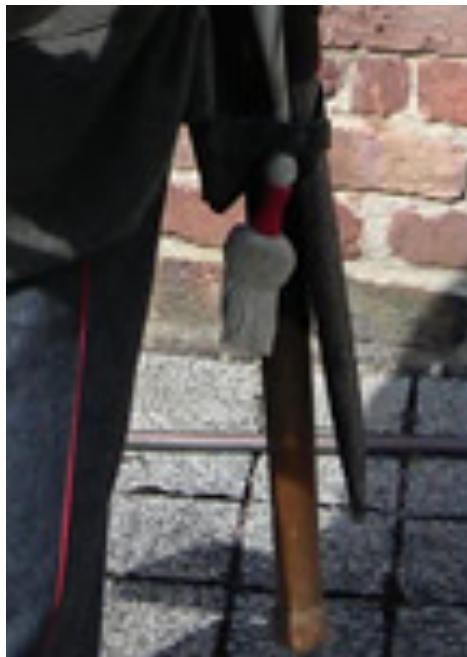
Dark brown leather.

Butcher bayonet

Although the Germans used a variety of bayonets (from the very long pre-war S98 to the very short *ersatz* model not dissimilar to the WW2 variety) the best bet by far is the 'Butcher' Bayonet as this authentic throughout 1914-18.

The key thing to remember when choosing a bayonet is that the pin you push in to actually attach it to a rifle is in good working order. [Simon](#) has 1x *ersatz* bayonet for loan – email him if you require this.

We use 5th Company bayonet knots (which are white-red-white.) See below.



Trousers.

A dark grey wool with red piping seam suitable for 1914 onwards. Braces are recommended.

Boots

These are the famous Jackboot (and are an absolute joy to put as there is no need for either gaiters or puttees).

In 1914 the Germans went to war with brown leather (including boots.) However, the following year they blackened all their equipment with boot polish. Your brown Jackboots should be hobnailed yet comfortable (an oxymoron if ever there was one).

Later on in the war many troops used ankle boots and grey puttees as they offered greater support.

I know that we have 1x size 10 black jackboots and 1x size 9 black jackboots spare to borrow.

This is a decent source albeit expensive -

<http://www.epicmilitaria.com/product.php/3552/reproduction-ww1-german-marching-boots>

Soldier of fortune do decent boots as well.

Rifle

As the Hessians are a battle re-enactment group as much as a living history group I would strongly advise on purchasing a live firing G98 7.92mm Mauser rifle held on a Section 1 Firearms certificate as oppose to a deactivated weapon.

However I appreciate this can be a massive purchase (I believe mine cost £425 but within the group they vary from £90-£600.) There are a deactivated G88 and a deactivated K98 within the group with the potential for borrowing at various shows.

Furthermore there are plenty of roles for non firers during battle displays such as Machine gunner / Grenadier/ Medic etc.

The rifle is about the only original WW1 kit used by the Hessians as frankly original items belong in museums and largely won't survive the rigours of battle re-enactment.

I think that's about the basics of an early war infantry soldier of the *Großherzoglich Hessisches Reserve-Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 116*.

The general idea is that we end up looking something like this chap!!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/29007475@N08/5046556543/in/photolist-8FWVrz>

There is plenty of kit throughout the group you can borrow whilst acquiring your own collection. We don't want you financially destitute.

The above is only a *recommendation* of course and is by no means an exhaustive list. If you find items cheaper on ebay or at militaria fairs for example, then feel free!

However, if you are unsure about anything at all regarding authenticity, necessity or price then ask before you purchase.

Just to give you a taster for an early war impression ...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6A6D0fpGWDw> (Detling 2009 - our uniform and equipment has progressed much further since then).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kc3IZO-7TEo> (Stratford Armouries 2009 - trench raid at the start and a German assault at end of the video).