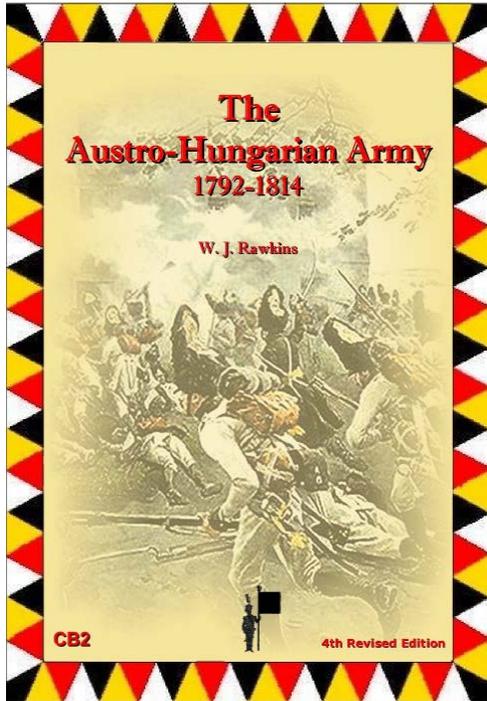


## The Napoleon Series Reviews

Rawkins, William J. *The Austro-Hungarian Army: 1792 – 1814*. History Bookman. Ebook. 2016. 445 pages. £4. Available as download, Ebook, or on DVD.



Anyone who reads my reviews knows that I am a big fan of his uniform series. For those of you who are not familiar with them, examples can be seen at: [Armies and Uniforms of the Napoleonic Wars](#). That review was written in February 2016 and since then Mr. Rawkins has added fourteen additional titles! The latest is on the Austro-Hungarian Army.

Like his previous works, the author makes no claim that the book is a history. He specifically states in the introduction that “This work covers the regiments and corps of the K und K Armee of 1792-1814, their organisation and their uniforms. It has never been the intention that this small undertaking should be a study of the field armies and campaigns of the Austro-Hungarian army, nor the political and social structures which encased the military. Those massive subjects I leave to others better qualified to take on such an enterprise.”

Mr. Rawkins admits in the introduction of this book that he has always been fascinated by the Austro-Hungarian Army since the early 1960s. The original edition of the book was reprinted 40 times. (My paper copy was published in 1977 and was 37 pages long.) His love of the topic is reflected in the latest edition. In the past 3 years, he has republished 19 new editions of his uniform studies. They average about 200 pages. *The Austro-Hungarian Army: 1792 – 1814* is a massive 445 pages!

The book covers:

- The Origins of the Kaiserlich und Königlich Armee – 9 pages
- The Organization and Uniforms of the:
  - The Regular Infantry Regiments – 86 pages
  - The Freikorps 1790-1807 – 27 pages
  - The Leichte-Bataillonen 1798-1801— 9 pages
  - The Jäger-Freikorps 1790-1801 – 11 pages
  - The Tiroler-Jäger-Regiment – 11 pages
  - The Feldjäger-Bataillonen – 9 pages
  - The Militär-Grenz-Regimenter – 25 pages
  - The Landwehr & Freiwilliger Bataillon 1808-1814 – 68 pages
  - The Hungarian and Croatian Insurrection 1808-1814 – 11 pages

The Regular Cavalry – 83 pages  
The Artillery – 29 pages  
The Militar-Fuhrwesen Korps – 8 pages  
The Engineers and technical Korps – 30 pages  
The Stabs-Truppen – 2 pages  
The General Officers and Staff – 14 pages  
The Leibgarde Kompagnien – 15 pages  
Flags and Standards – 9 pages

The book follows his typical format of text, followed by a table of data for the different regiments, and then illustrations. He provides data on the organization of companies, battalions, and regiments, plus detail on their uniforms, to include the numerous changes they went through over 22 years. For example for the infantry shako of 1806 – 1815, he writes on pages 40 – 41:

“In 1806 the helmet was officially replaced with the first of three patterns of Tschako, or shako, to be issued during the Napoleonic era. In fact a crude cylindrical shako of black felt with a small peak, similar to that worn by some Grenz units, and decorated simply with the wool cockade, had been issued to a small number of Hungarian troops during the Austro-Turkish War but the introduction of the hat for general wear throughout the army was strongly resisted in favour of the 1798 raupenhelm. The Tschako was finally approved in 1806 solely on the merits of cost, the manufacture of the hat being only a fraction of the cost of the raupenhelm and could be produced quickly to replace the vast amount of equipment which had been lost during the 1805 campaign. The raupenhelm had a planned life of twelve years but large numbers had been lost during the 1805 campaign and the shako whilst cheaper to produce was estimated to need replacing every four years in peacetime. In actual fact, supplies of the 1806 pattern shako were only issued to a limited number of Hungarian regiments by 1807 and were not in common use until 1808. The majority of the Deutsche-Infanterie-Regimenter continued to wear the 1798 raupenhelm into 1809 and did not adopt the shako until after the close of the 1809 campaign, when there was again a dire need to replace lost equipment. As late as 1812 some battalions were still wearing the raupenhelm for campaign dress.”

“The diary of Michael O’Meara an infantry Fourier in early 1812 records that a consignment of new hats (1811 shakos?) were received by his battalion but were ordered to be put into storage and ‘the old leather hats’ were to be issued to the men preparing to leave for service in the field.”

“The shako was black felt and of unusual construction with the top a disc of stiffened felt simply wedged and glued into the top of the bell topped tube. The peak and the rear visor were black leather and the shako was fitted with a stitched black leather chin-strap often with a divided upper end. The front of the

shako was decorated with a large black within yellow rosette cockade held with a whitened leather cockade-strap and brass or white metal button according to the regimental button colour. The semi-spherical black and yellow pompon cockade was worn at the front upper edge with the usual Feldzeichen fixed behind. In 1811 a similar pattern of shako was authorised with a one piece deep, rather pointed peak and rear visor and a narrow black leather chin-strap fitted to the inside of the sides of the hat. The cockade and pompon were as before. Both patterns of shako were in common use, often a mixture of both patterns in 1813-1814, until replaced in 1815 with a slightly different pattern of shako, somewhat shorter and slightly more belled at the top with black leather trim at the upper and base edges.”

To say that Mr. Rawkins’ latest work is lavishly illustrated is an understatement. There are over 275 color images in it! Many are from contemporary or 19<sup>th</sup> Century artists, such as: Herbert and Richard Knötel, J.S. Klein, Leinhart & Humbert, Louis Braun, Franz Allemande, and Henri Boisselier. In addition to them, he also includes 56 plates by Rudolf von Ottenfeld<sup>1</sup> of which 29 are full page and in color! These plates are worth the price of the book in itself!

One of the hallmarks of the original series was numerous black and white line drawings that were used to illustrate the text. Mr. Rawkins continues this tradition but has colored them. The one below follows the text on shakos.



*The Austro-Hungarian Army* can be ordered from the [History Bookman](#). If you order the ebook, you can get it almost immediately. At £4 they are a steal!

Placed on the Napoleon Series: October 2016

<sup>1</sup> From the two volume, 900+ pages *Die Osterreichische Army* by Oscar Teuber and illustrated by Rudolf von Ottenfeld was first published in 1895. A recent reprint sells for about £450.