

The Napoleon Series

The German and Dutch Troops in Spain Chapter 1 Part III: Troops of Holland

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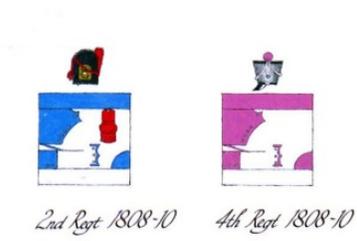
Infantry



Dutch Infantry 1806-1810 by Richard Knötel
(Courtesy of the Antony Broughton Collection)

When the troops were sent to Spain in August 1808 the composite regiment was formed by the 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment. On 15th June 1809 a decree was issued which switched battalions so that the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment became the 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Regiment making it a two battalion regiment in Spain; the 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Regiment became the 2nd/4th Regiment. Being so far from their depot it is not clear whether this second battalion in Spain was able to change its facing colours. By 9th July in the following year Holland was united with the Empire.

The jacket was white with the collar, cuffs, facings and turnbacks of mock-velvet in the regimental colour; 2nd-light blue, 4th pink. The front of the coat was joined at the bottom a little above the waistline to reveal the white waistcoat underneath; although the line of the coat was rounded at this point from its sweep up from the tails, the line of the bottom of the facings was straight; the facings were pointed at the top. The cuffs were square-cut, without flaps and secured by two white metal buttons which were also used on the facings. The tails of the jacket were quite long in the style of this time and decorated with long vertical pockets piped in the facing colour and three white buttons by each point. The jacket of the Fusiliers had no shoulder straps. White breeches with black gaiters which came to a point below the knee. The dress regulations of 2nd March 1807 specify sky blue coats but the French grey version and the ubiquitous Spanish brown were probably common alternatives. The bayonet was carried, as in the French line, on the white shoulder belt for the black leather cartridge box.



2nd and 4th Regiments Facing Colours
By Richard Tennant

The shako was the standard French style and shape, although the plume in the regimental colour for all Fusiliers companies was on the left; there was no cockade below the plume although there was a loop in white lace extending three-quarters of the depth of the shako and secured by a white metal button. The shako had the regiment's number on the front in white metal and white cords; chin straps of black leather are recorded in some illustrations although mostly without.

The Grenadiers wore black bearskins with red plumes, cords and top patch with either a white grenade or a white cross set diagonally across a white circular edging. The small brass plaque was embossed with a flaming grenade and the chin scales were also in brass. Grenadiers had the usual distinctions of red epaulettes, a sabre on a shoulder strap with a red wrist knot.

The Voltigeurs had white collars piped in regimental colour, white shako cords, and green epauletes (some sources with yellow crescents) and green sabre knots.

The officers wore the same uniforms as their men but with velvet regimental colours and silver shako cord, lace, epaulettes, etc. As with the French officers of this period no waist-sash was worn but a gilt gorger; boots were the usual Jockey style, black with buff tops.

Drummers wore the same uniform as the companies to which they belonged but with addition of silver laced and fringed "swallows' nest" on a backing of the regimental colour. Brass drums with a variety of colours/designs for the hoops.



Dutch Fusilier 1809 by Herbert Knötel (Courtesy of Greenhill Books)
Although this image is of the 3rd Regiment, the 2nd and 4th Regiments had similar uniforms but with different facing colors.

The flag was 80 cm by 80 cm and nailed to the staff. Since the re-construction of the remaining example is of a second battalion it can be assumed that the same flag was issued to each battalion of a regiment.



**Flag of the 2nd Battalion 4th Infantry Regiment
By Richard Tennant**

By the time that the battalions had arrived in Spain they had been reorganised from the 9 companies to the standard French arrangement of 1 Grenadier, 4 Fusilier, and 1 Voltigeur companies although it is stated that "the Voltigeur company is, after the Grenadier company, the first company of the battalion".

Horse Artillery or the Kingdom of Holland

At the end of 1807 the brigade of horse artillery comprised four companies of which one was of the Guard and the others numbered I to 3. The third company went to Spain in 1808 and was attached to the infantry. On 17th October 1809 the first company was re-distributed and the 2nd and 3rd companies re-numbered 1st and 2nd.

The jacket of the artillery was the French style dark blue dolman with red pointed cuffs, red braiding with brass buttons and a red collar with blue inset lacing. The barrel sash was dark blue with red tubes. Blue breeches were decorated with red Hungarian knots on the front and a red stripe on the side; black hessians without lace or tassels. The shako was laced top and bottom in red and had red cords and a red plume on the left; the company number appeared on the front possibly in brass; the chin straps were of black leather. The cartouche belt and the waist sabre-belt were black and the former decorated with a brass grenade, chains and pickers. The sabre knot was red (or white) and the sabretache decorated with the company number in brass. The saddle cloth was dark blue with a broad red edging and a thin red line. Since pistols were issued, the holster covers of the French style matched the saddle blanket.

Trumpeters wore the same but the dolman was in reversed colours although the collar remained red.

Officers wore a dark blue habit-veste with red collar, cuffs and turn backs; the pointed dark blue lapels were piped in red as were the vertical pocket on the long tails; red braided waistcoat; gilt epaulettes, buttons and grenades on the turnbacks. The bicorne with a red plume continued to be popular with officers and dark blue overalls with a broad red side-stripe and brass buttons were probably worn on campaign. Blue saddle blanket with gold trim.

Niederlande.



Trompeter und Kanonier
der reit. Artillerie.

Fuss-Artillerist.

Die Holländische Armee unter König Ludwig.

1806—1810.

Dutch Horse Artillery 1806 - 1810 by Richard Knötel (Courtesy of the Antony Broughton Collection)

Trumpeters wore the same but the dolman was in reversed colours although the collar remained red.

The coat of the Artillery Train was similar to the infantry in cut but was dark blue with a red collar, square cuffs and tum backs; the facings on the coat, the epaulettes and the vertical pockets were dark blue piped in red. Buttons were white metal. The bicorne was not replaced by the shako until April 1809 in the Train; both would have had small red plumes. The drivers were issued with infantry-style sabres which were worn suspended on a white shoulder strap with red sabre knot. Officers of the Train wore basically the same as the horse artillery but with a dark blue collar piped red, the red plume, topped black and silver fittings in place of gilt. There is no record of the woodwork of the guns or limbers being any particular colour so that it could be assumed that it was simply treated with turpentine and left to weather naturally.

Sources:

Dr Lienhart and R. Humbert (*Holland Vol V pp 59-63*)

J.M. Bueno and H. Achard who have used *Frankfurt-Knotel, Kingdom of Holland Collection Nassbaurn*.

J. Hoynck van Papendrecht, *De Uniformen van de Nederlandsche Zeeen Land macht*. 1-1. Ringoir, *De Nederlandse Infanterie*.

Otto von Pivka, C. Warner, *Dutch-Belgian Troops of the Napoleonic Wars*. Note that the illustrations on page 13 of the Horse Artillery and 2nd Train are incorrectly stated as being Batavian Republic 1795-1806 and should be the Kingdom of Holland 1808, 2nd Horse Artillery and Train.

Philip Haythornthwaite, B. Fosten, *Napoleon's Line Infantry. Excellent Plate, G 3, of the 4th Dutch Line soon after becoming 125th French Line*.

Otto von Pivka, *The Portuguese Army of the Napoleonic Wars*. Note although a description of a Frankfurt Voltigeur by Weiland, it is difficult to link this accurately as being worn in the Peninsular unless it was another variation of the modification of the Voltigeur uniform mentioned in the text.

T. Wise, *Artillery Equipments of the Napoleonic Wars*.

T. Wise, *Flags and Standards of the Napoleonic Wars*.

Text

Mainly a paraphrasing or precis from "History of the Peninsular War" by Oman for all parts of this series. David Johnson, *Napoleon's Cavalry and its Leaders*. Claude Manceron, *Austerlitz*.

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