

Insignia of the Coast Artillery Corps

Mark Berhow



Coast Artillery symbol on an overpass at the entrance to Fort Winfield Scott, the Presidio of San Francisco.

Author.

This article will provide information and examples of the insignia of the Coast Artillery Corps (CAC), a service branch of the United States Army that existed from 1901 to 1950. The focus will be on insignia that was unique to the CAC. Uniforms and rank insignia are covered in the various Army regulations for the service as a whole. The intent here is to bring together examples from the evolution of U.S. coast artillery insignia that can be used to aid researchers, collectors, and re-enactors.(1)

The story of U.S. Army uniforms and insignia is both long and complex. The evolution of the insignia that make up a military uniform includes an indication of rank, grade, service branch, and unit identification, as well as service time, specialties, ratings, and accomplishments. Both officers and enlisted men had a bewildering array of insignia that may or may not have official. Uniforms were finally codified with the issuance of uniform regulations beginning in 1872. Between 1902 and 1920 series of changes occurred in the uniform regulations along with an increase in both the numbers and types of grades, ratings, specialties, service, and recognized accomplishments. These were revamped again (to just seven pay grades) following the Army reorganization act of 1920, and the uniform regulations that followed from that act remain more or less in place until this day.

There are several distinct phases in the evolution of uniforms and accessories used by the Coast Artillery Corps. Generally speaking, these changes were driven by the periodic modernization of the army's uniform regulations as a whole. With few exceptions the personnel of the CAC wore the same regulation uniform and insignia as the rest of the army with the appropriate branch insignia applied. For a more in-depth and illustrated discussion of U.S. Army uniforms and enlisted men's rank chevrons consult Leon LaFramboise's insignia history, Keith Emerson's encyclopedia of army insignia and uniforms and Emerson's reference work on army chevrons.(2)

For more information on artillery unit history and unit insignia there are number of good references available.(3)

This article will cover three aspects of "unique" coast artillery insignia for officers and enlisted men:

Service branch insignia (collar/coat metallic pin "brass" and sewn emblems)

Specialty and Rating sleeve insignia for coast artillery enlisted men

Distinctive unit insignia (DUIs)

Service Branch Insignia

Prior to 1900, all soldiers in the artillery wore similar service branch insignia on their uniform collars, the brass crossed cannons, along with the red piping of the pant legs, the jacket sleeves, and hat bands, that were from the uniform regulations established in 1881. In 1901, the artillery was redesignated a Corps, which included the elimination of the regimental organization and the designation of independent artillery companies.(4) The 1901 pattern crossed cannon insignia with a red enameled disc at the center was modified in 1902 to distinguish between field and coast artillery officers. Field artillery would have a wagon wheel device in the red disc and Coast Artillery would have a projectile at the center.



1901 officers collar insignia *Bolling Smith*



1902 officers collar insignia *Greg Hagge*



1902 enlisted men's dress and service artillery collar insignia *Greg Hagge*

Enlisted men of the coast artillery initially used a stubby crossed cannon insignia patterned after the 1895 artillery insignia. The addition of numbers below the cannons identified the numbered independent companies. The cannon pins were finished in black for the olive drab field uniform and gold for the dress blue coat. Another difference is that only the dress uniform used a cap insignia. Cap insignia was attached to the front of the cap with a thumbscrew. The olive drab service cap was not

provided with cap style pins. The 1901 "fat" style cannon insignia was only manufactured for the first 126 companies, the black finish made only as a pin back.

The insignia for many branches of the army were redesigned in 1905. The coast artillery received a new "thin" style cannon device in black and gold finish. This time both service and dress cap badges were provided, and they were manufactured for company numbers up to 170. At different times reorganization changed the designation of companies. The numbers were sometimes broken off to accommodate these changes.

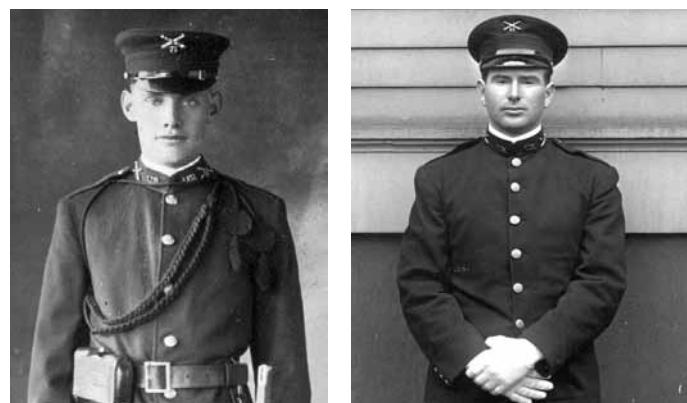
The officer's cannon insignia was also redesigned in the "thin" style. This was used through the 1920s. Officer's insignia did not have company numbers attached. The only devices attached to the officer's cannon insignia were to denote service in staff positions. These were small devices attached to the bottom of the insignia for Quartermaster, Ordnance, Mines, Chaplain, Adjutant General, Commissary, and a few others.



1904 officers collar insignia *Greg Hagge*



1904 enlisted men's dress and service collar insignia *Greg Hagge*



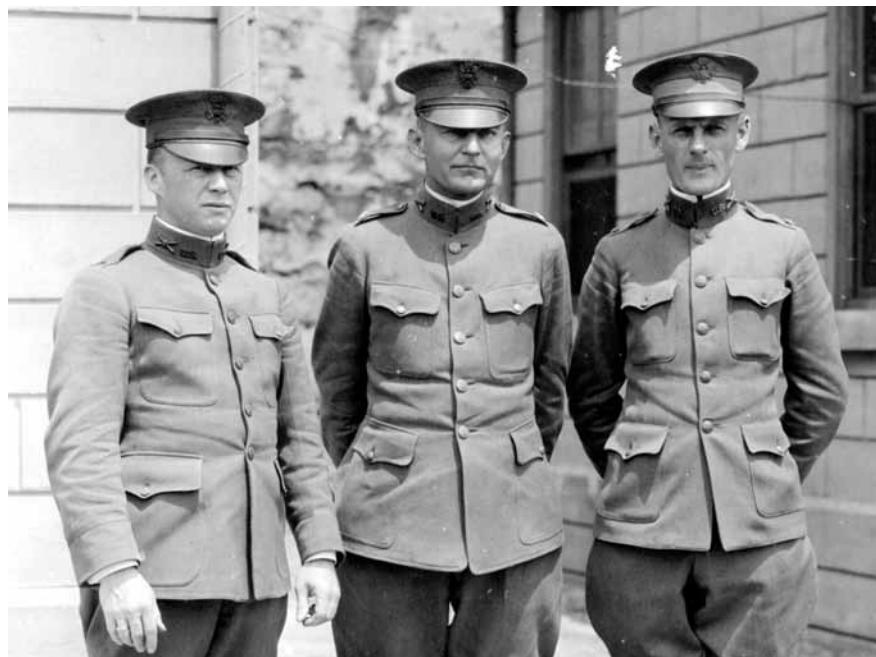
Enlisted men in dress uniforms circa 1905 with service insignia on the hat and collars.

Puget Sound Coast Artillery Museum

In 1908 the uniform regulations were revised resulting in the uniforms most associated with the first half of the coast artillery era. The regulations were accompanied by a published set of plates illustrating all aspects of the uniforms for both officers and enlisted men, including a set of service arm insignias and patches based on the 1905 design.(5)



Collar insignia from the *1908 Uniform Regulation* plates
Top Officers dress, bottom Officer's service



Coast Artillery officers 1919. NARA Still Pictures, 111-SC-WWI, SC Photo 60773.



Enlisted men's insignia from the *1908 Uniform Regulation* plates
enlisted men's hat (left) and collar (right)

A new type of enlisted insignia was introduced in 1908 for the enlisted service uniform—the collar disc. Troubles with manufacturing prevented the distribution of the disc until about 1910. This pattern disc is known as “Type-I” discs in the insignia collector’s jargon. It was about one inch in diameter finished black. This type of insignia has a screw stud on the back with a round thumbnut for attachment. The service branch (cavalry, artillery, infantry, etc.) device was worn on the left collar and the “US” disc on the right. The background of the disc was a scored crosshatch design. Coast Artillery was distinguished from Field artillery by placing the crossed cannon device above center to accommodate placing the company number below the cannons, just like the former collar pins.

Field artillery was organized in regiments of lettered batteries. Their left collar insignia had cannons centered on the disc with the letter below. A variation on this was provided for NCO staff. This field artillery insignia had the letter below with the regimental number above the cannons. Normally the “US” disc has the regimental number below the “US”, when this number is used. The relevance to Coast Artillery is that enlisted men of the CAC field regiments of the First World War used field artillery collar insignia. Officers of these field regiments wore CAC cannon pins with numbers attached above the projectile device. The projectile device was added to the enlisted collar insignia in 1917, but seldom used much before 1919. Around 1920 the background pattern was changed to an open cross-hatching with tiny shield shaped “dots” in the open spaces, all in very small detail.



1908 enlisted mens collar disk “Type I” *Greg Hagge*



1917 officers collar insignia *Greg Hagge*

The 1924 regulations required all buttons and insignia to be gold for the service uniform, so the collar insignia changed as well. This new background design in gold finish is known as “Type-II” collar brass. Officers began wearing a large cannon insignia with regimental numbers on the shirt collar (formerly very small black devices) for field service. A new smaller design with the regimental numbers above the projectile device was worn on the lapels of the service coat. Along with a revision of the uniform styles in 1927, this style insignia was used with minor variations for the last half of the coast artillery era until the CAC was disbanded.

1920s Officers collar insignia *Greg Hagge*1924 enlisted mens collar disk "Type II" *Greg Hagge*1930 enlisted mens collar insignia "Type III" *Greg Hagge*

About 1930 a new style enlisted collar disc was introduced. This was of two-piece construction consisting of a flat smooth brass disc with a branch device attached by a screw fitting from the rear. Any branch of service could be assembled with this disc. This is known as "Type-III" brass. It is still in use to the modern era. As before the "US" disc had the regimental number under the "US." The left disc had the crossed cannon and projectile device with the battery letter below. A variation on this included a battalion number above the device. Another unofficial addition was "AA" over the cannons for officers as well as enlisted men's collar brass. This was mostly a National Guard phenomenon. In 1943, as a wartime measure, the insignia was redesigned for economy of materials. The brass was replaced by stamped and plated steel. The new brass plated insignia is of one-piece construction.



A corporal of the 63rd Company c. 1915. Note the "Type I" discs on his collar and the "first class gunner" insignia on the left sleeve. *Puget Sound Coast Artillery Museum.*



General Ralph E. Haines and officers of the 6th Coast Artillery Regiment circa 1920s.
Golden Gate NRA Park Archives GOGA 35313-138.

Specialty and Rating Sleeve Insignia of the CAC

The most prolific type of cloth insignia specific to coast artillery is the enlisted men specialty and rating insignia. They were manufactured in bright colors for the dress uniform, in olive drab for the service uniform, and in tan for the lighter tropic service uniforms. The purpose of the specialized rating insignia was to show the specialty and level of qualification of the individual soldier. It was necessary to qualify as a first class gunner before other specialty qualifications could be earned. Some of these ratings also meant extra pay. The competition was tough and successful achievement could mean a chance to be selected for advanced training at the Fort Monroe enlisted specialty schools. The cutting edge technologies of master gunner (civil engineering skills), electrical and power plant operations (steam boilers and electric generators), radioman and other highly technical skills were on the curriculum.



MASTER GUNNER.



PLOTTER.

MASTER GUNNER,
COAST ARTILLERY.OBSERVER, FIRST CLASS,
AND PLOTTER,
COAST ARTILLERY.MASTER GUNNER,
COAST ARTILLERY.OBSERVER, FIRST CLASS,
AND PLOTTER,
COAST ARTILLERY.

Three types of insignia color patterns (dress blue, olive green, khaki) from the *1908 Uniform Regulation plates*

When the artillery corps was created in 1901, Congress also created a new series of ranks that were specific to the artillery corps enlisted men such as mechanics, electricians, engineers, and gunners. These were redefined with the separation of the coast artillery from the field artillery in 1907 and redefined and increased by the National Defense Act of 1916 (with lesser changes occurring in 1909 and 1912). With the 1916 Act Congress defined a series of enlisted ranks including chief mechanics, engineers, assistant engineers, master gunners, various electrician sergeants, and firemen (who looked after boilers in electrical plants). As the coast artillery corps was not organized in conventional regimental and battalion structure, it was instead organized by defended harbors (coast defenses) which had the companies assigned meet the manning requirements which essentially functioned as a regimental headquarters. As a result the Coast Artillery had many of their specialists assigned by coast defense not by unit. These included sergeant major senior grade, sergeant major junior grade, master electricians, electrician sergeants, and other non-company specialists.



Enlisted NCOs in great coats with chevrons and rating insignia on their sleeves. *Greg Hagge Collection.*



Enlisted men circa 1920s in service uniforms circa early 1920s. *Puget Sound Coast Artillery Museum.*

MASTER ELECTRICIAN,
COAST ARTILLERY.ENGINEER,
COAST ARTILLERY.ELECTRICIAN SERGEANT,
FIRST CLASS,
COAST ARTILLERY.ELECTRICIAN SERGEANT,
SECOND CLASS,
COAST ARTILLERY.MASTER GUNNER,
COAST ARTILLERY.FIREMAN,
COAST ARTILLERY.CASEMATE ELECTRICIAN,
COAST ARTILLERY.OBSERVER, FIRST CLASS,
AND PLOTTER,
COAST ARTILLERY.OBSERVER SECOND CLASS,
COAST ARTILLERY.CHIEF PLANTER AND CHIEF
LOADER, COAST ARTILLERY.GUN COMMANDER,
COAST ARTILLERY.GUN POINTER,
COAST ARTILLERY.FIRST CLASS GUNNER,
GUN OR MORTAR COMPANY,
COAST ARTILLERY.SECOND CLASS GUNNER,
GUN OR MORTAR COMPANY,
COAST ARTILLERY.FIRST CLASS GUNNER,
MINE COMPANY,
COAST ARTILLERY.SECOND CLASS GUNNER,
MINE COMPANY,
COAST ARTILLERY.

Coast Artillery Enlisted Men Sleeve Insignia.

The insignia shown here are for service uniforms from the 1908 *Quartermaster uniform catalog* in use circa 1904-1917.

COAST ARTILLERY.

(Par. 89, 90, G. O. 169 W. D. 1907. & Par. III, G. O. 15 W. D. 1908.)

SERGEANT MAJOR,
SENIOR GRADE.

MASTER ELECTRICIAN.



ENGINEER.

ELECTRICIAN SERGEANT,
FIRST CLASS.ELECTRICIAN SERGEANT,
SECOND CLASS.

MASTER GUNNER.



CHIEF MUSICIAN.

SERGEANT MAJOR,
JUNIOR GRADE.

CHIEF TRUMPETER.



PRINCIPAL MUSICIAN.



FIRST SERGEANT.



DRUM MAJOR.



SERGEANT.

COMPANY QUARTER-
MASTER SERGEANT.

CORPORAL.



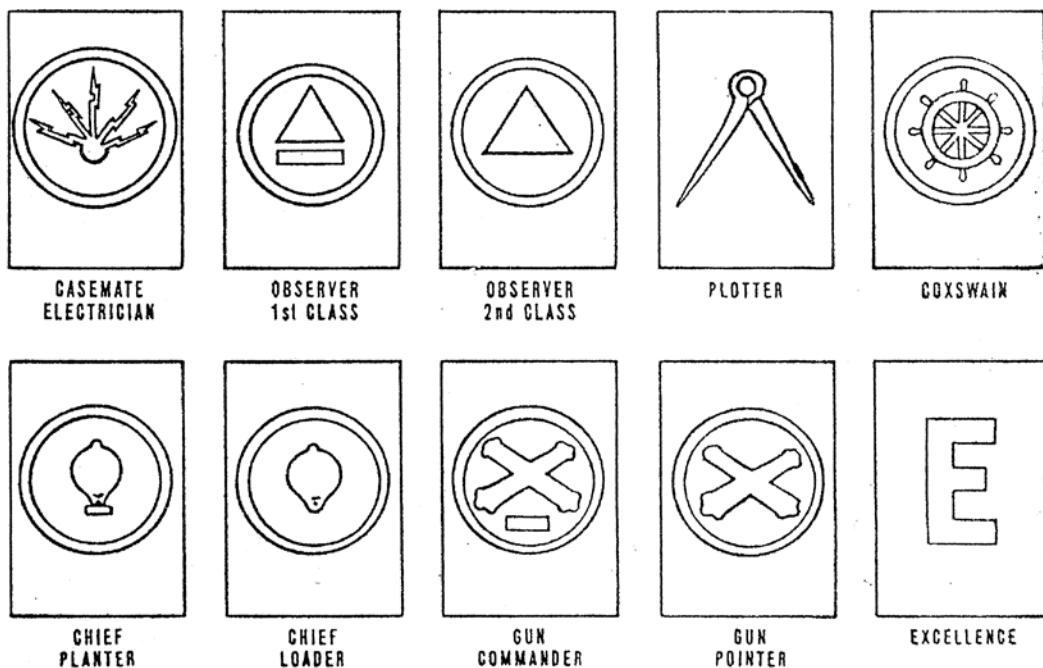
LANCE CORPORAL.

Coast Artillery Enlisted Men Sleeve Insignia.

The insignia shown here are for dress uniforms from the 1908 *Quartermaster uniform catalog*
in use circa 1904-1917.



Coast Artillery Enlisted Men Sleeve Insignia (continued).



Coast Artillery Enlisted Men Rated Position Sleeve Insignia circa 1935.

The new 1908 chevron designs included wreaths, small bars, stars, electrical governors, electric bolts. The law provided for new special ratings (with increased pay) including casemate electricians, observers first class, plotters, and (mine) loaders in addition to the gunners and electricians. The law also provided ratings for chief plotters, chief loaders, first and second class observers, gun commanders, gun pointers, and first and second class gunners. Congress authorized the Coast Artillery to provide for the complete manning detail, including specialists, for all guns, mines, searchlights, and power plants to be operated in connection with fortified harbors. Other rating insignia added included coxswain (1916), the badge for excellence in target practice (1910, 1923), expert gunner (1920), transportation sergeant (also called combat train or truckmaster sergeant) (1935), and railway sergeant (1935). In 1920 the Army reorganization act consolidated all the enlisted ranking systems to just seven pay grades.

There was a major difference between qualified and rated positions. Any number of enlisted men could qualify as a first or second class gunner by passing a qualification test and could wear a qualification chevron. However, Congress regulated the number of rated positions in the coast artillery and only when a rated position came open could a qualified enlisted man be assigned to fill that position. The enlisted men wore their qualification or rating insignia below their rank chevron or in the case of a private in place of their rank chevrons.(6)

1914 Coast Artillery Rated Positions by unit

Rating	gun	mortar	mine	Dist	Mine
	Comp.	Comp.	Comp.	Boat	Planter
Plotter	1	1	1		
Observer 1 st	1	1	1		
Observer 2 nd	1	1	1		
Gun Commander	2	3	1		
Gun Pointer	2				
Casemate Electrician			1		
Chief Loader			1		
Chief Planter			1	1	2
Total	7	5	7	1	2

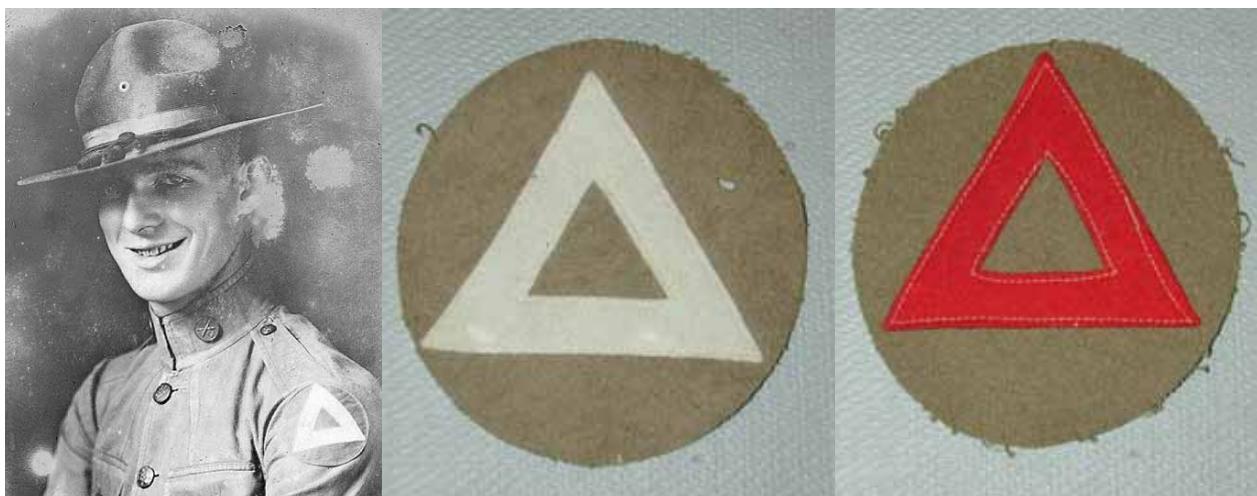
The cloth chevrons and other rank markings were similar to those of the other service branches with many variations over the years. Field and coast artillery used the same chevrons as well as some of the same rating insignia. Some of the rank chevrons used by the coast artillery had specialty insignia immediately below the chevron that were unique to the coast artillery, like the specialties that were a part of the other service branches. The dress chevrons were red artillery branch color facing cloth on dark blue uniform cloth. Service uniforms used full color on olive drab background at first, and then changed to drab or gray on olive drab background. After 1920 the service chevrons were all mounted on a dark blue background. Some of the rating insignia was red on blue, some drab on blue. These details changed regularly.

These qualification and rating chevrons remained in effect until 1941 when the War Department suspended rating chevrons for various reasons including cost and the application of these ratings to the coast artillery only.(7)

The Army Mine Planter Service was created in 1917 with six rated positions described in 1919. The rating positions were changed in 1920 with only two unique rated positions (steward and assistant steward) for the AMPS, the remaining rated positions used the regular coast artillery ratings. For each

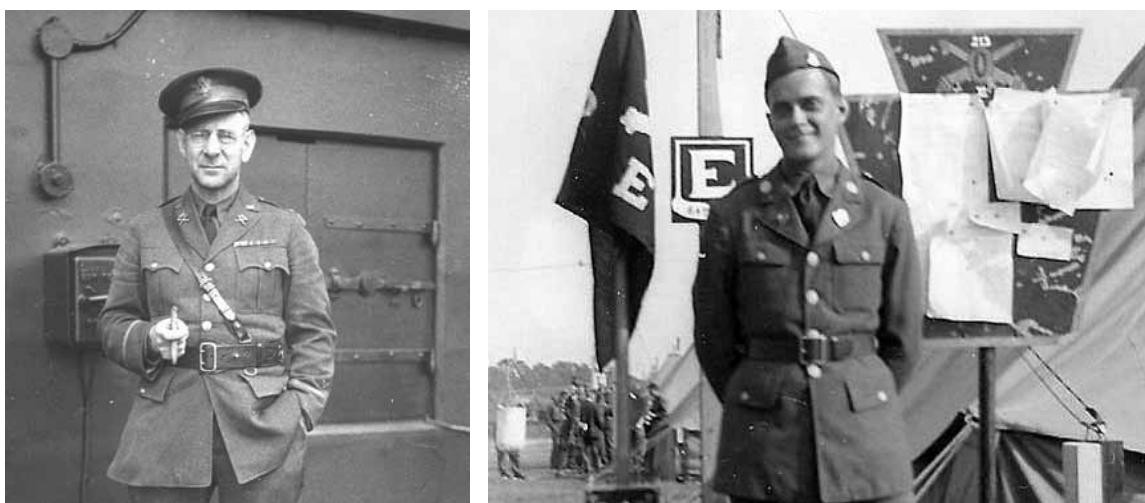
mine planter congress authorized (after 1920) there were five warrant officers (master, first mate, second mate, chief engineer, assistant engineer) and 13 enlisted men (two oilers, four firemen, four deck hands, one cook, one steward, one assistant steward). The mine planter warrant officers wore one of two insignia on their lower cuffs, a fowled anchor for masters and mates, and a three bladed propeller for the engineers. The insignia went above two, three, or four bands of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide braid that indicated the wearer's rank.(8)

There were only a few unit-specific or department-specific CAC shoulder sleeve insignia (SSI) "patches." The red triangle of the 55th CAC (below left) and the white triangle of the 59th CAC (below, right) used in the early 1920s are the most noteworthy.



Soldier with 55th CAC patch, 55th and 59th patches *Greg Hagge*

Some locations, especially overseas, wore a local department shoulder insignia beginning in the late 1920-1930s, the Hawaiian, Panama Canal Zone and the Philippine departments being the most important. WW II command shoulder insignia such as the Alaskan Defense Command (ADC) is another example. State side CAC organizations generally did not wear SSI until about 1942 when the insignia were developed for the continental defense, coastal, and AA commands. These were the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Ninth Coastal Defense Commands, and the Eastern, Southern, and Western Antiaircraft Artillery Commands.(9)



Officer, circa 1930s (left), enlisted man, 1940 (right)



Shoulder patch insignia of the Coast Artillery in World War II *Greg Hagge*

top: unknown

Second row (left to right): First Coast Defense Command; Second Coast Defense Command; Third Coast Defense Command; Fourth Coast Defense Command; Ninth Coast Defense Command.

Third Row (left to right): Antiaircraft command; Eastern Antiaircraft Command; Central Antiaircraft Command; Southern Antiaircraft Command; Western Antiaircraft Command; Eastern Defense Command.

Fourth Row (left to right): Philippines Department; Panama Canal Department; Hawaiian Department, Hawaiian Coast Artillery Brigade, Alaskan Defense Command.

Distinctive Unit Insignia

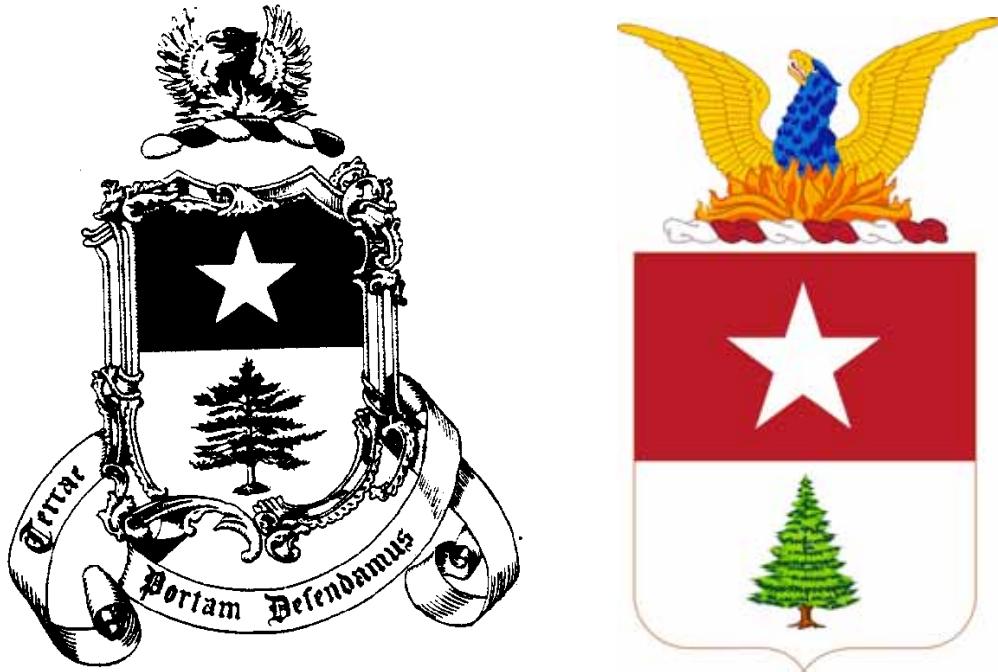
Previous to WWI regiments were authorized and encouraged to obtain “distinctive” insignia, but no official use was made of them, neither did the War Department exercise any control or supervision over the designs, and the result was a great variety, many defying the laws of heraldry, and a remarkable number containing historical inaccuracies. Concerned with a general lack of cohesion and distinction for military awards and insignia that he observed during wartime, President Woodrow Wilson sent a letter to his Secretary of War, Newton Baker. The President resolved that the design of military medals ought to be “artistically reconsidered by [an] official art commission.” Following this initial correspondence, President Wilson directed the establishment of a Heraldic Program Office the following year under the purview of the War Department General Staff. The adoption of arms and badges for organizations of the Army was formally approved towards the end of 1919.(10)

In 1919 the War Department authorized the Supply Division of the Chief of Staff to use regimental arms on the colors in place of the arms of the United States, thus making the color truly regimental in character, instead of being a national emblem as it had previously been. The retention of the eagle showed the Federal nature of the organization, but the remainder of the design applied only to that particular unit which reflected the traditions, ideals, wars, battles, and other incidents connected to that unit’s history. This was accompanied by the introduction of regimental distinctive unit insignia (DUI) for the uniforms. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, War Department policy dictated that the organizational colors would not be issued until a coat of arms was approved by the Chief of Staff, or after 1924, the Adjutant General. The first distinctive insignia for uniforms was produced for the 51st Coast Artillery Regiment in 1924, followed by the 55th. The distinctive insignia was developed from an element of the arms for use as a marker and an emblem to be worn on the uniform.(11)

A coat of arms, in the ordinary acceptance of the phrase, consists essentially of a **shield**, with the most important accessories being the **crest** and the **motto**. The shield consists of a base metal (gold or silver) and one or more solid colors on which are placed designs to illustrate the history of the unit. The crest was formerly worn on the helmet and, whenever practicable, was so shown. Due to the manner in which the arms and crest were placed on the regimental color, the helmet was often omitted, but on drawings, stationery, etc., it was used to support the crest, thus avoiding the appearance of a crest suspended in midair. The heraldic wreath typified the torse of cloth or silk formerly used to fasten the crest to the helmet, and was always shown. It was placed between the helmet and the crest, or as the support of the crest if the helmet was omitted. The mantling was an accessory of the helmet. It symbolized the mantle formerly worn over the knight’s armor, and was always the principal color of the shield, lined with the principal metal; and the same rule holds true for the wreath. The motto was placed on a scroll or ribbon, usually below the shield, but occasionally elsewhere, there being no fixed rule about its placement or color. Often the motto was given in latin, though English was used as well. In 1919 the Coast Artillery Corps had few regiments, so coats of arms were designed for the various coast defense commands and a small number were authorized as distinctive unit insignia.(12)

In 1924, the regimental structure was returned to the entire Coast Artillery Corps. Each new regiment was required to produce a coat of arms design for approval. Most existing active Regular Army, National Guard, and Organized Reserve regiments eventually had a coat of arms approved. The process, pretty much as it is today, was to design a coat of arms for the unit and submit it to the War Department for approval. Once a coat of arms was approved, a distinctive unit insignia was designed which may have been simply the crest or shield, or a variation of the full coat of arms. This then had to be authorized for use by the War Department. This process sometimes took a considerable length of

The Coat of Arms for the Coast Defenses of Portland.



The shield is divided horizontally, the upper half red, the lower silver. On the red is a silver star of five points, and on the lower half is a pine tree in natural colors. The star has a double significance; it symbolizes the Pole Star, this being the most northerly defense on the Atlantic Coast, while its five points represent the five forts, Williams, McKinley, Levett, Preble and Baldwin. This star is placed on a background of artillery red. The pine tree is the old emblem of the State of Maine, and appears on the coat of arms of that State.

The crest is a phoenix, and is taken from the arms of the city of Portland. Portland has been destroyed three times by fire, each time however Portland has risen from its ashes to a more prosperous existence, like the phoenix of old. Heraldically the phoenix is always represented as an eagle rising from flames, in this case the body and head are purple, the wings gold. The flames are always shown in natural colors.

The motto for these defenses is "Terrae Portam Defendamus," the translation being "We defend the (Port)land gate."

time. Some units never got an approved coat of arms, others had one approved, but never got a DUI authorized for use. A number of specialized entities, such as the various schools also received DUIs. Only the regular army coast artillery regimental DUIs are covered in this article.(13)

The DUI was worn on the shoulder strap by officers and on the lapel below the branch insignia by enlisted men (behind the disc on standing collars). The colorful pins were intended to identify each regimental organization and inspire esprit de corps. There are many variations of these insignia to be found—some through authorized changes in the designs and some through manufacturer's errors, die variations and different types of screw or pin attachments. Some of these regiments exist today and use the same DUI design, but most have long ago been deactivated or have drastically changed the design.

On December 29, 1942 it was announced that the manufacture of distinctive insignia was to be discontinued and that future requests would only be considered under very special circumstances. On January 2, 1943 War Department Circular Number Six absolutely suspended the manufacture of existing DIs and the approval of new DIs designs for the duration of the war. It did not discontinue wearing of those DIs that had been produced. Many units tried to circumvent the rules and had ones manufactured in plastic or in silver. Prohibitions against wearing DIs in combat zones also existed. The manufacture of DUIs was not authored to resume until 1947.(14)

In general, the coast of arms and the DUIs for the regular army and national guard harbor defense coast artillery regiments up to 1940 are well documented. Documentation of the DUIs for the antiaircraft, tractor-drawn, and railway units, as well as all the organized reserve units is complicated by the wholesale reorganization of units that occurred during the wars years and after and will not be fully discussed here. A visual guide to the DUIs of the coast artillery has been published by the CDSG based on information from a variety of sources.(15)



CD Narragansett Bay



CD New Bedford



CD Long Island Sound



CD Southern New York



CD Chesapeake Bay



CD Pensacola



CD Pearl Harbor



CD Honolulu

Insignia authorized for use for coast defense personnel. *Greg Hagge*

Distinctive Unit Insignia, 1940

Regular Army Coast Artillery Harbor Defense Regiments



1st Coast Artillery (HD)



2nd Coast Artillery (HD)



3rd Coast Artillery (HD)



4th Coast Artillery (HD)



5th Coast Artillery (HD)



6th Coast Artillery (HD)



7th Coast Artillery (HD)



8th Coast Artillery (HD)



9th Coast Artillery (HD)



10th Coast Artillery (HD)



11th Coast Artillery (HD)



12th Coast Artillery (HD)



13th Coast Artillery (HD)



14th Coast Artillery (HD)



15th Coast Artillery (HD)



16th Coast Artillery (HD)



18th CA (HD)



19th CA (HD)



20th CA (HD)



21st CA (HD)



22nd CA (HD)



23rd CA (HD)

Distinctive Unit Insignia, 1940
National Guard Coast Artillery Harbor Defense Regiments
Schools and Training Centers



240th Coast Artillery (ME)



241st Coast Artillery (NH)



242nd Coast Artillery (MA)



243rd Coast Artillery (RI)



244th Coast Artillery (NY)



245th Coast Artillery (NY)



246th Coast Artillery (VA)



248th Coast Artillery (WA)



249th Coast Artillery (OR)



250th Coast Artillery (CA)



251st Coast Artillery (CA)



252nd Coast Artillery (NC)



260th Coast Art (DC)



261st Coast Art (NJ)



263rd Coast Art (SC)



265th Coast Art (FL)

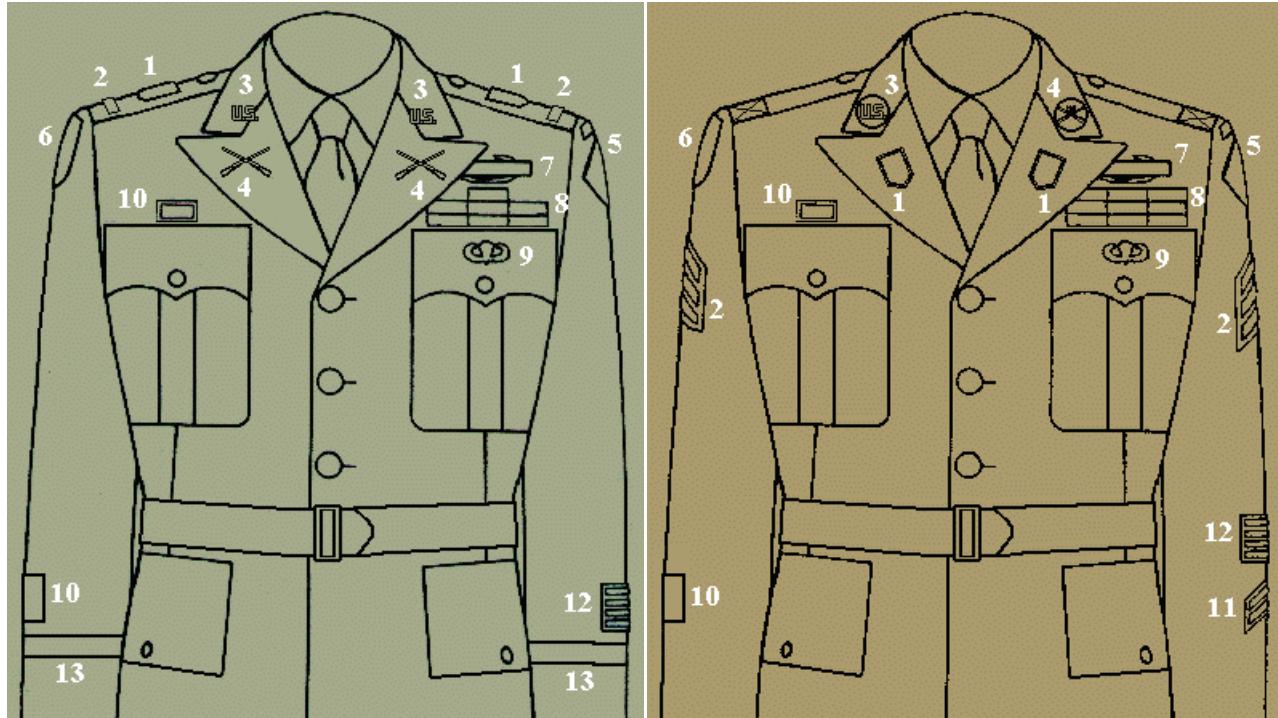


Coast Artillery School



Barrage Balloon School

Antiaircraft Artillery
SchoolAntiaircraft Artillery
Train & Repl. Center
Fort WaltersCoast Artillery
Train & Repl. Center
Fort EustisCoast Artillery
Train & Repl. Center
Camp Callan



(Officer) Placement of insignia on the Army service uniform, Second World War era. (Enlisted)
www.alumnibhs.com/insignia%20placement.htm

- 1. Distinctive Unit Insignia 2. Grade/Rank Insignia 3. U.S. Insignia 4. Branch Insignia
- 5. Current Parent Unit 6. Former Overseas Wartime Parent Unit 7. Single Skill Badge
- 8. Service Ribbons, decorations, medals 9. Second Skill Badge and Marksmanship Awards
- 10. Unit Awards 11. Service/Unit Stripes 12. Overseas Service Bars 13. Officer Braid



Colonel Fulton Q.C. Gardner, CAC, at the Coast Artillery School, Fort Monroe, VA, c. 1935. Coast artillery insignia are on his lapels and coast artillery school DUIs are on his shoulder straps above his rank insignia.
courtesy the Gardner family



Private Norman E. Hope, Harbor Defenses of Portsmouth, NH, 1942. Circular coast artillery collar insignia are on the upper jacket lapel and DUIs are on the lower lapel. The Eastern Defense Command patch is on his shoulder.
courtesy Norman E. Hope

Notes

1. For example the American Society of Military Insignia Collectors (ASMIC) is the oldest and largest organization of collectors of military insignia in the world. (<http://www.asmic.org/>). ASMIC publishes a quarterly journal *The Trading Post* that has a number of articles on insignia. See Capistrano, Robert, "Collecting Distinctive Insignia of WW II: Part I", *The Trading Post*, LXII, No. 2, April-June 2003: 17-22. Capistrano, Robert, "Collecting Distinctive Insignia of WW II: Part II", *The Trading Post*, LXII, No. 3, July-September 2003: 17-24.
2. Leon W. LaFramboise, *History of the Artillery, Cavalry, and Infantry Branch Service Insignia* (Watson Publishing Co., Steeleville, MO, 1976); William K. Emerson, *Encyclopedia of United States Army Insignia and Uniforms* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 1996); William K. Emerson, *U.S. Army Soldiers and Their Chevrons: An Illustrated Catalog and History from the Revolutionary War to the Present* (R. James Bender Publishing, San Jose, CA 2013).
3. Barry J. Stein, *U.S. Army Heraldic Crests*, (Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina Press, 1993); Steven E. Clay, *U.S. Army Order of Battle 1919-1942* (Combat Studies Institute Press, US Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 2010); Janice McKenney, *Air Defense Artillery* (Army Lineage Series, Center of Military History, United States Army, Govt. Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1985); Shelby L. Stanton, *Order of Battle, US Army in World War II*, Revised Edition (Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2006); James P. Sawicki, *Antiaircraft Battalions of the U.S. Army, Volumes 1 & 2* (Wyvern Publications, Dumphries, VA, 1991).
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Notes on Collecting Insignia

Mark Berhow

The post-1940 history of the units that comprised the coast artillery corps has resulted in a great deal of confusion over both unit histories and their assigned insignia. The regimental organization of the coast artillery corps was eliminated in 1943 and most units were converted to separate battalions by the end of the war. Nearly all of these battalions were inactivated as the US Army demobilized.

The artillery branch of the army was reorganized in 1950 creating the army air defense command and many old coast artillery battalions were re-activated as antiaircraft artillery separate battalions during 1950-1956. Many of these units also reused or received unit insignia as well. In 1958 the antiaircraft artillery was reorganized again, bringing back the regimental system and resurrecting (in theory at least) the old coast artillery regular army and National Guard regiments that were disbanded during the 1940s. These Air Defense Artillery units used, in many cases, the insignia approved for the their predecessor coast artillery regiment. During the downsizing of the air defense artillery from the 1970s on, many of these regiments have also been inactivated so that now only a handful of ADA regiments remain in service today.

Distinctive insignia remained in Army Regulations as an approved insignia even if their manufacture had been suspended for the duration and after 1947 approval of new designs was resumed. Some DIs were manufactured in Germany during the occupation period and have distinctive features. The Ballou clutch was introduced in 1942 and in the postwar era supplanted the older post and screw type with a few exceptions. Pin-back DIs were still manufactured during the postwar period.

Needless to say, this has resulted a large number of insignia that have been ascribed to a particular unit. Add to this the fact that all manner of reproductions and "re-strikes" have been made over the years for military members and families as well as the collectors. This makes it difficult to authenticate an insignia as a coast artillery regimental insignia.



Backs of authentic coast artillery DUIs showing pin-back, screw-back and the more modern clutch-back.

Note the maker marks on all three of these pins. *Author*

There are a number of differences between the older coast artillery insignia and the newer air defense insignia and the modern reproductions. The earliest distinctive insignia were either screw-post & retaining-nut or pin-back construction. The pin-backed insignia were used on officer's shoulder loops while the screw-backed insignia were for campaign hats prior to the general adoption of the garrison cap and enlisted men's coat lapels. The oldest ones are mostly screw back construction; pin-backed ones became more common over time. Many DUIs are marked with the name of the manufacturer; for example, A. H. Dondero of Washington, D.C. was a prominent early maker.

The U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry

The Institute of Heraldry's (TIOH) proud and distinguished history of service begins in the wake of World War I. Concerned with a general lack of cohesion and distinction for military awards and insignia that he observed during wartime, President Woodrow Wilson sent a letter to his Secretary of War, Newton Baker. The President resolved that the design of military medals ought to be "artistically reconsidered by [an] official art commission." Following this initial correspondence, President Wilson directed the establishment of a Heraldic Program Office the following year under the purview of the War Department General Staff.

At first, the Heraldic Program Office was entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating and approving coats of arms and other insignia solely for Army organizations. However, America's entry into World War II saw a tremendous increase in the demand for military insignia across all branches of service. As a result, the Munitions Board, which acted for all of the existing branches of service at the time, decided that the Heraldic Program Office would assist with providing heraldic services to all military departments.

Meanwhile, the need for coats of arms, decorations, official seals, and organizational emblems began to expand in other Government sectors. To aid those who required such heraldic services, Public Law 85-263 was enacted in 1957 to allow for the Secretary of the Army to provide these services to all branches of the Federal Government. Yet another expansion of its responsibilities and customer base would lead to a major restructuring of the Heraldic Program Office to help meet demands.

Ultimately, this restructuring resulted in Army General Order Number 29, issued on 10 August 1960 with an effective date of 1 September 1960, declaring the founding of "The Institute of Heraldry", a new organization derived from the Heraldic Program Office and placed under the auspices of the Army's Quartermaster General. Since 1960, TIOH's heraldic program has seen only two additional reassessments within the Army due to reorganization. The first occurred soon after its establishment, when it was transferred to the care of the Adjutant General's Office in 1962; then, in 2004, TIOH became part of the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. See the Institute of Heraldry website for more details (www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil).