

# The Uniforms of the Neapolitan Army 1806-15

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## Part 1 Introduction

The history of the Neapolitan army between 1806 and 1815 is fairly well known. Generally, the regiments of the kingdom were held in low regard and performed accordingly. The history of the uniforms worn by the men who followed first King Joseph and then King Joachim is less well known, except for the final, "classical" uniform. There are a variety of reasons for this: firstly, the army performed poorly and was rarely deployed in any strength beyond the borders of the kingdom and secondly, the records that remain are incomplete and often contradictory. The aim of this series is to attempt to piece together as accurate as possible a history of Neapolitan service uniforms of the period as can be achieved. The uniforms of such exotica as bandsmen will not be covered as records are almost completely non-existent.

## i) Line Infantry The Origins of the Regiments

On February 15th 1806 Joseph Bonaparte, assisted by a large Franco-Italian force, took possession of the mainland part of the Kingdom of Naples and soon set about raising an army. A decree dated June 13th 1806 raised the first two line infantry regiments but recruitment, however, proved to be difficult due to public resistance to conscription and the units were eventually recruited almost entirely from prisoners of war and civilian prisoners with the officers coming from the POW camps or from the French army. By August 6th the 1st Regiment consisted of 70 officers but only 490 other ranks while the 2nd Regiment numbered 85 and 435 respectively.

The 3rd Regiment was raised at Nola by a decree of March 10th 1809 and was soon up to a strength of 800, mostly conscripts, many of whom deserted during the occupation of the Papal States on hearing that the Pope had excommunicated the invaders. Apparently they thought that to stay would result in them all going blind! The same year, on August 27th, the 4th Regiment was raised at Capua from conscripts but the junior officers were promoted from the non-commissioned ranks of the Guard Velites, while some of the officers came from the existing regiments.

The 5th Regiment, formed on September 12th 1809, was raised from Calabrian volunteers and conscripts while the officers came from the Provincial Guards. Again, recruitment was slow and, by January 1st 1810, only 580 men were with the colours. The origins of the 6th Regiment were somewhat different as it was raised from the Naples City Guard. Originally this was a paramilitary police unit with only the elite companies being earmarked for active service but King Joachim decreed that it should be converted into a line infantry regiment and this was duly carried out in 1810. The 7th Regiment is probably the most famous Neapolitan unit,

being formed from the French army's "Corps des Pionniers Noirs", a motley group of Haitians who were used for fatigue duties until a shortage of manpower led to their employment as infantry at the siege of Gaeta in 1806. Thereafter, they served in the Neapolitan navy as marines before being absorbed into the army on December 17th 1810, becoming probably the finest infantry unit that the army possessed. After 1810, however, recruitment was open to non-coloureds and the quality of the regiment declined. Before this date desertion was virtually unknown, probably in part due to the difficulty that would-be deserters had in passing themselves off as members of the local population.

The decree for the formation of an 8th Regiment was issued on October 14th 1810 but the unit was not actually formed until the February of 1811, being raised at Saragossa from the remnants of the first two line regiments and the 1st Light Regiment, these units being reformed back in Naples.

The 9th Regiment was formed in 1812 from civilian prisoners and captured draft dodgers. Needless to say its desertion rate was appalling and its performance somewhat worse.

On March 8th 1814, the 10th Regiment was formed by conscription around a cadre of the 4th and 5th battalions of the 9th Regiment while the 11th Regiment was formed on May 3rd of the same year at Pescara from Italian deserters, prisoners and "volunteers" augmented by the usual levy of unwilling conscripts.

The final regiment to be formed was the 12th, raised on June 29th 1814 from veterans of the other regiments. This regiment was transferred into the Guard as the Voltigeur Regiment on September 29th of the same year and King Joachim set about raising a replacement regiment in secret from among men of the Marches, but more specifically from prisoners and, due to a lack of manpower, from discharged veterans, the latter being taken by force from their homes on the night of January 20/21st 1815. Despite this, the regiment would fight on for three months at Gaeta after the disastrous defeat at Tolentino in May of that year.

## Uniforms Early Uniforms

On being formed in 1806, the 1st and 2nd Regiments were issued with white, French style uniforms and bicornes. The coats differed from the French type in having no cuff flaps as shown in the sketch. Initially, facings were light blue for both regiments, these being borne on the collar, cuffs and lapels for the 1st and just the cuffs and lapels for the 2nd. The collar of the 2nd was white piped light blue. The piping on the pockets, shoulder straps and turnbacks was also light blue while no piping was used elsewhere. Elite company distinctions were as in the French army as was all the equipment and the waistcoat and breeches were also white, the latter usually being worn with black or grey gaiters, while the former had the collar and cuffs in the facing colour. The undress cap was white with piping in the facing colour. At some date, the 2nd Regiment's facings were changed to scarlet. Information on the drummers' uniforms is, to say the least, scarce but one illustration shows them as wearing the same uniform as the men with white chevrons on their arms, these being piped dark blue and bearing nine red diamonds. Rank markings were of the French pattern in yellow.

## PRE 1811 LINE INFANTRY UNIFORMS

Regiment	Year Raised	Coat Colour	Facing Colour	Cuff Type
1st (del Re)	1806	White	Light Blue	Round
2nd (della Regina)	1806	White	Light Blue/Scarlet	Round
3rd (del Principe Real)	1809	Dark Blue	Black	Flapped
4th (Real Sannita)	1809	Dark Blue	Amaranth	Flapped
5th (Real Calabria)	1809	Dark Blue	Orange	Flapped
6th (Napoli)	1810	Sky Blue	Crimson	Flapped
7th (Reale Africano)	1810	Light Brown	Scarlet	Round

## POST 1811 LINE INFANTRY UNIFORMS

Regiment	Facing Colour	1814 Collar	1814 Cuff	Fusilier Pompon Outer/Centre/No
1st (del Re)	Light Blue	Light Blue	Pointed	Not Known
2nd (della Regina)	Scarlet	Scarlet	Pointed	Not Known
3rd (del Principe Real)	Black	Black	Pointed	Wh/Black/Wh
4th (del Sannita)	Amaranth	Amaranth	Pointed	Amar/Whit/Amar
5th (Real Calabria)	Green	Green	Pointed	Not Known
6th (Napoli)	Orange	Orange	Pointed	Not Known
7th (Principe Luciano)	Yellow	Yellow	Pointed	Not Known
8th (No Name)	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Pointed	Yell/Pink/Yell
9th (No Name)	Sky Blue/Violet	Sky Blue/Violet	Pointed	Not Known
10th (No Name)	Mid Blue	White	Flapped	Blue/White/Blue
11th (No Name)	Scarlet*	White	Flapped	Not Known
12th (della Marca)	Green*	White	Flapped	Not Known

\*Aloja shows these two facing colours the other way around.

## POST 1811 LIGHT INFANTRY UNIFORMS

Regiment	Year Raised	Facing Colour	Cacciatore Pompon Outer/Centre/Number
1st	1813 (ex Royal Corsican)	Black	White/Blue/White
2nd	1806 (as 1st)	Yellow	Not Known
3rd	1809 (as 2nd)	Scarlet	Not Known
4th	1813	Orange	Blue/Orange/Blue

By 1809, it would seem that stocks of white cloth had run out as the 3rd Regiment was issued with a blue uniform bearing black facings, probably with the same arrangement of facings and piping as before except that the facing colour was possibly worn on the turnbacks. It is also possible that a black cuff flap was also introduced as the cuff now had three buttons rather than two as on the previous uniforms. At this time it would also appear that bicornes were still in use but that the grenadiers had adopted the bearskin with no front plate but having a back patch with a yellow grenade on a red field.

The uniforms of the 4th and 5th Regiments were similar to those of the 3rd, albeit with amaranth and orange facings respectively. Company distinctions were as before but grenadier companies now carried red grenades on their turnbacks while voltigeur companies had a yellow hunting horn and a yellow collar; the fusiliers had to be content with a white star on their turnbacks. Shakos were issued to these units and it is, therefore, probable that these were issued to all units in existence at this time. The shako carried a brass shield shaped plate bearing the regimental number, no cords and a plume; this being yellow over green for the voltigeurs and possibly of the facing colour for the fusiliers. Grenadiers continued to wear the bearskin, for full dress at any rate, with a red plume.

The addition of the 6th and 7th Regiments added to the variety of colours that composed the Neapolitan army. The 6th Regiment continued to wear the old uniform of the Naples City Guard, this being of the same pattern as the other regiments but in sky blue with crimson facings while the 7th continued to wear their old French issued uniform which was of a brown shade similar to that worn by the Austrian artillery, this having scarlet facings and the same cuffs as the uniform issued to the 1st and 2nd Regiments.

In an attempt to bring some sort of order into the uniforms of the infantry regiments an attempt was made to introduce a new regulation in 1811. The uniform described in this was similar to the French 1806 uniforms in colour and style but it appears that this was never issued as, the same year, the famous 1811 style uniform was decreed and issued to the regiments.

### **The 1811 Uniform**

The uniform issued in 1811 was almost identical to that worn by most of the Confederation of the Rhine regiments and that decreed by the French Bardin regulations.

### **Coat**

The white coat had closed lapels with seven brass buttons on each side, these being in the regimental facing colour as were the collar, turnbacks, cuffs and cuff flaps, all these being piped white.

Fusiliers wore shoulder straps piped in the facing colour and their turnbacks were either devoid of decoration or bore a white star, a yellow crown or a white heart while grenadiers had red or amaranth epaulets and grenade devices on the turnbacks. Voltigeur distinctions included a yellow collar, epaulets in a combination of green and yellow (officially green with yellow crescents although this tended to vary) and a yellow hunting horn on the turnbacks. Long service distinctions and NCOs' badges were similar to the French in

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red and yellow wool respectively.

From 1814 the 1st to 9th Regiments wore the uniform as described above but with pointed cuffs while the 10th to 12th Regiments wore the same uniform but with the collar and cuffs white piped in the facing colour and the cuff flaps in the facing colour piped white. In May 1814 a campaign coat of the "surtout" type was issued, this being white with the collar, cuffs and turnbacks in the facing colour.

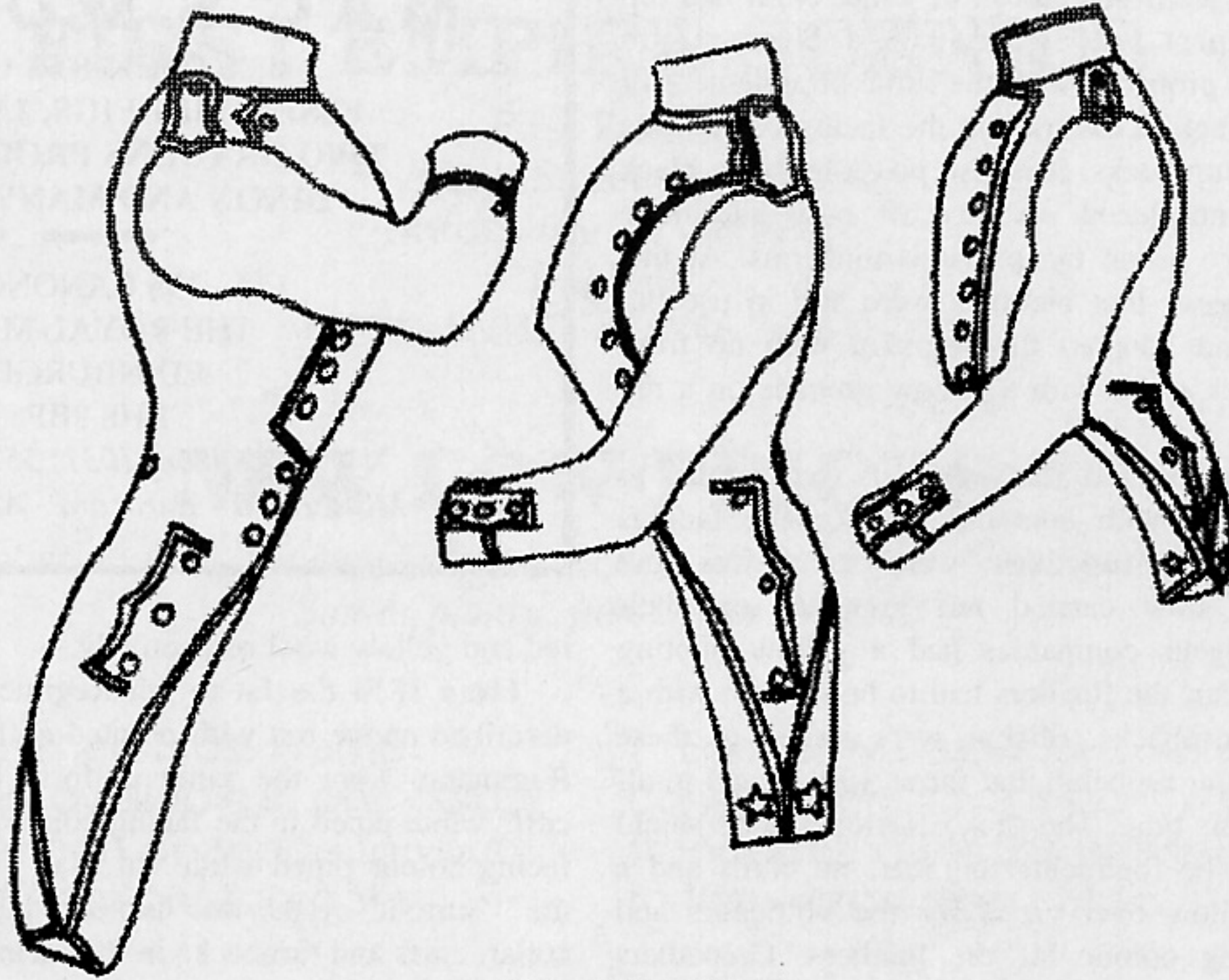
### **Equipment**

Equipment was similar to the French style, fusiliers and voltigeurs having one shoulder strap with no sabre-briquet while NCOs and grenadiers had two straps carrying the bayonet, cartridge pouch and sabre-briquet.

Breeches were white and extended below the knee with short black gaiters although white trousers were often worn on campaign. The greatcoat, which although not a regulation item, appears to have been in common use, was single breasted, either grey, sky blue or brown in colour and the fusiliers' coat appears to have had shoulder straps, these being piped in the facing colour, while the elite companies wore their epaulets. In addition, the collar often bore a patch in the facing colour.

### **Headgear**

The headgear was the French style shako with a brass plate. For the fusiliers this was shield shaped and bore the regimental number while that of the grenadiers (when they wore it) was of a similar style and bore a grenade. The voltigeurs' plate officially consisted of a grenade over a horn with the regimental number carried on the grenade. However, some illustrations show the voltigeurs with the same plate as the other companies, this bearing just a hunting horn and no number. Fusilier company distinctions consisted of a disk shaped pompon, this apparently being of two different patterns. Some units had a white or yellow outer with a facing coloured centre bearing the company number in white or yellow while others seem to have had the colours reversed with the number in the facing colour. Voltigeur pompoms were ball shaped, sometimes with tufts, in various combinations of green and yellow while those of the grenadiers were similar but in red or amaranth. However, many grenadier companies continued to cling to their bearskins, this now having red or amaranth cords in addition to the plume and patch. Shako cords were seldom worn by Neapolitan troops although the hooks required for them were present on the



UNIFORM COATS

1st and 2nd Line 1806

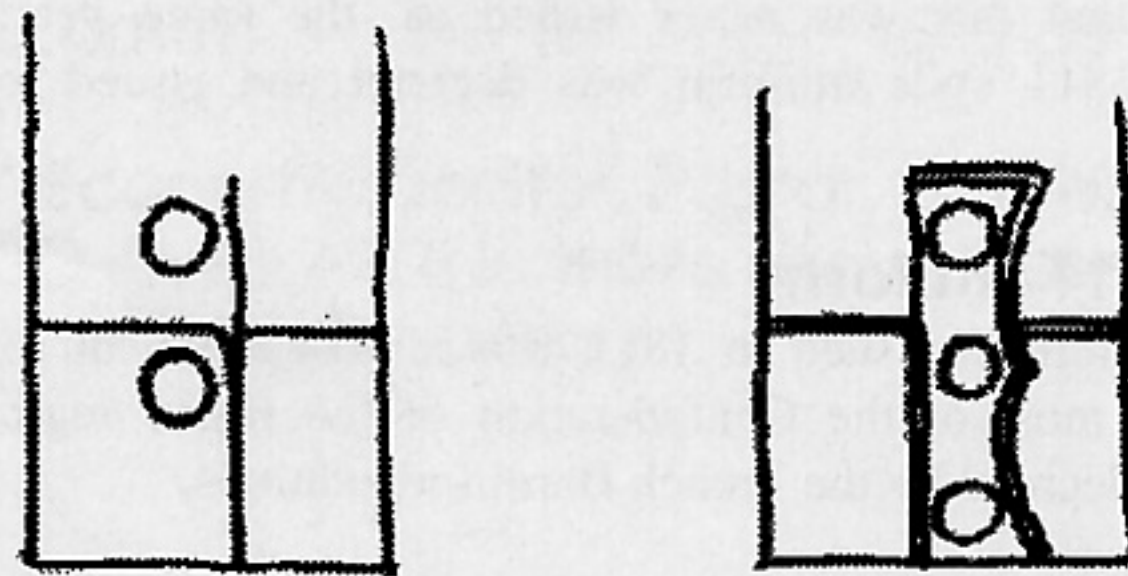
3rd Line 1809

1811 Pattern Coat

Rank	Markings	Fringe
Aiutante		Right
Sottotenente		Left
Tenente		Left
Capitano		Left
Capo Battaglione		Left
Maggiore		Both
Colonello		Both



MUSICIANS LACE



CUFF PATTERNS PRE 1811

1st, 2nd & 7th Line

3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Line

OFFICERS EPAULETTES



1st Light

7th Line

POST 1811 BUTTONS

shako. Chin scales were brass with the bosses bearing a star, grenade or hunting horn. The cockade had a white outer with an amaranth centre, this being held in place by a brass clip, although in 1815 the wearing of a cockade in the Italian national colours was ordered.

### Officers' Uniforms

Officers' uniforms were similar to those of the men, albeit of higher quality, with longer tails and gilt buttons and turnback devices. Rank insignia were similar to the French system and are listed in the table. However, the officers also appear to have worn a blue surtout with the collar and possibly cuffs in the facing colour while some traditionalists may have clung on to their pre-1811 uniforms or worn uniforms of the pre-1811 colours in the new style!

Officers' headgear was officially the shako although many seem to have preferred the bicorne when on campaign. The metal parts of the shako were gilt and the pompons were gold for the voltigeur and grenadier companies and had gold instead of white for the fusilier companies; Colonels, however, wore white plumes. When grenadier officers wore the bearskin, the cords were gold as was the grenade on the back patch. As an additional rank distinction, all officers except for colonels wore a gorget, this being gilt with an embossed white metal badge of the same pattern as the turnback device.

Mounted officers had a saddle cloth of the facing colour with gold lace edging and regimental number in the rear corner, although Aloja shows it as being blue with gold edging and a gold grenade in the rear corner.

Officers' equipment consisted of an epee for the fusilier officers and a sabre for their elite company colleagues, these having a golden knot and being carried in a leather scabbard with gilt fittings. These weapons had gilt hand guards bearing the gorget emblem in silver and the first seven regiments had mother-of-pearl hilts while the other five had black bone. All swords were officially carried on white leather belts, these being worn around the waist or over the shoulder, although some illustrations show black or facing coloured belts. Officers usually wore breeches and hussar style boots although many other patterns of legwear are known to have been employed including white trousers with or without blue stripes and "English" boots.

### Musicians

No official descriptions of the drummers' and voltigeur buglers' uniforms exist although contemporary illustrations show a uniform similar to that of the men with the addition of white and amaranth lace of the type shown on the lapels, collar, cuffs, turn backs, along the sleeve seams and in seven inverted chevrons along the arms. In addition, the musicians wore "swallows' nest" epaulets in amaranth with the same lace piping. However, many variations appear to have existed, including the use of yellow coats with black facings piped yellow (3rd Regiment), green coats with white facings (5th regiment), reversed pre-1811 uniform colours (6th Regiment) and blue coats with yellow facings (7th Regiment). Illustrations of musicians in 1815 fail to show the lace so it is possible that this was abolished before the campaign of that year started. Drum bodies were of brass with the wooden hoops being painted in white and amaranth stripes, although the units listed above appear to have had the hoops painted in

the drummers' coat and facing colours. The instrument was carried on a white shoulder belt with brass stick holders. Bugles were brass and usually had green cords although mixed white and amaranth ones were not unknown.

### Sappers

The sappers, of whom there were two in each grenadier company, appear to have worn uniforms identical to those of the grenadiers with the addition of a white or buff apron and a badge on the upper arm consisting of crossed axes surmounted by a grenade, all of this being in yellow with the grenade's flame in red. This badge also appeared in brass on the cartridge pouch. However, the official uniform was very different, consisting of a coat in the facing colour faced white with white piping, a colpack with its bag in the facing colour piped white, a white tassel and a red plume. I can find no proof that a uniform of this description was ever worn, the 7th Regiment apparently coming closest to it with a uniform that consisted of the coat as described, with the addition of gold horizontal lace across the lapels, the badge in reversed colours, mixed red and gold epaulets, a white colpack bearing the pioneers' badge with an embossed 7 on it and two pistols carried on a waist belt.

### Regimental Artillery

The regimental artillery companies, each of two guns, were authorised by a decree of April 24th 1813. They wore a sky blue coat with facings in the regimental colour on the collar, lapels, turnbacks, cuffs and cuff flaps, all of these being piped in sky blue while the pockets were piped in the regimental colour. Grenadier distinctions were worn on the turnbacks and shako and red epaulets were worn. All equipment was as for the grenadiers and, although a musket was not part of the official equipment, most of the men appear to have carried one.

### ii) Light Infantry Formation

The 1st Light Infantry Regiment was raised in 1806, as usual from a combination of ex Bourbon soldiers, conscripts and prisoners and this was the sole light infantry unit in the kingdom until 1809 when the 2nd Light Infantry was raised, again from the usual mix of prisoners and conscripts, except for the third battalion which was formed from the Naples Municipal Guard. However, the same year, all the married men of this battalion were transferred to the Naples City Guard, which was soon to become the 6th Line Infantry.

In 1813 a third regiment of light infantry was raised when the "Royal Corsican" Regiment, a unit formed for service on the island of Corsica, was transferred to the main army. This led to a shuffling of the regimental numbers as King Joachim decided that this regiment should become the 1st Light Infantry; the existing 1st and 2nd Regiments, therefore, became the 2nd and 3rd Light Infantry Regiments respectively.

The 4th Light Infantry Regiment was formed from the same unpromising stock as the 9th Line and was, therefore, of generally similar quality (or lack of it).

### Early Uniforms

The original uniform issued to the 1st Light in 1806 was

very similar to those worn by the two line units formed in the same year, but in the typical French light infantry cut and colours.

## Coat

The coat was identical to the French light infantry coat of the same period, being a dark blue habit coat with pointed lapels and white metal buttons. The pointed cuffs, lapels and turnbacks were also dark blue with all piping being white. The collars were red for the carabinieri and cacciatore companies while the voltiggiatore had the traditional yellow collar. Epaulets were red for the carabinieri companies and green with yellow crescents for the voltiggiatore while the cacciatore wore blue shoulder straps piped white.

## Headgear

The first headgear was the bicorne, bearing a pompon which was red for the carabinieri company and green for the voltiggiatore. The colour of the pompon issued to the centre companies is uncertain but there is a possibility that it was also green.

When the 2nd Regiment was raised in 1809, it was issued with a shako of the same design as that issued to the line regiments, as was the 1st Light. The fittings were of the same design as that issued to the line units but were all in white metal. Again, cords were not worn and the elite company distinctions followed the same pattern as the line regiments. It would seem that, at about this time, the carabinieri companies began to adopt the same bearskin as the line grenadier companies but with the rear grenade badge in white.

The fatigue cap worn at this time was dark blue with white piping and a white tassel.

## Equipment

The equipment was the same as that issued to the line regiments but the breeches and waistcoats were dark blue, the former being worn with black gaiters. However, there is some evidence that both units wore white waistcoats and breeches at various times.

## The 1811 Uniform

The 1811 style coat issued to the light regiments was of the same style as that worn by the line regiments, but retained the light infantry colours. The new facing colours were black for the 1st Regiment, yellow for the 2nd, scarlet for the 3rd and orange for the 4th. According to the regulations these colours should have been worn as piping on the lapels, turnbacks, collars, shoulder straps, cuffs and pockets as well as being the colour of the three pointed cuff flaps. However, Aloja clearly shows them as being worn on the collar by all four regiments. This may be a mistake by the artist but it is also possible that it was an attempt by the regimental commanders to make the regiments more easily identifiable. In all cases the voltiggiatore companies continued to wear yellow collars. Turnback distinctions appear to have been a white grenade for the carabinieri companies and white bugle horns for the others. NCOs' rank markings followed the same pattern as the line units but in white.

## Equipment

Equipment remained as before except that the voltiggiatore

companies lost their sabre-briquet and, consequently, were reduced to having only one shoulder strap. The carabinieri companies wore a white metal grenade on their cartridge pouch.

## Officers

Officers' rank markings were the same as in the line regiments except that all gilt items were now silver and the gorget was now silver with a gilt badge. There appears to have been a reluctance amongst officers to adopt the new uniform as Aloja shows officers of the 2nd and 3rd Regiments in 1815 wearing the old style coat with the new facings and white waistcoats. Officers' sidearms were officially the same as in the line regiments but the carrying of sabres appears to have been widespread as does the wearing of hussar style boots with silver trim and tassels.

Mounted officers had dark blue saddle cloths with silver lace trim while Aloja also shows a silver grenade in the rear corner.

## Musicians

There is no hard evidence as to the uniforms of the drummers and hornists but one rather dubious print appears to show a drummer of the 3rd Light wearing a dark blue coat with scarlet lapels, collar, cuffs and cuff flaps, all of these being piped in white, the whole being completed by white sleeve seam piping and inverted chevrons along the arms. The drum is brass with what appear to be white and amaranth(?) stripes on the hoops.

Continued next issue.

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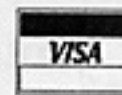
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NBP30	Austrian Hussar	RBP110	Prussian Infantry
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# The Uniforms of the Neapolitan Army 1806-15

Colin Allen, U.K.

## Part 2

### iii) Line Cavalry

#### The Origins of the Regiments Cacciatori a Cavallo

One of Joseph's first acts on entering his new capital was to order the formation of a cavalry regiment, which he did by a decree of February 18th 1806 announcing the formation of the 1st Cacciatori Regiment.

The unit, to be commanded by the wonderfully named Colonel Giovan Battista Caracciolo, a former officer of the Parthenopean Republic and presently an officer in the Italian cavalry, was initially to consist of two squadrons, to which another two were to be added when possible. To this end, all the suitable personnel, both Neapolitan and foreign, were to be assembled in Aversa. Unfortunately, at this point a slight problem arose; although there was a surfeit of officers, these consisting of men from the ex-Bourbon forces, ex-Parthenopean Republican officers and a large number of Frenchmen, Italians and even Poles who saw Neapolitan service as a route to rapid promotion, there was, as was so common in the Neapolitan army, a lack of troopers, these mainly being ex-Bourbon soldiers, captured Bourbon guerrillas and criminals.

With raw material such as this, it is hardly surprising that desertion proved to be a major headache for the cavalry as well as for the infantry.

The raising of a second regiment, ordered by a decree of June 4th 1806, only added to the problem and the Conscription Law of March 29th 1807 gave the two regiments the right to recruit from the territories of Principato Ultra and Terra di Bari.

A further problem was the lack of suitable cavalry horses, those from the main horse breeding areas of Terra di Lavoro and Puglia being wholly insufficient for the units' needs.

Naples was a poor country and, in order to reduce costs, Joseph offered his Imperial brother the use of the two regiments. This offer was accepted and, on December 11th 1807, the first three squadrons of the 2nd Cacciatori departed for Catalonia. To the disgust of the men, they had to march all the way to Perpignan where they finally received their mounts.

Meanwhile, the 1st Regiment participated in the occupation of the Papal States and entered into garrison in Lazio in 1808 where it had a restful, and desertion-filled, time until September 1809, when, with three squadrons totalling 429 men and 342 horses, it was called on to occupy Bologna in order to guard against any incursion by Andreas Hofer's Tyrolean rebels.

When that threat was removed, the regiment rode off to join its colleagues in Spain as part of General Pignatelli's 2nd Neapolitan Division, arriving there in March 1810.

Losses in Spain, both through action and desertion, were

horrendous and, by April 1811, the two regiments totalled only 178 men, formed into two combat squadrons.

Murat had now succeeded Joseph as king and, in July 1811, he issued a decree reforming the two regiments with a strength of five squadrons each, the men coming from among the conscripts and deserters along with men from his own Guard of Honour.

#### Cavalleggeri

When Murat arrived in his new kingdom he discovered that the only regular cavalry available to him were the depot squadrons of the two regiments and that of the Royal Guard, Joseph having taken all the active members of the latter regiment to Spain with him. Murat, being somewhat enamoured of cavalry, set out to rectify this deficiency and, on Christmas Day 1810, he ordered the formation of a regiment of Cavalleggeri, based on the cavalry squadron of the Naples City Guard. This regiment was to consist of four squadrons, each of eight officers and 250 men; needless to say, this strength was never reached.

#### The 1813 Reorganisation

In March 1813, Murat ordered that the two Cacciatori regiments were to change their title to Cavalleggeri, becoming the 1st and 2nd Regiments of that ilk, while the existing Cavalleggeri regiment became the 3rd Regiment. At this time, all three regiments were issued with lances.

Two squadrons of the 2nd Regiment were already fighting in Germany and, when two others were dispatched to join them in the April, Murat decided to raise a further two squadrons to replace them, these being formed by a decree of June 29th 1813 from the sons of men already serving in the regiment or from the orphans of those who had been killed.

According to a roll call dated October 15th 1813 the 1st Regiment had a strength of 47 officers, 963 NCOs and men and 898 horses, the three squadrons of the 2nd Regiment in Naples consisted of 59 officers, 849 NCOs and men and 825 horses while the 3rd Regiment disposed of only 18 officers, 537 NCOs and men and 485 horses, somewhat short of its planned strength.

A fourth regiment was raised by a decree of July 7th 1814 and this was to be the last full regiment raised before the end of the Napoleonic era in Naples except for a regiment raised from among Italian patriots during Murat's brief and disastrous 1815 campaign. There is little information available concerning this unit, known as the Hussars of Bologna, but they apparently saw action during the retreat to Tolentino although, together with all the line cavalry except the 2nd Cavalleggeri, they did not fight at that battle.

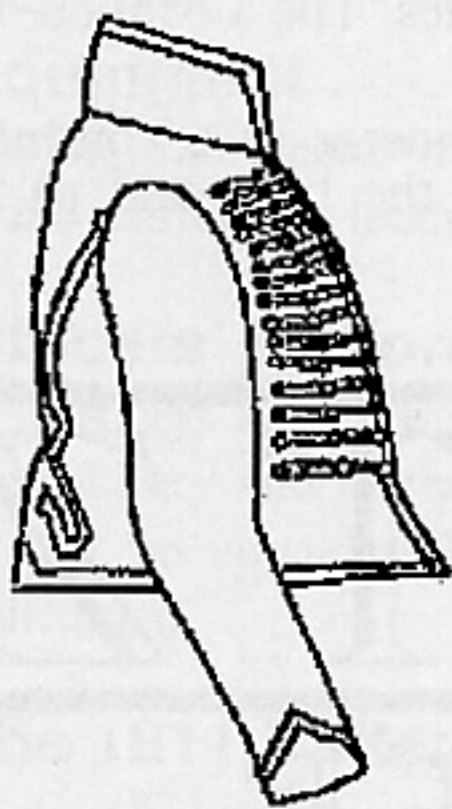
#### UNIFORMS

All the regiments wore a variety of uniforms throughout their existence and these will be dealt with in chronological order within each type.

#### Cacciatori a Cavallo First Uniform Coat

The first coat issued to the Cacciatori was a dark green hussar style dolman with white braid and piping down the front and around the bottom. The facing colours (red for the

## Neapolitan Cavalry Uniforms



Cacciatori  
Dolman 1806



Cacciatori  
Coat c. 1808



Cacciatori &  
Cavalleggeri  
Coat 1809-1811

1st, yellow for the 2nd) were displayed on the collar and pointed cuffs, both of these also being piped white.

A pelisse was also issued for winter wear and this was originally dark green with white braid, piping and buttons and black fur, although it appears that, at some date, pelisses in the facing colour were issued with the same details. However, I can find no evidence of the pelisse ever being worn by the men.

The waist sash was green with barrels in the facing colour.

The elite company wore red epaulets.

### Trousers

The tight fitting breeches were originally in the facing colour with white Hungarian knots and piping along the outside length. The hussar style boots were of black leather with white piping around the top and white tassels and white metal spurs.

### Headgear

The black shako bore a diamond shaped brass plaque bearing the regimental number, brass chin-straps, a French cockade and a green plume tipped with the facing colour, rising from a pompon in the company colour (this followed the French system).

The elite company wore a black colpack with a red plume and a bag in the facing colour piped white for the 1st Regiment and red for the 2nd.

### Equipment

All leather was whitened with brass buckles and supported a plain black cartridge pouch, a carbine, a white metal scabbard carrying a brass hilted sabre with a white knot (red for the elite company), and a sabretache. This latter was of black leather, with the outside face covered in green cloth with white braid around the outside edge. In the centre was either the regimental number alone or a hunting horn with the regimental number on it. One illustration shows this latter device with a crown above the horn, all of this being in white.

The horse furniture was a white sheepskin with "wolf's teeth" in the facing colour and a cylindrical green portman-

teau with white braid and regimental number on the ends. All leatherware on the horse was black.

### Officers' Uniforms

Officers' uniforms were similar to those of the men, albeit with silver braid etc instead of white. A painting of Colonel Desvernois, commander of the 1st Regiment in 1808-09, shows him in this uniform with the addition of crimson boots piped silver, five bands of silver braid on cuffs and breeches, a silver and red sash and a pelisse with white fur. He wears a green shako with silver trim, plate and chin-scales and a white plume rising from a red pompon. His cartridge pouch belt is green leather with red trim and bears a silver shield, while the cartridge pouch itself has a diamond shaped silver plaque.

Officers' pointed saddlecloths were probably green trimmed with silver.

### Musicians

Trumpeters wore reversed colours, in other words a dolman of the facing colour with green facings and green breeches, while the sheepskin was black. No other information is available.

### Second Uniform

This was basically the undress version of the above and came to replace it completely by 1808.

### Coat

The coat was a green, French chasseur style coat with the collar, pointed cuffs and turnbacks in the facing colour piped green, while the facing colour also appeared on the piping of the lapels, pockets and shoulder straps. Buttons were white, as were the bugle horn badges which were worn on the turnbacks. The elite companies continued to wear their epaulets.

Beneath the coat a waistcoat was worn, this being red for the 1st Regiment and red with a yellow collar for the 2nd, both having white buttons and hussar style braiding. However, a green waistcoat with white braid and buttons also appears to have been issued by 1809.

In this year a new, shorter tailed jacket was issued. It had facing coloured lapels and cuffs piped green and green collar, turnbacks and shoulder straps piped in the facing colour.

From this time, as well, a surtout type coat in green with collar and cuffs in the facing colour piped green and green turnbacks piped in the facing colour also came into use for campaign wear.

### Trousers

The new breeches were green, reinforced with black leather and bearing a broad stripe of the facing colour down the outside with white metal buttons.

### Headgear

The shako was still worn, although the metal work had changed to white metal and the plate was now sometimes in the form of a shield bearing a hunting horn inscribed with the regimental number. In addition, the plume was now black with a facing coloured tip although a small pompon with the bottom half green and the top in the facing colour was coming into use instead.



The elite company continued to wear their colpacks.

### Equipment

The Sabretache was no longer officially in use and a new brass reinforced, leather scabbard was sometimes carried.

### Officers' Uniforms

Officers now adopted silver epaulets of the same pattern as the infantry and appear to have had a fair degree of discretion as far as breeches and other items of equipment were concerned.

### The 1811 Pattern Uniform

In 1811 a new uniform was decreed, of a similar style to that issued to the infantry in the same year.

### Coat

The new coat was green and of the "Spencer" type with closed lapels and short turnbacks.

This appears to have existed in two different versions, the first of which had the collar, lapels and pointed cuffs in the facing colour piped green, facing coloured turnbacks and green shoulder straps piped in the facing colour, while the second had everything in green piped in the facing colour. The second version, which was possibly a trial version, does not seem to have been issued in any numbers.

Elite company epaulets were now of amaranth rather than red.

### Trousers

The new full dress trousers were red with white piping for the 1st Regiment and yellow with red piping for the 2nd, although leather reinforced, green trousers with facing coloured piping were worn for normal wear.

### Headgear

The shako remained the same although the pompon, now worn without the plume, reverted to the company colour. In addition, the cockade had now changed to one with an amaranth centre and a white outer. The elite company colpack now carried an amaranth pompon in place of the red plume.

### Musicians

Musicians continued to wear reversed colours with the collar and cuffs piped with the musicians' lace illustrated in Part 1 of this series.

The shako bore an amaranth plume tipped white and white cords while the sheepskin was black.

### Cavalleggeri

The initial uniform issued to this unit was based on that of the Naples City Guard and, consequently, was similar to that of the 6th Line Infantry, who were also formed from the same base.

### Coat

The coat was of the chasseur pattern in a dark sky blue with crimson lapels, turnbacks, cuffs and collar, crimson piped shoulder straps and white buttons. Under this was worn a crimson waistcoat with white braid and buttons. Again, a surtout was worn on campaign, this being of the same colour

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as the dress coat with crimson cuffs, turnbacks and piping to the collar and shoulder straps.

### Trousers

The trousers were dark sky blue piped crimson.

### Headgear

The black shako carried white cords, a white metal Imperial eagle, a French cockade and a black plume over a crimson pompon.

### Equipment

All equipment was as for the cacciatori regiments as was the horse furniture, albeit with a blue portmanteau piped crimson.

### Officers' Uniforms

Officers' uniforms were similar to that of the men with the same rank distinctions as worn on the cacciatori version of the coat and the saddlecloth was blue with silver trim.

### Musicians

The trumpeters wore reversed colours as for the cacciatori regiments.

### The 1811 Pattern Uniform Coat

In 1811 the Cavalleggeri adopted the "Spencer" type jacket in dark sky blue with amaranth collar, cuffs, lapels and turnbacks and brass buttons, although one illustration shows the collar and lapels in dark sky blue piped amaranth. Shoulder straps were piped amaranth and the elite company wore amaranth epaulets.

### Trousers

Trousers were of the same colour as the jacket with amaranth piping.

### Headgear

The centre companies wore the old shako with a white plume and the new cockade, while the elite company changed to an amaranth czapka with white trim, black lower part and a white metal "Polish style" plate inscribed with the royal monogram, surrounded by brass rays. This glorious piece of headgear was surmounted by an amaranth pompon and plume.

## Equipment

All equipment was as before.

## Officers' Uniforms

Officers wore the same rank markings as before.

## Musicians

Musicians wore reversed colours and had black sheepskins.

## The 1813 Reorganisation

This is where life gets complicated!

When Murat reorganised his cavalry he also decided to mess around with their facing colours and this has led to a great deal of confusion, especially regarding the 2nd and 3rd Cavalleggeri Regiments.

## Coat

Coats were of the same pattern and were officially all of dark sky blue with the facing colour on the collar, lapels, cuffs, turnbacks and as piping on the shoulderstraps.

The new facing colours were red for the 1st, amaranth for the 2nd, yellow for the 3rd (ex 1st) and orange for the 4th Regiment which was raised in 1814.

However, the 2nd Regiment continued to wear its green coat with yellow facings until the end of Murat's reign in 1815.

On campaign, the surtout continued to be worn but in the new colours and the elite companies clung on to their amaranth epaulets.

## Trousers

Full dress trousers were blue (except 2nd Regiment) with piping in the facing colour but a wide variety of different types were worn on campaign.

## Headgear

The centre companies wore the shako with brass metal-work and a pompon in the facing colour while the elite companies wore the colpack with white metal fittings, an amaranth plume and a bag which was red piped white for the 1st Regiment, green piped yellow for the 2nd, yellow piped white for the 3rd and orange piped white for the 4th, all having amaranth tassels.

## Equipment

The main change in the equipment was the issuing of the lance, which was black and bore an amaranth over white pennon. Unlike his brother-in-law, Murat realised that a horseman could only carry a limited amount of equipment and the carbine was withdrawn, leaving the trooper with only one strap supporting the cartridge pouch. This strap bore a brass shield bearing the regimental number, attached by a chain to a brass rondel.

The mens' saddle furniture remained as before except that the portmanteau was now in the coat colour with piping and number in the facing colour, but the officers (except for those of the 2nd Regiment) adopted the blue, pointed saddlecloth piped silver with a silver hunting horn in the rear corner.

In addition the sabretache appears to have made a reappearance for full dress wear.

## Officers' Uniforms

These were as for the men with the same rank distinctions as before. Many officers continued to carry the sabretache.

## Musicians

As before, the musicians continued to wear reversed colours.

## Pioneers

According to the new regulations, the pioneers were to wear uniforms of reversed colours, amaranth epaulets and a grenadier style bearskin with an amaranth rear patch bearing a white grenade. Those of the 1st Regiment, however, wore white epaulets on their red coats. All wore red (blue for the 1st Regiment) pioneers' badges of a grenade over crossed axes on their left upper arm.

## The Hussars of Bologna

This regiment was raised in a hurry and it is arguable how many of the recruits were issued with the uniform described below.

## Coat

The coat was of the "Spencer" style in medium blue with yellow collar, round cuffs, lapels and turnbacks. All members of the regiment wore white epaulets.

## Trousers

The trousers were of the same colour as the jacket with yellow trim.

## Headgear

The regiment wore a medium blue Czapka with white piping and a black base bearing the same plate as that worn by the elite company of the Cavalleggeri Regiment from 1811-13. A white plume was worn as was Murat's green and amaranth "Italian" cockade.

## Equipment

The regiment carried the sabre and carbine and all leatherware was whitened.

The pointed saddlecloth was red trimmed with yellow as was the portmanteau.

## iv) Line Artillery

### The Origins of the Batteries

This section is especially difficult; detailed records are non-existent and the following is pieced together from odd snippets and orders of battle.

On assuming the throne in 1806 Joseph decreed the formation of a foot artillery battery and, the following year, a battery of horse artillery was added. The foot battery was equipped with six Austrian 6 pounders and two howitzers while the horse battery was equipped with six French 4 pounders, all of which were painted either light blue or in the same colour as French pieces.

By 1811, the strength had risen to twelve foot batteries and one horse battery, two of the former having six Austrian 12 pounders and 2 howitzers while the others maintained the same equipment as the first battery.

The artillery does not appear to have escaped the effects of

the general reorganisations of 1811/13; the horse battery seems to have been promoted to Guard status while the number of foot batteries may have been reduced to ten. All that can be said with any certainty is that this was the organisation for the 1815 campaign. It is also possible that, by 1815, the foot batteries had been reduced to six guns and that the Guard Horse battery had been reequipped with 6 pounders.

## **UNIFORMS**

### **Foot Batteries**

#### **Coat**

The first coat was a long tailed habit coat as worn by the first infantry regiments but in dark blue with red collar, cuffs and turnbacks, the latter bearing a blue grenade. The lapels, pockets and cuff flaps were dark blue piped red while all buttons were brass. Blue piped red shoulder straps were supposed to be worn but red epaulets seem to have been popular. A blue waistcoat with brass buttons was worn beneath the coat.

In 1809 the artillery adopted a new short tailed jacket, similar to that issued to the line infantry at this time, with the same colours as the previous coat.

This was replaced in 1811 by a "Spencer" coat with amaranth facings and epaulets.

#### **Trousers**

Breeches and trousers were dark blue with brass buttons for parade and blue cloth buttons for campaign wear.

#### **Headgear**

The first uniform included a bicorn with a red, carrot shaped pompon but, by 1809, a black shako sporting a red plume or pompon, red cords (for full dress), a French cockade, a diamond shaped brass plate bearing crossed cannon barrels over the battery number and brass chin-straps was in use. The 1811 regulations altered the cockade to amaranth and white while the plume and cords were changed to amaranth and the plate became shield shaped but bearing the same device as before.

#### **Equipment**

Equipment was identical to that of the line infantry grenadiers, except that the greatcoat was dark blue and the cartridge pouch bore a brass grenade. All belting was whitened leather.

#### **Officers' Uniforms**

These were identical to those of the men with rank insignia of the same style as the infantry in gold.

#### **Horse Artillery**

##### **Coat**

Initially, the horse battery wore a dark blue chasseur style coat with the facings as for the foot batteries; this was replaced in 1809 by the shorter tailed jacket with the same colours. Both jackets were worn over a dark blue hussar style waistcoat with red braid and edge piping.

#### **Trousers**

The tight breeches were dark blue with red Hungarian knots and piping and were worn with red trimmed and

tasselled hussar boots.

From 1809 trousers were adopted with black leather strengthening and red piping.

#### **Headgear**

The battery wore a shako with a brass lozenge plate bearing the same emblem as the foot batteries, French cockade, red plume and cords and a band of red trim around both top and bottom edges as well as brass chin-straps.

#### **Equipment**

Equipment was as for the cacciatori regiments except that the cartridge pouch bore crossed cannon barrels in brass.

The troopers' horse furniture was also identical to that of the cacciatori but with red "wolf's teeth" and a blue portmanteau piped red.

#### **Officers' Uniforms**

Again, as for the men but with gold rank markings. Officers' saddlecloths were of the cacciatori style in dark blue with gold trim and a gold grenade badge in the rear corner.

#### **Musicians**

Musicians wore reversed colour uniforms and had black sheepskin saddlecloths.

#### **Artillery Train**

No contemporary information is available as to what was worn before 1811 but it seems to be sensible to assume that it was similar to that which was worn after this date but in the earlier cut.

#### **1811 Uniform**

##### **Coat**

Grey-blue "Spencer" with dark blue cuff flaps, turnbacks and lapels, the latter being piped in the coat colour while the turnbacks bore white grenade badges. The collar, shoulder straps and cuffs were in the coat colour piped dark blue and all buttons were white metal.

#### **Trousers**

Grey-blue breeches were worn with black, knee length riding boots.

#### **Headgear**

The shako was covered in blue-grey material with dark blue trim to the top and bottom edges, a blue-grey pompon, Neapolitan cockade, shield shaped brass plate bearing a grenade over crossed cannon barrels and brass chin-straps.

#### **Equipment**

The train troopers wore a sabre and a plain black cartridge pouch on whitened leather belts.

Continued next issue ...