

'The Frankfurt Collection'

D.S.V. FOSTEN
Paintings by
BRYAN FOSTEN

During the Second World War the German military artist Ludwig Scharf — a member of a number of historical research societies, and a friend of the Knötel family, Paul Pietsch, Friedrich Schirmer and other respected military historians — chanced one day to be in Frankfurt. While taking refreshment in a coffee house he fell into conversation with an army officer; and mentioned his lifelong interest in matters military.

His companion replied that, coincidentally, he too was interested in old German uniforms; and actually had with him in his briefcase a collection of old coloured drawings which were a family treasure. He produced a sketchbook containing drawings made by an ancestor during the Napoleonic wars, which he had intended to take to the Berlin Zeughaus or some similar institution for appraisal.

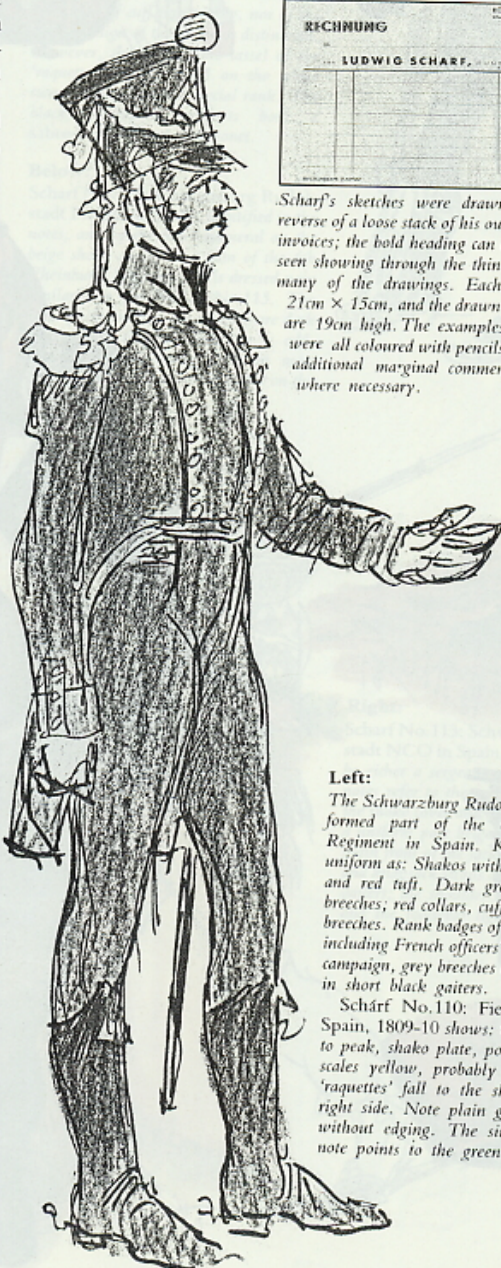
Scharf immediately recognised the unique interest of these sketches. They were mainly of uniformed figures — clearly drawn from life, on campaign — representing the various small contingents of the Confederation of the Rhine serving in Spain.

It was an opportunity Scharf could not ignore; and he begged permission to copy the sketches for his own collection. The Wehrmacht officer agreed, but regretted that he was in transit, under orders, and had to leave the next day. Scharf stayed up most of that night making careful copies of the sketches, using a stylo drawing pen and adding colour details either with coloured pencils or in note form in the margins. Since no proper drawing paper was immediately to hand, he used the only material available — the backs of his own invoices.

Scharf managed to draw many, but not all of the figures. When they finally parted the officer told him where he was staying; and promised that Scharf could finish the work the next day before his departure. In the hours before dawn Scharf was awakened by air raid sirens, and sat out a violent and prolonged RAF raid in a shelter. When he searched out his acquaintance's hotel the next morning, he found

nothing but a heap of rubble. There was no sign or record of the officer; and neither he nor his sketchbook have been seen since.

The late Ludwig Scharf's files and drawings now form part of the collection of Mr Roy Belmont Maitland; and it is with his kind permission that we are able to reproduce here some of Scharf's copies, and to reconstruct our own paintings from others. **MI**



Scharf's sketches were drawn on the reverse of a loose stack of his own printed invoices; the bold heading can clearly be seen showing through the thin paper in many of the drawings. Each sheet is 21cm x 15cm, and the drawn figures are 19cm high. The examples shown were all coloured with pencils, with additional marginal comments where necessary.

Left:

The Schwarzburg Rudolstadt companies formed part of the 6th Rheinbund Regiment in Spain. Knötel gave the uniform as: Shakos with white cap lines and red tuft. Dark green jackets and breeches; red collars, cuffs and stripes on breeches. Rank badges of varying designs including French officers' epaulettes. On campaign, grey breeches in lieu of green, in short black gaiters.

Scharf No.110: Field Officer in Spain, 1809-10 shows: Cap lines, edge to peak, shako plate, pompon and chin scales yellow, probably gold and gilt; 'raquettes' fall to the shoulder on the right side. Note plain green cuff flaps without edging. The single additional note points to the green being dark.



Above:

Scharf No.114: Schwarzburg Rudolstadt Officer in Spain, 1809-10. The ends of the cap lines on the right side are looped up. Clearly in campaign dress, this officer has a cloak en banderole, a haversack and a Prussian-style canteen. The sabre has a brass scabbard, and is suspended on black slings. The notes mention light red facings; and a silver sword knot with a light blue stripe.



Bryan Fosten's reconstructions show (top) Scharf No.47: Lippe Pioneer in Spain, 1909-1810. In 1808 the Lippe-Deimold and Schaumburg-Lippe contingents, both serving in the 5th Rheinbund Regiment, were wearing white jackets with green collars, cuffs and turnbacks; with white lapels, shoulder straps and cuff flaps all piped green. Buttons were white metal. Until 1812 headress was a black Corsican-style round hat turned up on the left, with a white loop and button, and either a red and yellow (Schaumburg) or red and white (Deimold) cockade. The Frankfurt figure shows the additional interesting distinctions of a Zimmermann or pioneer. The black-brown French-style bearskin has a red plaited cord and tassels. Since the cockade would no doubt have been worn on the left, there is no indication of which of the two contingents is depicted. The cap probably had a red top patch with a white embroidered grenade. The jacket has large French-style epaulettes, and cut-out crossed axes on the left arm. Note the carbine, the heavy sword (probably with a cock's-head pommel in French fashion), the axe, and the proffered tobacco pouch — which seems to have a clay pipe protruding from it.

(Bottom) Scharf No.10: Koburg Fusilier in Spain, 1809. The Sachsen-Koburg contingent formed part of the 4th Rheinbund Regiment. The dark green double-breasted jacket had bright yellow collar and cuffs, and green cuff flaps with three buttons and white lace loops. Buttons were white metal, and turnbacks red. It is unclear whether the service chevron on the left arm points up or down. For ceremonial occasions pale blue Hungarian-style pantaloons with yellow braid ornaments were worn, but for undress, white breeches — both with short black gaiters. The Frankfurt figure shows the jacket as described but in disarray; it is lined dark green. The unbuttoned waistcoat is white, the buttons white metal. The shako cover, and tobacco pouch tied to the sabre, are described as grey-brown, the overcoat roll brown. Note the gourd carried on a red strap. Sabre and bayonet scabbards are black with brass chapes. Note the bent bayonet and matching scabbard. The steel-mounted musket has a red-brown sling. The pouch flap is covered in white cloth or canvas, painted with the company identification '2 Cp'.

Details (top): Various items shown in sketches, often not identified beyond the note 'German soldier in Spain': Numbered pouch cover; knapsack variant; Koburg pouch ornament; steel canteen; Schwarzburg Rudolstadt shako with plate and lines, and with cover; sabre hilt. (Bottom): Knapsack with pan, axe and kindling; camp kettle; shako in fur cover; Koburg skirt ornament.

Right:

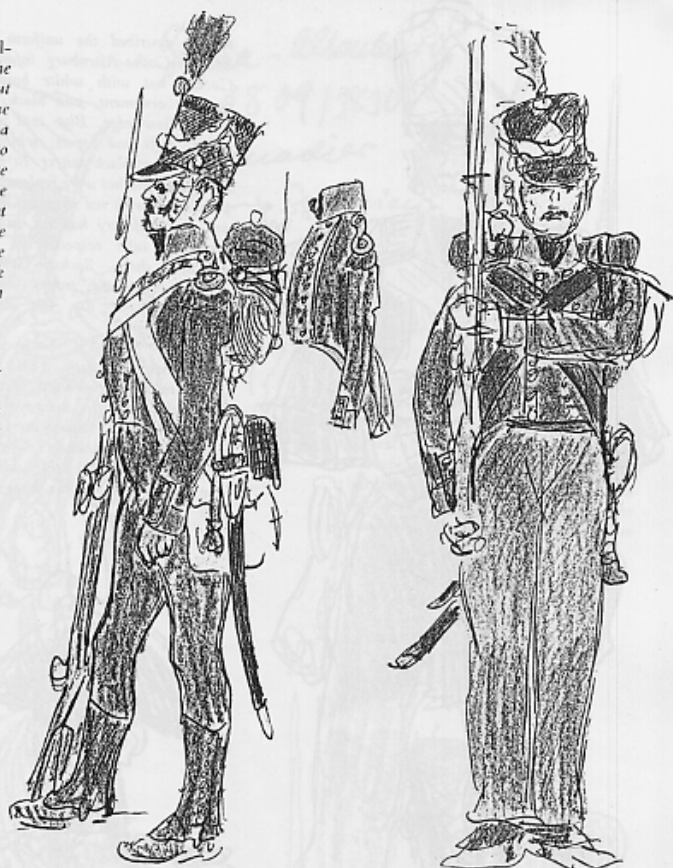
Scharf No.111: Schwarzburg Rudolstadt Private in Spain, 1809. The shako has yellow metal mounts, but white cap lines, as given by Knötel. The green coat has been carefully copied a second time, emphasising the edging to the cuff flaps and the odd epaulette shape. A hatchet is strapped beneath the folded overcoat. The notes confirm that the overcoat is dark grey-green, the equipment white, the musket garniture steel, and the sling white. Note dark green sabre knot, red pompon and green plume.

Far right:

Scharf No.112: Schwarzburg Rudolstadt Sergeant(?) in Spain, 1809. Here the shape of the cap plate is confirmed, but pompon and plume are red. Cf. jacket shape with No.111: in this case it is double-breasted, opening on the right side only. There is no clear indication of cuff flap piping, nor of the precise design of the red rank distinction. However, the bright blue tassel of the 'raquette' and the tassel on the white sword knot indicate a special rank. The black equipment supports both a sabre-briquet and a bayonet.

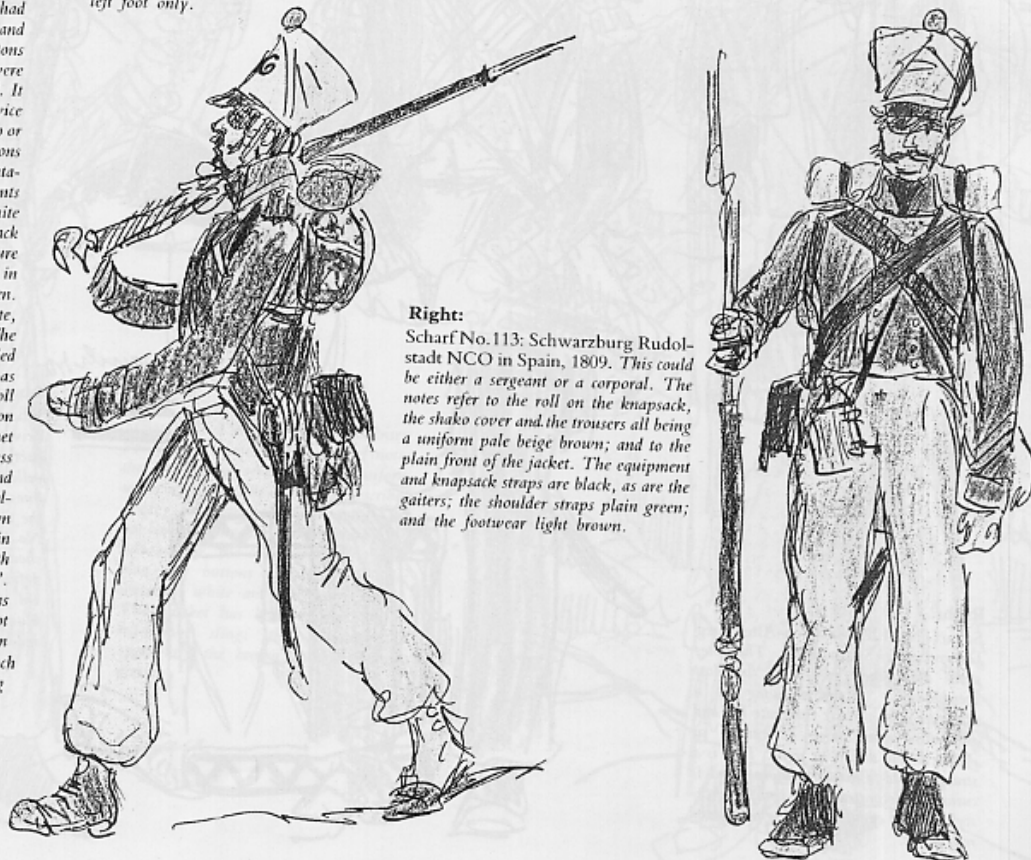
Below:

Scharf No.115: Schwarzburg Rudolstadt Private in Spain. Identified in the notes, and by the black numeral on the beige shako cover, as a man of the 6th Rheinbund Regiment, he is dressed very similarly to the NCO, No.113. The notes point out that the trousers are dark brown, and that the footwear is odd, Spanish sandals being worn in most cases. There is a pale-toned gaiter on the left foot only.



Right:

Scharf No.113: Schwarzburg Rudolstadt NCO in Spain, 1809. This could be either a sergeant or a corporal. The notes refer to the roll on the knapsack, the shako cover and the trousers all being a uniform pale beige brown; and to the plain front of the jacket. The equipment and knapsack straps are black, as are the gaiters; the shoulder straps plain green; and the footwear light brown.





Left:

Knoel described the uniform of the Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg infantry as: Cocked hat with white border and pompon ornament, and black cockade with yellow edge. Blue coat with red collar, cuffs and lapels; white smallclothes; short black gaiters. In 1809 the white smallclothes were replaced by blue pantaloons with red stripes. Grenadiers and light infantry had red and yellow headress tufts respectively. Scharf's sketches show Sachsen-Gotha and Sachsen-Altenburg troops separately. All served in the 4th Rheinbund Regiment.

Scharf No.119: Sachsen-Gotha Grenadier in Spain, 1810-11. The coat is royal blue with red collar, lapels, turnbacks and cuffs, and royal blue cuff flaps. The blue trousers are loose, and stained up to the knees. Note the red plume attached to the sabre scabbard, and the ticken cover on the knapsack roll.



Right:

Scharf No.122: Sachsen-Altenburg Drummer in Spain, 1809. The notes show that there was in the lost sketchbook a second drawing of a drummer with a more elaborate hat and alternative drum hoop decoration, as shown in the details at right. This is a strangely old-fashioned uniform, and is curiously decorated with both French-style fringed epaulettes and white-barred red wings.

Gebölchung
wied



and so.

Above:

Scharf No.132: Sachsen-Altenburg Private in Spain, 1808(?). The date is queried. The cockade is black, edged yellow; the pompon and tuft red; the cap lines white; and the plate, apparently, the ducal arms in brass. The coat is as No.119 but the design and colour of the shoulder straps are more precisely defined. The blue pantaloons have clear red stripes. The notes also mention the blue-grey coat roll, white waistcoat and red-brown musket sling.

Right:

Scharf No.136: Sachsen-Altenburg Grenadier in Spain, 1809-1810. Apparently wearing the habit-veste, with red cuff flaps, and red fringed epaulettes; the sabre knot is also red. There is a steel cooking pan on the knapsack.

Gotha-Altenburg¹³⁶
18 09/1810

Grenadier
in Spanien

Grol
Grol

Below:

Scharf No.135: Sachsen-Altenburg Private in Spain, 1811. The coat is the habit-veste, closed to the waist and with shorter skirts; it has red cuff flaps. The equipment is noted as being white leather, the coat roll dark blue.

Left:

Scharf No.134: Sachsen-Altenburg Private in Spain, 1809. Scharf notes that this was apparently the first uniform worn in Spain. The overcoat is described as grey, the leather equipment white, the hat border white, the cockade black with yellow edge, the coat and trousers dark blue, the buttons yellow metal, the waistcoat white and the gaiters black. The musket has brass mounts and a red-brown sling; the knapsack is apparently the brown calfskin French pattern.