

The Uniforms of the Neapolitan Army 1806-15

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Part 3

v) Guard Infantry

The Origins of the Regiments

Granatieri

The Grenadiers of the Neapolitan Guard were organised on a single battalion basis by Joseph when he assumed the throne but Murat, eager to have a guard that fitted his perceived status, added another battalion, probably in 1808.

Veliti

The Veliti regiments were of Murat's creating, being set up as a two battalion regiment in 1808. By 1809, the regiment seems to have grown to three battalions and a second regiment of two battalions was formed in 1811 from the Volteggianti(?) and the extra battalion of the 1st Regiment, this remaining the organisation until the fall of the Napoleonic kingdom in 1815, although Weil lists three regiments as being in existence for the Tolentino campaign of that year.

Volteggianti

The Volteggianti regiment would appear to have been established in 1809/10 as a two battalion regiment. However, this formation was, apparently, short lived as by 1811 it appears to have been converted into a second Veliti regiment.

The apparent ending of the wars in 1814 led to the regiment being reformed in time for the final, calamitous campaign, when, again according to Weil, it consisted of three battalions.

However, there is some doubt over this and it may be that the regiment was first formed in 1814.

Marinari

The marines were inherited from the Bourbon regime and served until the end of the Napoleonic kingdom in 1815.

UNIFORMS

Granatieri

First Uniform

The first uniform worn by this regiment appears to have been very similar to that worn by their predecessors under the Bourbon regime and may indeed have been a slightly modified version of this uniform, worn while the new uniforms were being prepared.

However, it must be pointed out that this uniform is somewhat conjectural, being based on incomplete data.

Coat

The coat was scarlet and similar to the Spencer in cut although with long tails. It had black or very dark blue facings, these being borne on the lapels, cuffs, cuff flaps and turnbacks,

all of these being piped white. The collar was scarlet and was also piped white as were the pockets, while the epaulettes were white. Buttons were made of brass.

Trousers

Breeches were white and were worn with either black or white gaiters, these coming to above the knee and being fastened with brass buttons.

Headgear

That worn before 1807 is unknown, although it is possible that caps of the Russian guard pattern introduced by Paul I, with a transverse "caterpillar" were worn.

However, by 1807 bearskin caps similar to those worn in the French army had been introduced, these being plateless and having a scarlet rear patch bearing a white grenade, a scarlet plume and white cords, flounders and tassel. The French tricolour cockade was worn.

The fatigue cap was scarlet with white piping and tassel.

Equipment

All belts were of whitened leather with brass metalwork and the sabre-strap was also white. The actual equipment was identical to that carried by the elite companies of the line regiments, the cartridge pouch being undecorated at this time.

Officers' Uniforms

As for the men except that the bearskin's cords, flounders and tassel were gold as was the grenade on the rear patch. Field officers had all white plumes while those of the junior ranks were scarlet tipped with white. A gilt gorget was worn and epaulettes followed the same system as for the line infantry regiments.

NCO distinctions followed the same patterns as in the line regiments.

Musicians

Drummers probably wore the same uniform as the men and the body of the drum was brass with the rims being painted in white, scarlet and black diagonal stripes.

Second Uniform

Murat, having occupied the throne, introduced a new uniform, probably in 1809, although the exact date is, as far as I can discover, unknown.

Coat

The coat was a long tailed, dark blue Spencer of the same general style as the previous coat. The collar, cuffs, cuff flaps, pocket piping, lapels and turnbacks were amaranth, the latter bearing yellow grenade badges. The buttons were brass and

all button holes were decorated with yellow lace batons, two of which also appeared on the collar. The epaulettes were now amaranth. However, according to Aloja, in 1815 the cuffs were now pointed, although they continued to bear yellow lace batons around the two button holes. Based on the history of the cuff patterns of the line regiments it is possible that this style replaced flapped cuffs in 1814.

At this time an undress surtout was also introduced for all ranks, this being dark blue with the same collar, cuffs and turnbacks as the dress coat and amaranth piping down the front. No lace batons were worn on the chest although they were carried on the collar and cuffs.

Trousers

Legwear remained as before although, on campaign, trousers and off-white breeches may have been worn.

Headgear

The same pattern of bearskin was still worn, although everything that had previously been scarlet was now amaranth as were the tassel, cords and flounders while the amaranth and white cockade, adopted in 1808, was worn in place of the French version. The grenade on the rear patch also became yellow at this time. The fatigue cap was dark blue with amaranth piping and a white tassel.

A figure in the background of plate 13 of Aloja's album shows a grenadier in undress wearing a shako with a carrot shaped amaranth plume, amaranth and white cockade, brass plate (possibly in the form of an inverted, five pointed star) and brass chin scales.

Another figure wears a bicorne with amaranth stiffeners and the same plume and cockade.

Equipment

All belts were now of buff leather edged white and the cartridge pouch sported a large central brass grenade with a smaller grenade at each corner. Sabre-straps changed to amaranth. Greatcoats were dark blue, possibly with an amaranth collar.

Officers' Uniforms

Officers wore the same uniform as the men with all yellow distinctions being in gold. Plumes were now amaranth for company officers and white for field officers.

Officers' brass hilted swords were worn on a buff belt edged white (gold edged silver for parade dress) and sported a gold sabre-strap. They were carried in black leather scabbards with brass fittings, although mounted officers carried similar weapons in steel scabbards with brass fittings. Rank distinctions remained as before as did those for NCOs. Officers' boots appear to have been of various types including the "English" pattern and hussar style with gold trim and tassel.

Aloja shows an officer wearing the surtout and a bicorne with gold stiffeners and cockade strap, carrot shaped plume and the standard cockade.

Mounted officers wore heavy riding boots and horse furniture consisted of a square cornered, dark blue shabraque edged in gold with a gold grenade in the rear corner. The portmanteau was square ended and edged in a similar fashion as were the pistol holsters.



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Musicians

The new drummers' coats were of the same pattern as those of the men but in reversed colours with the standard musicians' lace edging to the collar, cuffs, cuff flaps and lapels while the epaulettes were amaranth with yellow crescents. The drum was carried on a buff belt edged white and the rims were now painted in amaranth and white diagonal stripes.

Veliti

The Velite regiments are almost unique in that they appear to have worn basically the same uniform throughout their history.

Coat

The coat was a white Spencer which seems to originally have had long tails, these becoming short by 1815 at the latest.

The collar, pointed cuffs, lapels and turnbacks were scarlet for the first regiment and amaranth for the second. Buttons were brass and all button holes were outlined with yellow batons, as in the Grenadier regiment, and there were two horizontal batons on the cuffs. In addition, the turnbacks bore badges of a flaming grenade in a hunting horn. Some sources show the collar, cuffs and lapels as being piped with a very thin trace of white.

The colour of the epaulettes is debatable; Aloja shows both regiments with all green epaulettes while other sources show green straps and fringes with amaranth crescents.

In addition, Aloja shows a velite of the 1st Regiment in 1815 wearing a surtout similar to that of the grenadiers but in white with scarlet collar and cuffs, these bearing lace batons, and scarlet piping down the front.

Trousers

Breeches were white, worn with over the knee gaiters before about 1811 and short gaiters after this date. In addition, white or off-white trousers were also worn on campaign.

Headgear

Full dress headgear was a plateless bearskin with a scarlet or amaranth rear patch sporting a yellow grenade and green cords, plume and tassels (some sources show a red tip to the plume for the 1st regiment). Aloja shows officers and men of

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The 1st Regiment in 1815 wearing shakos in undress, these having a green plume and pompon, brass chin scales and a brass shako plate consisting of a crowned, inverted five pointed star with the royal monogram at its centre.

Equipment

Equipment was as for the grenadiers, all belts being of buff leather edged white. Cartridge pouches bore the same brass grenade badges and sabre straps and knots were green.

In bad weather, dark grey greatcoats were worn with epaulettes.

Officers' Uniforms

These followed the same pattern as those of the men with all yellow lace being gold. Epaulettes and bearskin cords etc were gold and the gorget was gilt. Plumes were green tipped white for junior officers and all white for field officers. The brass hilted epee was carried in a brass mounted, leather scabbard and had a gold strap and knot.

Officers appear to have worn gold laced hussar pattern boots.

Aloja shows a gorgeously dressed officer of the 1st Regiment in 1815 wearing a shako as described above with white over green plume, gold pompon and lace around the top consisting of interlinked gold hoops. His tunic is a white surtout with scarlet collar and cuffs, both of these being piped white, scarlet turnbacks and piping down the front. No lace batons are worn on this coat. He wears the badges of his rank and scarlet trousers with two gold stripes down the outside seam and carries the epee described earlier.

He also depicts a battalion commander of the 2nd Regiment in full dress with an amaranth shabraque, this having pointed rear corners, gold lace edging and a crowned royal monogram in the rear corner.

Musicians

Drummers probably wore uniforms in reversed colours with the standard musicians' lace around the collar, cuffs and lapels. Drums were of the same pattern as for the grenadiers.

Volteggianti

The only uniform for which there is any firm evidence is that of 1814-15, possibly lending support to the theory that the

unit was only formed in 1814.

Coat

Identical to that of the 2nd Velites but with yellow collars and bugle horns on the turnbacks. Epaulettes were green with yellow crescents.

Trousers

As for the velites.

Headgear

The headgear was a black, line infantry style shako which appears to have had a buff flamme wrapped around it in the style of revolutionary French hussars. This sported a drooping green horsehair plume over a green pompon with an amaranth centre, this bearing the company number in yellow. The standard amaranth/white cockade was worn and the shako plate was of the same pattern as that worn by the velites. Brass chin scales were worn. The fatigue cap was white with green trim and tassel.

Equipment

Equipment was the same as for the velites except that the cartridge pouch badge was a large hunting horn with a smaller horn in each corner. Sabre straps and knots were green.

Officers' Uniforms

These followed the mens' uniforms and, hence, were similar to those of the velites but with the regimental distinctions. The plume was green for company officers and white for their senior brethren while the pompon was gold with a green centre, bearing the company number in gold for junior officers. The same decoration was worn as on the Velite officers' shako. The gorget was gilt and bore a white metal hunting horn.

Musicians

Drummers wore reversed colours and the same shako as the men. From the one illustration that I have been able to find, it does not appear that the usual musicians' lace was worn. Epaulettes were as for the men. The drums had a brass body with rims painted in amaranth and white diagonal stripes.

Marinari

I can find no reliable information on what was worn before 1815 so this description will be of the uniform worn in that year, however it is probable that this uniform was also worn earlier.

Coat

This was a long tailed, dark blue Spencer with amaranth collar, pointed cuffs, lapels and turnbacks, these bearing a yellow grenade. All buttons were brass and the button holes were laced, this being in the form of a heavily decorated yellow anchor. This lace was also worn on the collar in the same fashion as in the other guard regiments and in three vertical stripes on the cuffs. Amaranth epaulettes were worn.

As an alternative, a dark blue tailless jacket, similar to that worn in undress by the French Guard Marines, could be worn, this being piped in amaranth and having dark blue pointed cuffs piped amaranth. No lace batons were worn on this jacket

but the epaulettes were worn.

Trousers

In full dress white breeches were worn with short black gaiters while dark blue trousers could also be worn.

Headgear

The headgear was a line infantry style shako with an amaranth plume over an amaranth pompon and amaranth cords and flounders (the pompon alone was worn in undress). The usual cockade was worn with a yellow cockade strap and the brass shako plate was shield shaped and bore an anchor and flaming grenade. Brass chinscales were worn.

Equipment

Equipment was as for the other guard regiments although the cartridge pouch badge was the same shield as worn on the shako surrounded by four brass grenades. Aloja shows a marine with a white pouch cover bearing a naturally coloured anchor and grenade. Sabre straps and knots were amaranth. The greatcoat was brown and apparently worn without epaulettes.

Officers Uniforms

As usual, officers' uniforms followed those of the men with all yellow trim in gold. In addition the collar, cuffs, lapels and turnbacks were piped in gold. The usual epaulettes were worn and Aloja shows a Captain wearing gold aiguillettes on the right shoulder.

As an alternative a long tailed, dark blue surtout with unpiped amaranth turnbacks could be worn in undress. This had a blue collar and cuffs piped in amaranth, which colour also appeared on the front seam. The head gear was as for the men with gold cords and pompon although a bicorne with gold stiffeners could also be worn.

Officers wore breeches with gold laced hussar style boots in full dress or dark blue trousers in undress and the same epee was carried as in the velite regiments, although for senior officers this could have an ivory grip.

NCOs wore the normal rank markings including mixed gold and amaranth shako cords, pompon and epaulettes.

Spada d'Onore

Aloja shows a marine and NCO of the "Spada d'Onore" (Sword of Honour), these wear the uniform described above except that the shako and cartridge pouch plates are shield shaped bearing an anchor and crossed cannon. In addition they carry a short, straight bladed sword with a basic, cross shaped hilt, this being of brass with a black grip, rather than the usual sabre. The sabre belt carries a brass mounted black plaque bearing the inscription:

SPADA
D'
ONORE

Whether this was an elite sub-unit or just a distinction awarded to outstanding marines is something that I have been unable to discover.

Musicians

I have been unable to uncover any information on the uniforms worn by the musicians of this formation.

vi) Guard Cavalry

The history of the Neapolitan guard cavalry is even more complicated than that of the rest of the army. This is mainly due to the fact that Murat changed the names and uniforms of his favourite regiments about as often as Caroline changed her lovers (As a brief aside, Caroline is alleged to have slept with every officer in the guards!).

The Origins of the Regiments

The Neapolitan guard cavalry basically evolved down two parallel paths; the first began with a regiment of cavalry formed by Joseph in 1806, mostly from French volunteers (allegedly including many ex members of Louis XVI's guards). When he departed to take up the throne of Spain in 1808 he took most of the able bodied men of this unit with him. Murat combined the remainder with the two squadrons of the Berg Light Horse that he had brought with him from the Grand Duchy to form the Guardie d'Onore. In late 1813 this unit was split, half becoming the Guardie del Corpo and the rest being converted to the Corazzieri (cuirassiers); according to Weil, in April 1815 the Corazzieri consisted of one squadron of 200 men, a drop from the strength of 529 in October 1813.

The second path started with the Veliti a Cavallo, apparently raised by Joseph in 1806. This regiment, remarkably, remained intact until 1813 when it became the Ussari regiment. Again according to Weil, this regiment consisted of four squadrons totalling 550 men in April 1815.

In addition, two more regiments appeared in time for the 1815 campaign; these were the Cavallegieri (raised in 1813 and totalling 550 men in four squadrons in April 1815 according to Weil) and the Lancieri, both of these being lance armed units.

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I will describe the uniforms in the same order that the regiments were listed above, that is following their evolution via the two parallel lines.

Joseph's Guards

Sources for this uniform are virtually non existent. This uniform is based on that worn by them when they were serving as part of the Spanish Guard and seems to correspond to the few mentions that exist of their uniform from 1806-1808.

Coat

The coat was a long tailed Spencer in dark green with yellow collar, shoulder strap piping, lapel piping, cuffs and turnbacks. Buttons were brass and, as with most of the Guard foot regiments, were outlined with yellow batons.

Trousers

On active service, green trousers with a single yellow stripe were worn while, for full dress, white breeches were worn with yellow trimmed hussar style boots.

Headgear

A brass helmet with front and rear peaks was worn, these being of black leather and trimmed with brass. The lower half of the body of the helmet was covered in black fur and the brass comb carried a black caterpillar crest. Chinscales were brass. A tall scarlet plume was worn at the left hand side and the

whole was almost identical to that later adopted by the French line lancer regiments.

Equipment

The whitened leather belts supported a plain black cartridge pouch, a French light cavalry carbine and a brass hilted sabre in a brass, white metal or black leather scabbard, the latter having brass fittings. The carbine strap sported a brass grenade badge, linked to a small boss by a brass chain and all fittings were brass.

The cape was, apparently, white with a yellow collar and three bands of yellow trimmed green lace across the small shoulder cape, these having yellow tassels at their ends.

The horse furniture consisted of a green shabraque with pointed rear corners; in other words, the same style as that used by Napoleon's Polish Guard Lancers. This was piped in yellow and the royal monogram was displayed in the rear corners. A green portmanteau piped in yellow was carried behind the saddle. It seems possible that, in full dress, a green shabraque with rounded front and rear corners was used. This had an unusual edging consisting of a yellow stripe edged with yellow trimmed, green scallops.

Officers' Uniforms

I have been unable to find any information on these and can only assume that they were similar to those of the men but with all yellow piping in gold and gold epaulettes.

Musicians

Again, as far as I can find, no information is available.

Guardie d'Onore

Coat

The coat was a white kurtka with amaranth collar, pointed cuffs, lapels, turnbacks, shoulder strap piping, pocket piping and seam piping. Buttons were white metal and the lapel buttonholes were decorated with batons of white lace. Two white lace batons also appeared on each side of the collar while three vertical batons were worn on the cuffs.

Trousers

On active service, off white or grey trousers were worn, these being piped amaranth while, in full dress, amaranth trousers were worn with two white stripes down the outside seam.

Headgear

Headgear was a czapka with an amaranth top piped white along the corners and edges and with a white X from corner to corner on the top. The black lower body was separated from the top by a broad strip of white lace. Decoration consisted of a white plume, cords and flounders and an amaranth and white cockade. The plate was a white metal Polish style "sunburst" with a gilt centre bearing the royal monogram while the chin-scales were of white metal.

For undress wear, a white fatigue cap was worn, this having amaranth piping and tassels.

Equipment

The shoulder belts were of whitened leather with brass

fittings and supported a black cartridge pouch which carried the royal monogram in white metal. Up to 1812, all troopers wore a second shoulder belt which carried a light cavalry carbine. After this date the front rank lost their carbines and had them replaced by a black lance with an amaranth over white pennon. The brass hilted sabre was carried in a steel scabbard which hung from a white waist belt sporting a white metal buckle. Sabre straps were white.

The horse furniture consisted of a Polish Guard Lancer style amaranth shabraque. This was piped with a wide band of white edged in amaranth and carried the royal monogram in the rear corners. The round portmanteau was amaranth piped white and the harness was of black leather.

Officers' Uniforms

As usual, these followed those of the men with silver lace, epaulettes and trouser piping. In addition, a silver aiguillette was worn on the right shoulder. The officers' czapka sported silver cords and piping; field officers wore a white plume while their junior colleagues had a white plume tipped amaranth.

The cartridge pouch was carried on a gold belt edged silver in full dress and was made of red leather edged in silver. The belt was decorated with a silver chain and pickers. As an alternative, it seems that a red leather belt could be worn, this being edged in silver. The full dress waist belt was of this latter style and supported a sabre with a silver plated hilt, this being carried in the same type of scabbard as worn by the men. Sabre straps were silver. However, on active service, all belts were of black leather. The horse furniture was of the same pattern as that of the men, minus the portmanteau, with silver decoration instead of white, while the harness was of red leather.

Musicians

The trumpeters' coat was of the same style as that of the men but in reversed colours with lace trimming to the collar, cuffs, lapels and turnbacks of the standard musicians' pattern; this lace also decorated the lapel buttonholes. White epaulettes with amaranth crescents were worn. Full dress trousers could be in reversed colours or the same as those of the men while the brass trumpets were decorated with mixed amaranth and white cords.

The czapka was white with amaranth piping and sported a white over amaranth plume and mixed amaranth and white cords and flounders.

The trumpeters' shabraques were of the same style as those of the men but in reversed colours and the harness was of black leather.

Guardie del Corpo

On first being formed from the Guardie d'Onore, this unit adopted a provisional uniform, which was apparently still in use, alongside the regulation uniform, in 1815.

Provisional Uniform

Coat

The coat was a single breasted, long tailed, scarlet tunic with yellow collar, pointed cuffs and turnbacks, these latter being decorated with silver grenades. Seven white metal buttons closed the front of the tunic, which was decorated with seven broad silver batons extending across the chest. A horizontal silver

baton was worn on each side of the collar and two fully fringed silver epaulettes were worn, along with silver aiguillettes on the right shoulder. This coat had no pockets.

Trousers

Trousers were dark blue and were decorated with piping down the outer seam which consisted of a narrow strip of yellow sandwiched between two wider stripes of the same colour.

Headgear

A yellow topped czapka was worn; this had a black lower body, silver lace in the same positions as the white lace on the Guardie d'Onore version and white metal chinscales. The plume was yellow over green and was worn over an amaranth and white cockade. No cords were worn while the plate was the same as that worn by the previous regiment.

Equipment.

The shoulder belt was of buff leather trimmed silver with white metal fittings and supported a white cartridge pouch with gold edging and royal monogram. The brass hilted sabre, which had a white strap, was carried in a steel scabbard supported by a waist belt of the same style as the shoulder belt.

Horse furniture consisted of the same shabraque as worn by the previous regiment and a round blue portmanteau with white trim. The harness was of black leather.

Officers' Uniforms

These appear to have been the same as those of the men.

Musicians

No information is available.

Official Uniform

Coat

The same coat was worn but with silver trefoil epaulettes in place of the fully fringed variety. All other details were the same, including the aiguillettes.

In undress, a dark blue, double breasted coat with white metal buttons was worn. This had an amaranth collar, pointed cuffs and turnbacks, the latter bearing silver grenade badges while a baton of horizontal silver lace was worn on each side of the collar.

The lapels could be worn buttoned back to show the undecorated amaranth lining. This coat had the same trefoil epaulettes and aiguillettes as the dress coat.

Trousers

In full dress white breeches were worn with heavy cavalry boots while, in undress, grey trousers with a narrow amaranth stripe on the outer seam were worn.

Headgear

Headgear was a bicorne which, in undress, was trimmed with black lace with silver stiffeners and cockade strap, the latter holding the standard cockade. In full dress the bicorne was laced in silver and sported a bushy white plume.

Equipment

The shoulder belt was silver with inlaid medium blue squares and supported the same cartridge pouch as in the provisional uniform. The waist belt was of buff leather edged silver and supported the same sabre, with a silver knot on the white strap, in a steel, brass fitted scabbard. All buckles were of white metal.

Horse furniture consisted of a dark blue shabraque with round front and square rear corners. This was trimmed with a broad band of silver lace, piped on the outside edge with a thin line of amaranth. The silver royal monogram was displayed in the rear corners while a square dark blue portmanteau with the same lace as the shabraque was carried. The harness was of black leather.

Officers' Uniforms

These were almost identical to those of the men, except for the following:

A full silver epaulette was worn on the left shoulder and belts were gold with silver trim, the shoulder belt sporting a silver shield and boss.

Musicians

Again, no details have been found.

Corazzieri

Coat

The coat was a dark blue, short tailed, single breasted tunic with nine white metal buttons down the front and amaranth collar and turnbacks, the latter being decorated with white grenade badges. The collar had a baton of white lace on either side and a further nine batons were across the front of the coat. White, fully fringed epaulettes were worn with aiguillettes on the right shoulder. I have been unable to discover what the cuffs were like as all the illustrations show white gauntlets being worn.

In undress a similar coat was worn, without the frontal lace batons and with amaranth piping down the front. The same epaulettes and aiguillettes were worn and the plain amaranth cuffs were fastened with three white metal buttons, one actually on the cuff and two above it. This coat had no pockets.

Trousers

In full dress, white breeches were worn with heavy cavalry boots while, in undress, the same boots could be worn over dark blue breeches. For dismounted duty plain blue trousers could be worn.

Headgear

Headgear was a plateless bearskin with an amaranth rear patch bearing a white grenade badge. A white plume was worn at the left hand side but, apart from this, the bearskin was undecorated. It seems that a French style helmet was to have been issued but was not available in time for the campaign, although a print of the Battle of Tolentino in the Austrian Military Museum shows it in use; however this print is inaccurate in many other regards so should not be taken too seriously as evidence.

The fatigue cap was dark blue with a white grenade on the front, white piping around the top of the body and a blue tail

piped amaranth with a white tassel.

Equipment

French pattern cuirasses should have been worn but were not ready in time for the campaign, although the same Austrian print shows them being worn.

Belts were of buff leather edged white, with brass fittings, while the cartridge pouch was of black leather and was decorated with a brass grenade. The French pattern, brass hilted, heavy cavalry sword was carried in a black leather scabbard with brass fittings and had a plain white wrist strap. The cape was dark blue with an amaranth collar.

The horse furniture consisted of a square dark blue saddlecloth edged with a wide band of white, inside which was a narrower band. This same edging appeared on the square portmanteau and the round bottomed pistol holsters and their covers, while a white grenade badge appeared in the rear corners of the saddle cloth. The brown leather saddle, with a pouch for a spare horseshoe on the right hand side, was positioned over the shabraque.

Officers' Uniforms

As usual, these followed the same pattern as the mens' with all white trim in silver. Epaulettes followed the usual system for officers and were silver, as was the sword strap. The plume was white for all commissioned ranks who, in full dress, wore gold belts edged with silver.

Musicians

Again, my research has failed to turn up any reliable information.

Veliti a Cavallo

The second path begins with the Veliti a Cavallo, who although remaining intact until 1813, underwent a change of uniform along the way.

First Uniform

Coat

The first pattern coat, issued to the unit during Joseph's reign, was of the Spencer style, dark blue in colour with yellow collar, pointed cuffs, lapels, turnbacks and piping to the pockets. Buttons were brass.

In undress, the unit wore a dark blue, single breasted tunic with all facings blue piped yellow and nine yellow lace batons across the front. Full epaulettes with yellow straps and scarlet crescents and fringes were worn with both of these coats.

Trousers

Dark blue breeches piped yellow and bearing a yellow arrowhead shaped design on the thigh were worn with hussar style boots, these being trimmed in yellow.

Headgear

The headgear was a yellow topped czapka with a black lower body and dark blue piping. The plume was white while the cords and flounders were yellow. The plate was of the sunburst pattern with brass rays and a white metal centre while the chin-scales were brass.

In undress the men wore dark blue fatigue caps with a

yellow tassel and piping.

Equipment

All belts were of black leather with brass fittings and supported a black cartridge pouch bearing the royal monogram and a brass hilted sabre in a brass fitted, black leather scabbard. This sabre appears to have had a black leather wrist strap. The cape was dark blue with a yellow collar.

Horse furniture consisted of a dark blue shabraque of the Polish Guard Lancer style with yellow piping and monogram in the rear corner. The portmanteau followed the same colour scheme. The harness was of black leather.

Officers' Uniforms

At this period officers' uniforms were similar to those of the men with the addition of gold epaulettes, gold aiguillettes on the right shoulder and gold lace batons on the undress coat.

NCOs had epaulettes with mixed scarlet and gold fringes and gold crescents and mixed scarlet and yellow cords and flounders on the czapka. Their sabre straps were yellow with a mixed gold and scarlet knot and tassel.

Officers' saddlecloths were similar to those of the men with all yellow details replaced by gold.

Musicians

The musicians' coats were in reversed colours with piping to the collar, cuffs and lapels of the later musicians' pattern lace in scarlet, white and blue. Instead of epaulettes they wore blue "swallows' nests" with yellow piping to the shoulder straps and the upper edges and the tricolour piping to the bottom edge. The plume was yellow with a scarlet tip, the legwear was the same as for the men and the trumpets were brass with yellow cords. Musicians' saddlecloths were of the same style as those of the men but in reversed colours.

Second Uniform

The second uniform, introduced by Murat in 1809, was radically different to the first, that obviously being far too boring (sensible?) for his taste.

Coat

The dolman was white with amaranth collar and pointed cuffs trimmed in yellow lace, this extending around all the edges of the collar and forming a Hungarian knot above the cuffs. This yellow lace also trimmed the edges of the dolman and outlined the pockets. Sixteen braids of yellow lace decorated the front, with 5 rows of brass buttons.

Yellow lace also appeared on the back, following the two seams and ending in trefoil knots.

The waist sash was alternately amaranth and yellow and had amaranth cords and tassels.

The pelisse was amaranth with black fur and yellow lace trim around the edges and along the back seams, again ending in trefoil knots. The sixteen lines of braid were also yellow.

Trousers

The new full dress, skin tight, breeches were amaranth with yellow piping down the outer seams and yellow arrowheads on the thighs. These were worn with the same boots as before.

On active service, amaranth trousers were worn, these having two yellow stripes and a row of brass buttons down the outer seams.

Headgear

The new headgear was an amaranth shako with yellow bands around the top and bottom, brass chin-scales and a shield shaped, brass plate bearing the royal monogram.

The white plume rose from an amaranth pompon, below which was the usual cockade, while the cords and flounders were still yellow.

Fatigue caps were now white with amaranth piping and tassel.

Equipment

All belts were now of the usual buff and white guard pattern and the sabre strap was changed to amaranth. A new addition was an amaranth sabretache with yellow lace edging and royal monogram.

The horse furniture was of the same pattern as before but was now amaranth with yellow trim and monogram.

Officers' Uniforms

Officers' pelisses and dolmans were similar to those of the men with all yellow lace being replaced with gold, this being very ornate for the senior ranks, whose rank markings, decorated with huge Hungarian knots, extended almost the whole way up the arms. Senior officers had red fox fur trim to the pelisse. The waist sash was amaranth and gold with gold cords and tassels.

Officers' breeches were amaranth with gold trim and boots were of either black, yellow or amaranth leather with gold lace.

Officers' headgear was a brown colpack with an amaranth bag piped gold. The plume, rising from a gilt holder, was white with an amaranth tip for junior officers and all white for their senior colleagues. Chin-scales were gilt.

Belts were white with gold edging for company officers and gold edged silver for field officers and supported a black or buff cartridge pouch with gold trim and monogram, a brass hilted sabre in a black leather scabbard with gold fittings and the gold decorated sabretache, this being very heavily decorated for senior officers, including a heavy gold fringe for the colonel.

Officers' saddlecloths were amaranth with gold trim, this becoming heavier with increasing rank; the colonel's shabraque being shown with a heavy fringe and large tassels at the rear corners. In addition, his black leather harness is heavily decorated with brass and black horsehair tassels.

NCOs wore the same uniform as the men with the following distinctions:

Gold trim to the shako, mixed gold and amaranth cords and flounders and mixed amaranth and gold sabre straps, as well, of course, as standard French hussar rank markings.

Musicians

Musicians wore an amaranth dolman faced white while the pelisse was white with white fur; in both cases the braid was a mix of amaranth and yellow. The waist sash was yellow and light blue.

Breeches were amaranth with piping and arrowheads in the mixed lace and were worn, in full dress at least, with yellow

leather boots piped in the same lace.

Headgear was either the shako, which in this case was white with yellow trim at top and bottom and mixed yellow and amaranth cords, a plume which had the bottom third amaranth and the rest white, and brass metalwork, or a white colpack with an amaranth bag piped yellow and the same plume as worn on the shako. The trumpets were brass with amaranth/yellow cords, while the sabre strap was of the same mixture of colours. A figure in the background of a print has a sabretache which appears to be white with amaranth piping and monogram.

Trumpeters' horse furniture was of the same pattern as that of the troopers but was white with amaranth trim.

Ussari

When the velites were converted to hussars, the uniform underwent some changes of colour.

Coat

The dolman became dark green with a dark green collar and amaranth pointed cuffs. Piping and braid was as for the Veliti. The pelisse and waist sash remained the same.

A single breasted, green stable jacket was also worn, this had a green collar with yellow piping on the front, top and bottom, amaranth pointed cuffs piped yellow and amaranth piping down the front.

Trousers

Legwear remained as before although, in undress, green trousers with a wide amaranth stripe could be worn.

Headgear

Black colpacks were now worn by all ranks, these having an amaranth bag piped yellow with an amaranth tassel, a white plume over a yellow over amaranth pompon and brass chin-scales.

The fatigue cap was dark green with red piping and a yellow and amaranth tassel.

Equipment

All belts were buff with white edging and brass fittings. These supported a black cartridge pouch with a gold monogram, a light cavalry carbine, a brass hilted sabre with a white strap, carried in a steel scabbard, and a black sabretache with the royal monogram in brass. The cape was white.

The horse furniture remained as before and, in full dress, the harness was heavily decorated with black horsehair tassels.

Officers' Uniforms

These were very similar to those of the men with everything that they wore in yellow being in gold. The level of decoration was the same as that described for the Veliti, Aloja showing a major with rank markings and Hungarian knots on his thighs descending as far as his knees. This figure also sports gold belts edged in silver, complete with a gold shield connected to a boss by a gold chain, a gold pompon surmounted by a white egret plume on his black colpack and a marvellous Mameluke sabre with gold fittings and sabre strap in a leather and gold scabbard. Unfortunately his sabretache is obscured.

In undress, officers could wear a dark green, chasseur

style habit coat with an amaranth collar, pointed cuffs, turnbacks and piping to the pointed lapels. Beneath this, an amaranth waistcoat with gold braid was worn. Gold epaulettes following the usual rank system were worn with this coat as were aiguillettes on the right shoulder.

Undress trousers were dark green with two gold stripes and the headgear was a black bicorne with gold stiffeners and cockade strap and a white plume.

More junior officers appear to have worn a brass hilted sabre in a steel scabbard. This had a dark green wrist strap and knot and was carried on a black waist belt.

Officers' horse furniture was as for the men with all yellow distinctions in gold. The major's shabraque in the Aloja print has a broad band of gold with a thinner band of silver inside it, the two being separated by a thin amaranth strip. His round portmanteau has gold trim around the edges with a silver circle in the middle and a silver and gold tassel descends from the rear corner of the shabraque. His harness is of red and black leather, heavily decorated with brass and black horsehair tassels.

Musicians

Apart from the pelisse being green, trumpeters' uniforms were the same as for the Veliti regiment. The colpack was worn and the sabretache was amaranth with a gold monogram. The shabraque was dark green with amaranth distinctions.

Cavalleggieri Coat

The full dress tunic was a dark green, short tailed, single breasted tunic with amaranth collar, pointed cuffs, turnbacks, seam piping and piping down the front. Nine white metal buttons closed the jacket with two more on each cuff. Nine white lace batons decorated the front of the tunic and one was also worn on each side of the collar. White epaulettes were worn, along with white aiguillettes on the right shoulder. An alternative version of this uniform appears to have had green pointed cuffs, piped amaranth.

In undress, and apparently during the 1815 campaign, a dark green kurtka could be worn; this had an undecorated amaranth collar, amaranth turnbacks, seam piping and piping to the dark green lapels and pointed cuffs. Epaulettes and aiguillettes were worn with this coat.

Trousers

In full dress, legwear consisted of amaranth trousers with seam piping consisting of a thin line of white sandwiched between two wider bands of white. In undress, dark green trousers with two lines of amaranth piping could be worn.

Headgear

The headgear was a czapka almost identical to that worn by the old Guardie d'Onore except that the chin-scales and all of the plate were brass.

In undress a dark green fatigue cap was worn. This had white piping around the top of the body, amaranth piping to the tail and a white tassel.

Equipment

All belts were of buff leather edged white and

supported a plain black, or buff in full dress, leather cartridge pouch and a brass hilted sabre with a white strap and knot, in a steel scabbard. All buckles were of steel. The main armament consisted of a black lance with an amaranth over white pennon.

Horse furniture was of the same pattern as for the Ussari. Aloja shows the shabraque as being amaranth with a broad white edging and monogram in the rear corners. The portmanteau is also amaranth with white trim and centre to the ends. However, a painting in the Austrian Military Museum shows the same shabraque but with white "dogs' teeth" edging. Both sources agree that the harness was of black leather with steel fittings.

Officers' Uniforms

As usual, these were very similar to those of the men with silver epaulettes, czapka cords, aiguillettes and lace. All officers wore a white plume while senior officers appear to have sported silver chin-scales and have had the rays on the czapka plate in the same metal. Aloja shows a Squadron Commander with the czapka as described but with an extra trim of small, interlinked silver hoops around the top of the lower body and around the false rear peak.

In full dress, belts were gold edged silver and supported a heavily decorated cartridge pouch and the same sabre as the men, with a silver strap and knot, in a steel scabbard with brass fittings.

In bad weather, officers could wear an unadorned dark green greatcoat, this being slit fore and aft to enable them to ride. They could also wear a similar undress uniform to that of the men.

Officers' shabraques were similar to those of the men but with silver lace, while the harness appears quite often to have been constructed of gilt or silver chain rather than leather, at least for parades.

NCOs wore the same uniform as the men adorned by epaulettes with amaranth straps, silver crescents and mixed amaranth and silver fringes, as well as the normal stripes on the cuffs.

Musicians

Yet again, no information has come to light regarding the uniforms worn by the musicians of this regiment.

Lancieri Coat

The regiment wore a medium blue, single breasted, short tailed coat with yellow collar, pointed cuffs and turnbacks. All other decoration was as for the Cavalleggieri with the addition of a white lace baton on the cuff.

Trousers

Legwear consisted of medium blue trousers with yellow piping consisting of a narrow line sandwiched between two wider stripes.

Headgear

Headgear was a cylindrical medium blue shako with a black horsehair plume rising from a white pompon, white band around the top, standard cockade, black leather peak and false rear peak, both trimmed in white metal, white metal crowned

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monogram on the front and white metal chin-scales.

Equipment

Belts and weapons were the same as for the cavalleggeri. The horse furniture consisted of a black sheepskin with amaranth "dogs' teeth" edging and a round amaranth portmanteau with white piping and monogram. The harness was black leather with white metal fittings.

Officers' Uniforms

It will come as no surprise to discover that these were very similar to those of the men with all white decoration being silver. Epauettes were silver, although Aloja shows a Major with gold straps and silver crescents and fringes. This figure also wears a shako with a black horsehair plume, silver pompon and decoration around the top consisting of a line of interlinked gold hoops sandwiched between a row of interlinked silver hoops (above) and a pair of silver over gold lines (below). All other details are as for the men.

All details of belts and weapons were as for the Cavalleggeri.

The Major's shabraque is a leopardskin bearing the royal monogram in silver in the rear corners. The outer edge is piped with a thin line of gold outside a broad silver band, with amaranth "dogs' teeth" on the extreme edge. The portmanteau is amaranth with the same piping and the royal monogram in silver. The harness is of black leather, heavily inlaid with silver and decorated with horsehair tassels.

Musicians

No details are available.

vii) Guard Artillery

Origins

Despite an immense amount of research I can find no contemporary evidence for the existence of batteries of foot artillery.

The Artiglieria seems to have been formed sometime between 1811-13 when the line horse battery was transferred to the guard. Originally a six gun unit, it seems that, by 1815, the battery had been reorganised into two small batteries, each consisting of three 6 pounders and a howitzer.

UNIFORM

Coat

In full dress the coat was a dark blue dolman with amaranth collar, cuffs and braid and brass buttons. The waist sash was amaranth and yellow with amaranth cords.

The undress coat was a dark blue, chasseur style habit coat, with amaranth collar, epauettes, aiguillettes on the right shoulder, turnbacks and piping to the pointed lapels and cuffs. Buttons were brass. The vertical rear pockets were piped amaranth and yellow grenade badges were worn on the

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turnbacks. Beneath this was worn a dark blue waistcoat with red piping and braid.

Trousers

In full dress, dark blue breeches were worn with amaranth Hungarian knots and piping down the outer seam. These were worn with amaranth trimmed hussar style boots.

Undress legwear consisted of dark blue trousers with a thin amaranth stripe down the outer seam.

Headgear

This was a black colpack with an amaranth bag piped dark blue with an amaranth tassel. Decoration consisted of an amaranth plume over a pompon of the same colour and, in full dress, amaranth cords and flounders.

Equipment

The belts and sabre were identical to those of the Cavalleggeri but with brass buckles while the cartridge pouch was of black leather, trimmed brass and bearing crossed cannon surmounted by a crown. The sabre strap and knot were amaranth.

Horse furniture was also similar in style to that of the Cavalleggeri except that the shabraque was dark blue with amaranth edging and an amaranth grenade badge in the rear corner. The portmanteau was dark blue with the same edging and an amaranth grenade badge.

Officers' Uniforms

In full dress these were as for the men but with gilt buttons, gold pompon, gold piping on the colpack bag, gold braid, piping, Hungarian knot, sabre strap and knot and gold instead of amaranth on the shabraque. The pelisse, when worn, was dark blue with gold braid and trim and black fur and full dress belts were gold with silver trim.

In undress the chasseur coat was worn with gold epauettes, aiguillettes, turnback badges and trouser piping.

Musicians

In full dress, trumpeters wore amaranth dolmans with dark blue collar, cuffs and braid, the first two being piped in the standard musicians' braid.

Breeches were amaranth with a dark blue knot and piping while the boots were the same as for the men. The colpack had a white over amaranth plume and mixed amaranth and white cords. The trumpets were brass with amaranth and blue cords.

Trumpeters shabraques were in reversed colours.

Artillery Train

Coat

The single breasted coat was dark sky blue in colour with an amaranth collar, pointed cuffs and turnbacks, the latter

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being decorated with yellow grenade badges. Buttons were brass and nine yellow batons were worn across the front in addition to one on each side of the collar. Amaranth epaulettes and aiguillettes were worn.

Trousers

Undecorated dark sky blue trousers were worn with heavy cavalry boots.

Headgear

A black shako was worn; this sported an amaranth plume over an amaranth pompon, the usual cockade, amaranth cords and flounders and a brass grenade badge and chin-scales. In undress, a fatigue cap of the coat colour piped amaranth could be worn.

Equipment

The white edged, buff shoulder belt supported a black cartridge pouch, edged in brass, bearing crossed cannon below a grenade. All buckles and fittings were brass.

Unusually, the short sabre was worn directly on the waist belt; it had a brass hilt and an amaranth strap and knot and was carried in a black scabbard with brass fittings.

The cape was in the coat colour with an amaranth collar.

The shabraque was square with point-ended pistol covers. It was in the coat colour piped amaranth with an amaranth grenade in the rear corner while the square portmanteau was in the same colours.

Officers' Uniforms

Once again, as for the men with the following variations:

Gold pompon, cords, flounders, epaulettes, lace and aiguillettes.

In full dress, belts were gold edged silver, supporting the same cartridge pouch as the men and a brass hilted sabre with silver strap and gold knot in a black leather scabbard with brass fittings. This sabre was worn in the more usual fashion.

The shako had a gold band around the top, this being in the form of interlinked gold hoops, while the shabraque was as for the men but with gold instead of amaranth.

Musicians

No information is available.

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