

# Austrian Hungarian Infantry 1866

## (Bohemian Theatre)

### A Painting Guide



#### ORGANISATION, TACTICS & WEAPONRY

These notes are intended to act as a guide when painting our range of 28mm Austrian Hungarian Infantry.

The 'Hungarian' regiments were recruited from what could be termed the Slavic lands of the Habsburg Empire, and were chiefly distinguished from the 'German' regiments by the cut of their trousers. In actual fact, the Hungarian regiments could contain a number of nationalities, including Czechs, Slovaks, Serbians, Romanians, Croats and Ruthenians (Ukrainians).

Although defeated in every battle saved two (Trautenau and Oswiecim), the infantry

were reliable and brave, to the point of being foolhardy in attack.

Unfortunately, peacetime training was inadequate, and the quality of many of the men's shooting was abysmal. Although conscription was the prescribed recruitment method, the well-off found it possible to avoid service by using substitutes. In general, the educational and literacy levels amongst the ranks were low. The 'glue' that held the infantry units together in the heat of battle during 1866 was a core of very experienced non-commissioned officers, many of whom had seen service in Italy in 1859, and Schleswig-Holstein in 1864.

The infantry regiment consisted of four battalions, each of six companies. In time of war the fourth battalion normally remained behind to act as a depot unit. In battle the battalions frequently manoeuvred by division. Each division consisted of two companies, thus each battalion contained three divisions. At field strength a battalion consisted of 26 officers, one doctor and 1041 NCOs and privates. The standard battlefield formation was the *Bataillonsmasse*. In this the battalion's three divisions formed shallow columns, the men packed in close ranks. Line formations saw infrequent use during 1866.

The men were armed with either the M54 or M63 Lorenz rifle. This was a fine weapon, although it suffered the disadvantage of being a muzzle-loader, with a rate of fire of no more than 3 or 4 rounds per minute. The majority of men

were armed with the M54 I, effective up to 650 yards; selected shots and NCOs carried the M54 II, with a range of 750 yards.

## UNIFORMS

**Boots** - black.

**Trousers** - deep royal blue with black and yellow seam cord piping, and a Hungarian knot in the same colour on the thighs. **Officers' trousers** - deep royal blue with white piping down the outside seam.

**Greatcoat** - dark grey with two rows of buttons, brass or white metal according to the regiment. Beneath the greatcoat a black stock and white coat or shirt were visible. 'Paroli' or lance-head-shaped flashes on the collar denoted the regiment (see table below). **Officers' greatcoat** - the same shade of grey as for the other ranks. Buttons were silver or gilt, depending on the regiment. Paroli were in facing colour. In addition, the regiment's facing colour piped the greatcoat cuffs, pocket flaps, collar, rear belt and edging to the right front vent.

Regimental distinctions were as follows (only Hungarian regiments serving in Bohemia are listed):

<i>Regiment</i>	<i>Facing colour</i>	<i>Buttons</i>
2	imperial yellow	brass
6	rose red	white metal
12	dark brown	brass
23	cherry red (medium deep)	white metal
25	sea green	white metal
32	sky blue	brass
33	dark blue	white metal
34	madder red	white metal
37	scarlet (orangey)	brass
44	madder red	brass
46	parrot green	brass
51	dark blue	brass
52	deep red	brass
60	deep green	white metal
61	grass green	brass
62	grass green	white metal
64	orange yellow	brass
67	crayfish red	white metal
68	red brown	brass
69	pike grey	white metal
71	crayfish red	brass
72	light blue	brass
78	red brown	white metal

**NCO's distinctions** - although the Grenadier companies of regiments had been abolished in 1860, their former members who had remained in the army were allowed to retain the Grenadier distinction of a brass flaming grenade, which was worn on the upper part of the front crossbelts.

**Officers' uniform coat** – officers wore their greatcoat open to display their badges of rank. The coat was white; the front vent, base and collar of the coat were piped in the regimental colour. Tunic buttons were as for the greatcoat. The cuffs were pointed and had a lace bar known as a 'bear's claw', plus a button – this was white if the buttons were silver, yellow if buttons were gilt. The right shoulder bore a gold cord to retain the sash.

**Officers' distinctions – collar markings** – silver or brass stars, depending on regimental button colour. Field grade officers (major and above) also had stars, but these were of the opposite colour to the regimental button colour.

**Sash** – deep yellow with thin black lines along its length. Tassels were deep yellow on the outside, black on the inside. **Horse furniture** – black lambskin saddle cloth, with gold imperial ciphers on black panels, under a dark brown saddle. Dark brown reins with steel or brass fittings. Black or dark brown pistol holsters.

**Shako** – black with brass eagle and domed black on brass cockade. On campaign, often covered by a black oilskin. Sprigs of oak were often stuck onto the top as a traditional Habsburg field sign. Black chinstraps. **Officers' shako** – if uncovered, bore a wide band of gold braid around the top.

**Holzmutz (other ranks forage cap)** – deep royal blue with white piping.

**Lagermutz (officers' forage cap)** – black cloth and peak; gold cockade with black centre; gold piping around base.

#### PERSONAL EQUIPMENT & WEAPONS

**Rifle** - wooden stock stained mid/dark brown. Highly polished gunmetal fittings. White sling.

**NCOs sabre & scabbard** – steel guard, black hilt, black leather scabbard with steel mountings. Sword knot - yellow with black lines to the strap, and a black core to the tassels.

**Officers' sword & scabbard** - polished steel blade, guard and scabbard; black hilt or grip; yellow sword knot.

**Officers' equipment** - black or brown shoulder bags, binoculars cases, pistol holsters.

**Ensign's equipment/flagpoles etc** - black oilskin cover wrapped around body. This usually carried the name of the regiment and battalion number in white lettering. Over right shoulder, a thin white bandolier with brass clip. Flagpole was painted in descending spirals of red, white, black and yellow. Butt of pole, and finial were brass. Regimental honour ribbons were tied at the top of the pole (see separate download guide to Austrian infantry colours in 1866 for further details).

**Drum** - brass shell; outside of hoops diagonal bands of yellow and black; inside of hoops red; skin and cords white. White belt bearing brass plate. Black drumsticks tipped with brass at non-playing end.

**Bugle** - brass with black and yellow striped tassels and cords.

**Other ranks' personal equipment: Belts** – white. **Bayonet scabbard** – black with iron tip. **Backpack** – mid-brown fur with two small white straps on either side. Some figures have their fatigue coat or *Leibel* rolled on top of the

pack, this was white in colour. **Mess tin** – steel with black straps. **Squad mess tin** – as mess tin. **Hand axe** – dark brown with iron head, attached to pack by black straps. **Haversack and strap** – very pale buff. **Canteen and strap** – polished steel with a cross of white straps. Sometimes may be covered in dark brown leather. Pale grey or black belt. Wooden bung. **Cartridge box** – black. **Percussion cap box** – white.

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