



Another common feature to be found when examining both transitional and production line Einheitsfeldmütze, is the T-shaped insignia fixed to the cap with a simple triangular fold, thus reducing production time.



EINHEITZFELDMUTZE

Einheitsfeldmütze translating as 'standard field cap' very much describes the nature of the caps we have presented within the pages of this book. This is the original German terminology that was introduced in 1943. One can easily imagine with so many diverse arms within a huge uniformed state that standardization would be an obvious practical step. However many forms and materials were used within its construction. Coupled with this, other caps for tropical and camouflage purposes were also worn alongside before, and of course after, 1943. We have thus decided to try to avoid the 'M43' term. This M-designation is purely a collector's term and although useful has now very much become the term used solely for woolen fabric caps. Thus it is somewhat restrictive in the broad range of this study. In the US War Department technical manual of 15 March 1945 TM-E 30 - 451 (7) can be found under Chapter VI 'Supply, Evacuation and Movements' an interesting although complicated resume of the German supply evaluation and movement. This complex chapter reveals many interesting details; starting from the top it is clear the Germans had moved to centralized economic production under the auspices of Reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduktion headed by Albert Speer. In Section 3 of the same chapter it appears that the Heer High Command (OKH) was ultimately responsible for a well-functioning Heer supply system. Interestingly the Heer did in fact to some degree act for the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) and did procure a significant proportion of the material used by the SS. A little later in section 2, column 4, clothing and individual equipment supply organization is addressed. It mentions that the Heer's highest administrative echelons, known as Allgemeines Heeresamt/Stab/Bekleidung, issued directives on clothing and equipment and controlled the work of the army clothing depots - Heeresbekleidungsamt or HBA. Various dates within 1943 show approval for various services for the adoption and use of the standardized cap. At this point it is again important to be aware that

although there was a basic standardization its rigidity was almost immediately diluted by manufacturers' interpretations, materials used, plus idiosyncrasies of the diverse and numerous branches that employed these caps. As a very basic outline the dimensions of the cap were described to have a peak 1cm longer than that of the Bergmütze predecessor with marginal changes in the height of the upper cap and elimination of air vents, the placement of loops to incorporate a detachable earmuff. It was clear that the M42 peakless cap had been utterly unpopular with troops and thus a peaked cap was the final design stage in terms of this form of headdress. The Heer officially adopted the cap in order HV43B No 352 on 11 June 1943 and this was fully intended to replace all other field caps after they had reached the end of their serviceable lives. The Luftwaffe closely followed the Army in adopting the new headdress on September 27th of the same year. Interestingly the Luftwaffe used the word Einheitsfliegermütze - clearly showing the Luftwaffe aviation identity even in basic terminology. The SS again followed suit adopting a very similar cap to the Heer in '43. Interestingly the SS continued to permit the wearing of the Schiffschen style cap after the adoption of the peaked cap as it is believed this was preferred by many who worked with optical instruments and thus needed a peakless cap. These details appeared in VBI/W/SS Nr-19-Oktober 1943 Ziffer 355 (Feldmütze P45). The Kriegsmarine who, of any of the armed services, used the cap in the most limited numbers, again authorized the cap in approximately 1943. However, some confusion exists as the publication NVBL No 557 of 1943 seems to refer to a Feldmütze '42. One can fully understand the problems encountered with nomenclature and dating when one takes into consideration the gargantuan task of implementing headdress changes across an entire armed nation. Other organizations across the Third Reich's vast mobilized populous also quickly fell into line and proudly donned the new cut of cap.





A combat-worn and very much text book example of the Einheitsfeldmütze as worn by the Heer, following the characteristics laid down in order HV43B352 of 11th June 1943. The peak has a greater length, being approximately one centimetre longer than the earlier Bergmütze.

To the left hand side of the cap is attached the zinc alloy oak leaves insignia denoting Jager troops.



The one-piece triangular insignia has a subdued grey weave to the eagle with the contrasting white weave to the roundel.

The wartime produced rayon silk liner shows a high degree of wear and dirt, the forehead area has become somewhat brittle and shredded. This is often the case with rayon cloth.

