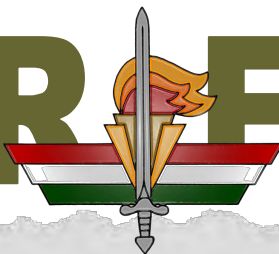


# MAGYAR FRONT



VOLUME XI, ISSUE 4

FALL 2009



CZINK COLLECTION

PAGE 8 - ROYAL HUNGARIAN UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA - PART IV



**MAGYAR FRONT  
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Membership in the  
International Hungarian Military History  
Preservation Society is \$40.00 annually,  
and includes both the *Magyar Front* and  
the *New Hungarian Voice* periodicals.

The original Magyar Front was the  
weekly newspaper of the Front-Line  
Fighter's Association, and was  
published from the early 1930s until the  
end of the Second World War.

## *A note from the Editor*

It is a great pleasure, as usual, to introduce this new issue of the *Magyar Front*. Once again, the IHMHPS is treated to the work of fellow member Dr. Gergely Sallay, who has shared with us his excellent piece on the rare 1944 Royal Hungarian Defence Forces' Qualification Badges – fascinating for anyone who shares our interests, and essential for the collector and enthusiast of military insignia. Thank you Gergely!

Equally exciting is Ajtony Virágh's article on the only medal issued by the old Front-line Fighters' Association – the cross for prisoners of war. This is another very obscure theme that is virtually unknown – certainly in the English speaking world, and I am very grateful for his hard work and dedicated research.

On page 13, I have featured a brief overview of some of the relatives of IHMHPS member James Marin. He has persistently obtained obscure information and documentation relating to his in-laws, who made up part of a considerably large minority of

***“It is my sincere hope that other Hungarian organizations today may be inspired by our showcasing these brave gentlemen, and that the IHMHPS will have a positive influence on some of the venerable institutions that have not yet embraced universal tolerance and cooperation.”***

Jewish-Hungarian soldiers. He has also begun to compile data on Jewish servicemen who have served in the Austro-Hungarian and Hungarian armies, which I will include in a future issue, once it is nearer to completion.

Our next issue will also be covering an upcoming event that I think we can all be very proud of – the Hungarian Ambassador in Australia will be awarding George Hennessy's father, Bandi, a decoration for his World War II military service to his homeland (see the Winter 2009 issue of the *Magyar Front*).

Although there are a great many Jewish advocacy groups involved in the righting of Second World War wrongs, little has been done to show appropriate respect to the great many Jewish officers and men who have fought and served side by side with their fellow Hungarians. It is my sincere hope that other Hungarian organizations today may be inspired by our showcasing these brave gentlemen, and that the IHMHPS will have a positive influence on some of the venerable institutions that have not yet embraced universal tolerance and cooperation.

In other news, I am also very pleased to announce that the IHMHPS will soon be offering a military document translation service. I have often encountered English language translations that have been misleading, due to the translator's unfamiliarity with correct military terminology. Our service, which will be launched soon, will mirror the high level of quality we have come to expect from all of our association's endeavours.

*P.Cz.*

## *Our Cover:*

This detail of the original postcard-sized photograph is the only known image of a member of the Frontline-Fighters' Association wearing the rare Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross. On the reverse is a very brief personal pencil inscription and the date 1937.I.31. Unfortunately, the gentleman's name is not known.

We can tell, however, that he had a leadership role within the organization, denoted by him having two shoulder cords (the single one, worn by regular members, was always on the right shoulder only). His frontline service is denoted by the Emperor Charles' Troops' Cross and the WW I Hungarian Commemorative Medal, and he had also been issued the Commemorative Cross of 1912-1913, along with other allied nations' war service medals. The unique feature of his medal group is the POW cross, worn correctly after his WW I Hungarian Commemorative Medal.

# In the Service of Training and Morale

## The 1944 Royal Hungarian Defence Forces' Qualification Badge System

by Dr. Gergely Pál Sallay - photos by Péter Szikits

Employed to reward the achievements of the rank and file in the field of training, the Royal Hungarian Defence Forces' qualification badges were inherited from the armed forces of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and were used throughout the interwar period. By the end of the 1930s, their regulations had been modified several times and their number had reached a total of 28 insignia of different design.

By order of the Minister of Defence, the number of the badges had to be decreased, and a simplified structure of qualification badges had to be devised. As a result, a draft of the regulations for the awarding of the badges was issued by the Ministry of Defence in the spring of 1944. (The final and official introduction of the new



**"Best Subdivision" Badge**  
(*"Legjobb alosztály" jelvény*)

HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM

also laid down that previously won (old-style) qualification badges were allowed to be worn until 1 October 1944. The new qualification badges were made of aluminium due to the shortage of raw materials (such as copper) in Hungary.

One of the new elements of the simplified structure was the Best Subdivision Badge, which was meant to be awarded on a yearly basis, similar to a challenge trophy. It was to be awarded to the best subdivisions of units in the fields of combat training; knowledge and handling of firearms and equipment; formal and sports training. Each enlisted soldier of the subdivision was entitled to wear the badge, with a cloth backing in arm-of-service colour. According to the plans, badges were to be passed on

**Assault Badge**  
(*Rohamjelvény*)  
and two of its  
supposed  
prototypes

HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY  
MUSEUM - HAJDU COLLECTION



qualification badges in the Defence Gazette did not happen until the end of the Second World War, though.) The little booklet discussed the design of the new badges (see pages 4 and 5), the conditions under which they could be earned, the process of awarding, and the manner in which they should be worn. The aim of the introduction of the new insignia was to replace the outdated badges with ones that reflected the changes that the Royal Hungarian Army went through in the late 1930s and early 1940s, concerning training and structure. When elaborating the new system of awards, the characteristics of the branches of service and the modifications of regulations were also considered.

The instruction introduced eight different kinds of qualification badges and four types of sports qualification badges (the latter had existed for almost two years by then). It was

to the subdivision doing best the following year, in case the original recipient of the title would not have maintained its priority within the unit. A large version of the badge was also intended to be presented to the "best subdivision" symbolically, and would have served as an ornament in their barracks.

The new Assault Badge was to be awarded for those who completed the assault course or the tank destruction course with an excellent result.

Those fulfilling the requirements for firearms training with rifles, submachine guns or pistols, could earn the Expert Rifleman's Badge for Individuals, whereas the Expert Rifleman's Badge for Squad Members could be won by the operators of light and heavy machine guns, trench mortars, antitank or anti-aircraft guns for



**Expert Rifleman's Badge**  
for Individuals  
(*Mesterlövész jelvény egyéni*  
*fegyverek részére*)

HAJDU COLLECTION

Continued on page 6...

## ÜGYESSÉGI JELVÉNYEK (tervezet 1:1)



1. LEGJOBB ALOSZTÁLY JELVÉNY.



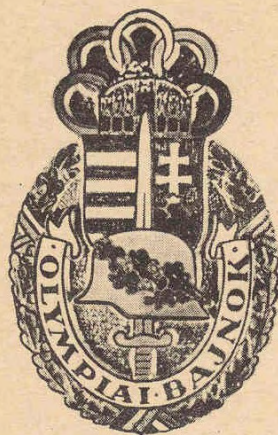
2. ROHAM JELVÉNY.



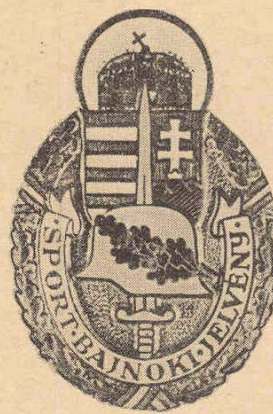
5. IRÁNYZÓ JELVÉNY.



6. TŰZVEZETŐ JELVÉNY.



9. OLYMPIAI BAJNOK JELVÉNY.



10. SPORT BAJNOKI JELVÉNY.

1.sz. melléklet  
az 52.9000/el.n.kik.-1944. számhoz.



3. MESTERLÖVÉSZ JELVÉNY  
/ EGYÉNI FEGYVEREK RÉSZÉRE /



4. MESTERLÖVÉSZ JELVÉNY  
/ RAJ FEGYVEREK RÉSZÉRE /



7. PÁNCÉLJÁRMŰ VEZETŐ JELVÉNY.



8. MESTERÜGYESSÉGI JELVÉNY.



11. HONVÉD SPORTÜGYESSÉGI JELVÉNY  
/ N A G Y /



12. HONVÉD SPORTÜGYESSÉGI JELVÉNY  
/ K I C S I /

**The Expert Rifleman's Badge  
for Squad Members**  
*(Mesterlövész jelvény rajfegyverek részére)*  
and a variant, which differs in both size  
and finish: its diameter is 51mm as opposed  
to the common version's 45mm; its disc is  
not convex, but flat; and there are also slight  
differences in its design.  
**1944 / HÁBORÚS ÉV (1944 / WAR YEAR)**  
is stamped on its reverse.

HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM – HAJDU COLLECTION



...continued from page 3

excellent results in shooting.

The Gunner's Badge served to reward outstanding aiming proficiency of the members of mortar and gun crews, while the Infantry Heavy Weapon Squad Commander's Badge could be awarded to commanders of squads, half-platoons

award included driving, and operation and maintenance of vehicles throughout the year of training.

To cover all the aspects of military training, a General Qualification Badge was also introduced, which was the main means of making the old structure of Qualification Badges more reasonable. The badge was manufactured in the



**Gunner's Badge**  
*(Írányzó jelvény)*

HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM



**Infantry Heavy Weapon  
Squad Commander's Badge**  
*(Tűzvezető jelvény)*

ZEIDLER COLLECTION



**Armoured Vehicle Driver's Badge**  
*(Páncéljármű-vezető jelvény)*

HERMANN COLLECTION

and platoons for fulfilling the requirements for command proficiency in weapons training.

The Armoured Vehicle Driver's Badge could be gained by first-rate drivers of armoured vehicles used by the troops of the Royal Hungarian Defence Forces. The criteria for the

same form for all the branches of service, with a curved band bordering the lower edge, where the name of the field of training, for which the badge was to be awarded, could be engraved. (It would have meant about fifty different versions of text to be engraved, but all the existing examples of the



**General Qualification Badge**  
*(Mesterügyességi jelvény)*  
and its illustration from the 1944 regulations  
supplement. The former, like all known  
examples, bears no engraved words on the  
curved band bordering the lower edge,  
whereas the printed version displays the  
word **MESTERUTÁSZ** (Expert Pioneer) in  
raised letters, which contradicts regulations.

HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM

General Qualification Badge seem to be unnamed., In addition to other factors, this also suggests that the 1944 Qualification Badges, though mass produced, were never actually distributed to the soldiers.)

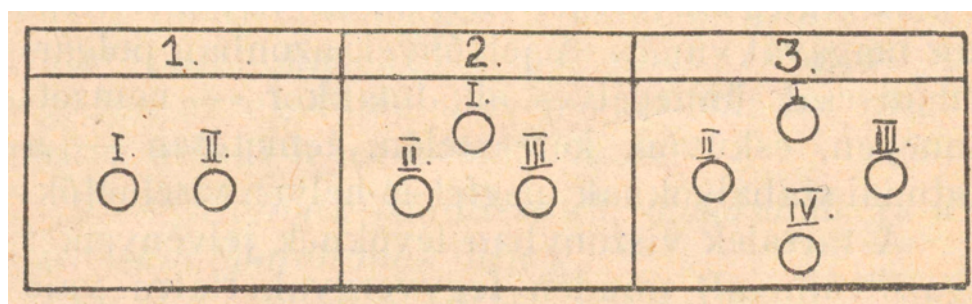
According to the regulations, those decorated with the qualification badges were (theoretically) ensured priority regarding promotion; longer leave and holidays; and monetary rewards as well. Their names were also meant to be displayed on the bulletin boards of the barracks.

The qualification badges could be awarded by subdivision (company/battery) commanders or, on the recommendation of tournament committees, by troop (regiment/battalion) commanders. The badges could be won by students of the military officer training schools; by all soldiers of the rank and file; and by the reserve members of gendarmerie battalions. Soldiers who would have qualified for the respective insignia twice, i.e. in both years of the training period, were entitled to keep them, and wear them on civilian clothes, but only on festive occasions. Students of the military officer training schools were only allowed to wear the badges until they were inaugurated as officers, but “double-winners” could keep them as souvenirs.

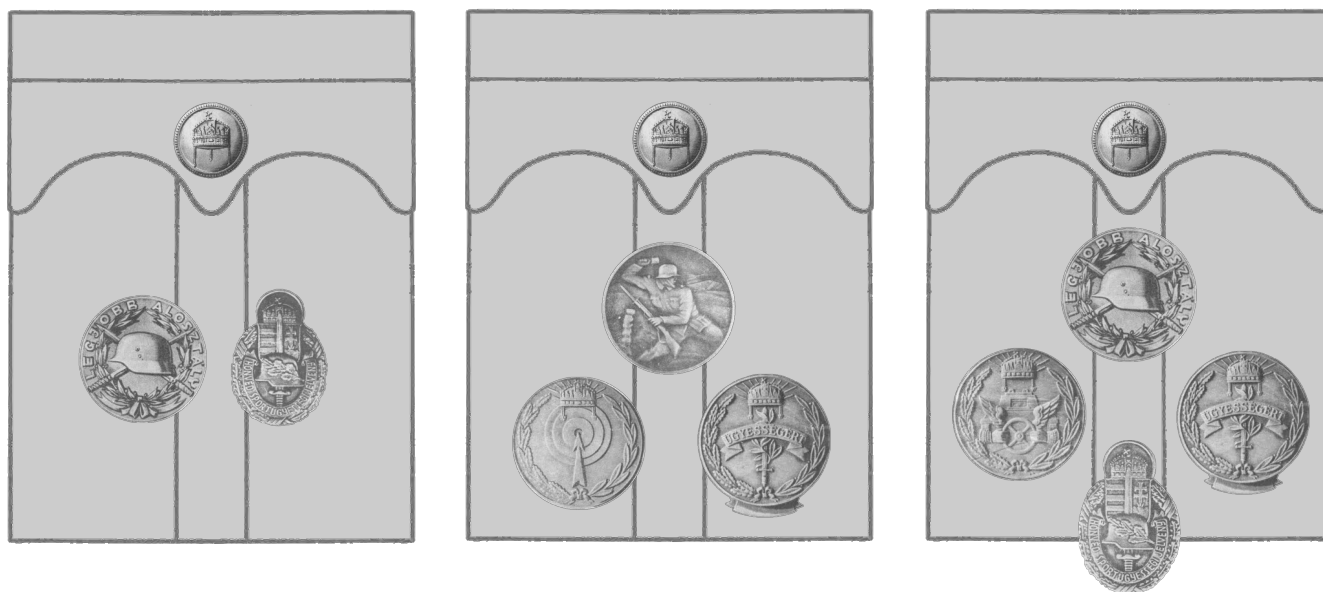
The aluminium qualification badges were supposed to be worn in the middle of the right breast pocket of the tunic. Theoretically, more than one of the badges could be displayed at the same time, according to the regulations. In their order of precedence, the Best Subdivision Badge ranked at first place, followed by the others (as listed above). Winners of the Gunner’s Badge and the Infantry Heavy Weapon Squad Commander’s Badge, as well as the Assault Badge, were also entitled to wear a lanyard (together with the metal badge when in gala uniform) across their breast on the left (from the left shoulder strap to the second button of the tunic). On the field uniform only the metal badges were permitted to be worn, whereas only the lanyards were permitted on the greatcoat. Students of the military officer training schools were only allowed to wear the metal badges.

The badges and certificates entitling soldiers to wear them, had to be issued to their winners simultaneously.

The Sports Qualification Badges, which the 1944 instructions ranged among the newly introduced qualification badges, had been in use since 1942, and formed a separate group of insignia, and therefore are not being dealt with in this article.



**The illustration from the 1944 supplement showing the arrangement in which the qualification badges were to be worn, in their order of precedence, in case more than one would have been awarded to an individual.**



**Individual illustrations taken from the regulation booklet superimposed on representations of the Hungarian soldier’s uniform tunic pocket, showing the correct wear of the qualification badges had they been awarded.**

**UNIFORMS AND RANK INSIGNIA OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**MAGYAR KIRÁLYI LÉGIERŐK EGYENRUHÁI - RENDFOKOZATI JELZÉSEK**

**Pilot's Badge**

*Pilótajelvény*



III - XI

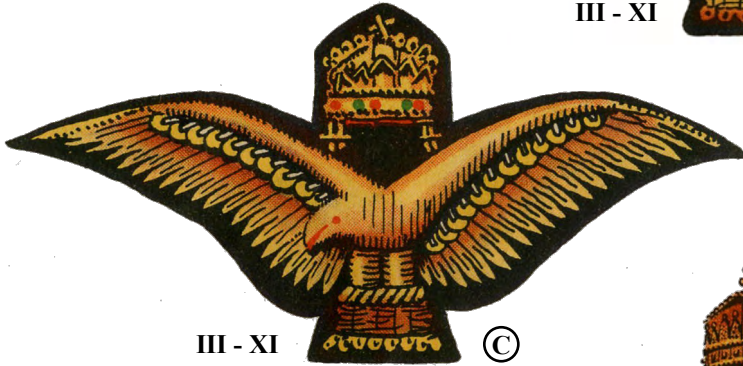


III - XI

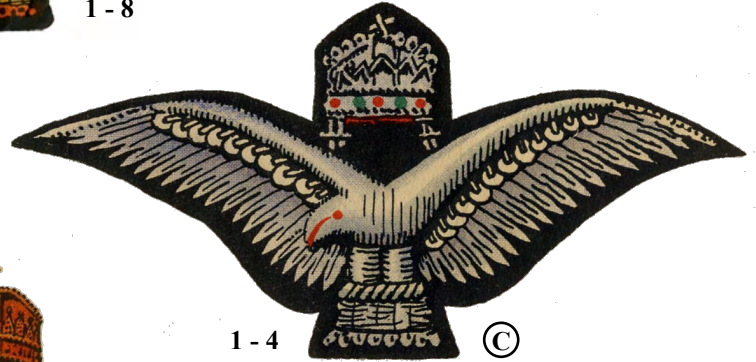
1 - 8



1 - 8



III - XI



1 - 4



5 - 8



IX

**FIRST LIEUTENANT**  
*FŐHADNAGY*



V -

**GENERAL STAFF**  
*VEZÉRKAR*



X

**LIEUTENANT**  
*HADNAGY*



V - XI

**AVIATION ENGINEER (velvet)**  
*REPÜLŐ MÉRNÖK (bársony)*



XI

**OFFICER CANDIDATE**  
*ZÁSZLÓS*



VII -

**AVIATION TECHNICIAN**  
*REPÜLŐ MŰSZAKI TISZTVISELŐ*



GENERALS - TÁBORNOKOK



LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
ALTÁBORNAGY

III



MAJOR GENERAL  
VEZÉRŐRNAGY

IV



COLONEL  
EZREDES

V



LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
ALEZREDES

VI



MAJOR  
ŐRNAGY

VII

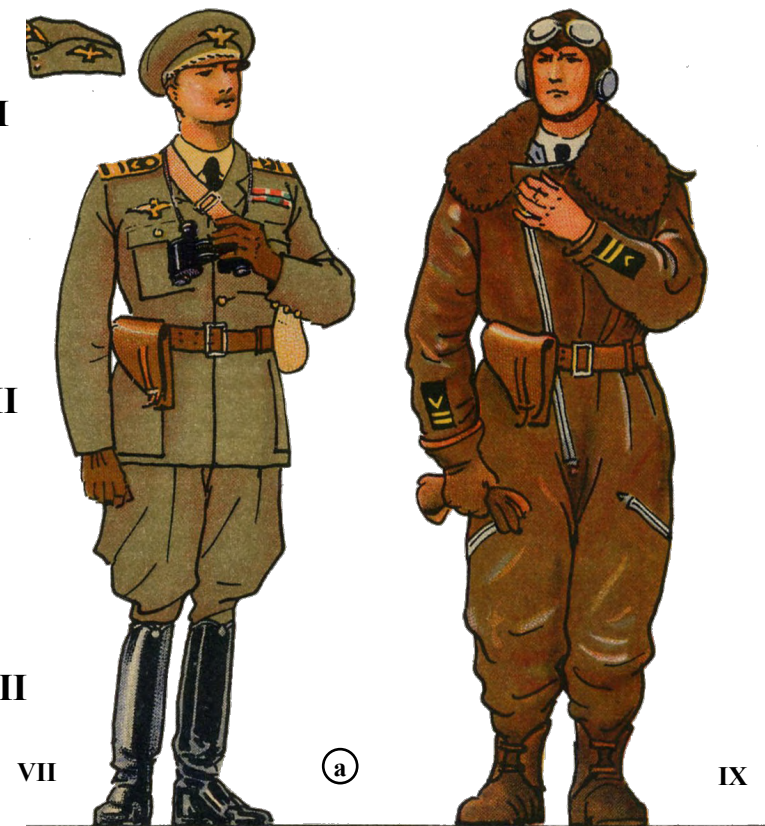
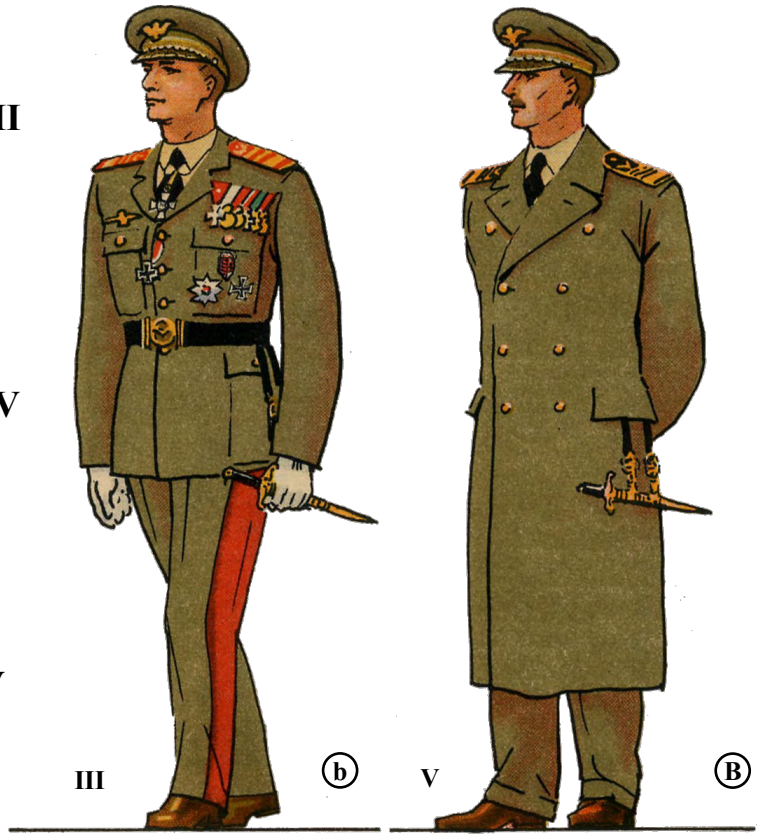


CAPTAIN  
SZÁZADOS

VIII

SENIOR OFFICERS - TÖRZSTISZTEK

OFFICERS - TISZTEK



III

(b)

V

(B)

VII

(a)

IX

# The Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross

by Dr. Attony Virágh

Since the early years of the Hungarian Frontline Fighters' Association, there were plans to establish a decoration for veterans who were taken prisoner during the Great War. A prisoner of war not only had to endure degrading hardships in the camps – they also were denied the chance to move ahead in rank and distinguish themselves. The leadership of the veterans' association felt that compensation was necessary. On April 25, 1933, at an official conference, the association's leadership established the Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross.

The statutes of the award outlined its purpose, detailed the criteria regarding who was eligible to receive it, and gave a physical description of the cross. A veteran was entitled to the award if it could be officially certified that he was taken prisoner through no fault of his own. Soldiers who gave up without a fight, fled across the frontier to give themselves up to the enemy, or who deserted, weren't considered morally eligible for the cross. To earn the decoration, prisoners of war had to provide witnesses to their honest, loyal and soldierly conduct, and that they weren't influenced



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In this photograph, dated January 31, 1937, an unidentified member of the Frontline Fighters' Association wears the Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross according to regulations.



Obverse and reverse of the Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross, shown actual size.

by unacceptable ideology (Marxism, for example), during their captivity.

The cross could only be awarded to members of the Frontline Fighters' Association, and the leadership formed a so-called Memorial Commission of Prisoners of War to administrate the applications. The necessary forms cost 10 *fillér*, and were available through the organization's leadership. The applicant was required to attach copies of the requisite documents to the official form, and return them to their superiors. After receiving official approval, the veteran was required to pay a fee of 5 *pengő*.

By the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, 1933, the association's leadership began to distribute the crosses to the chapters, to be awarded ceremoniously by the local leaders. Along with the cross, an award document, or *igazolójegy*, with official stamp and signatures of President Count József Takách-Tolvay and department leader Major Halmay, was issued to the recipient. This was the only way in which a veteran could have

received the cross – retail sale of the award was strictly forbidden.

According to the regulations, the diameter of the cross was 40mm, and its thickness was 2mm. It was specified that it would be cast in bronze, however, when manufactured, the cross was die-struck, and carried the hallmark of the well-known firm of Nándor Bérán.

It was described as follows: “On the face of the cross is a wreath of thorns surrounding a broken sword. On the horizontal arms of the cross are the words *HADIFOGSÁG EMLÉKÉRE* (Prisoner of War Commemoration).” Interestingly, by the time the cross was actually manufactured, this inscription appeared, divided, on the upper and lower vertical arms of the cross. On the horizontal arms appear the dates 1914-1918. The reverse bears a laurel wreath and the insignia of the Frontline Fighters’ Association in the centre. The cross was meant to be worn directly after the Hungarian World War I Commemorative Medal.

The regulations also state that the ribbon would have horizontal stripes of red and black. There are known examples of the cross with such a ribbon, however, the June 1, 1933 issue of the *Magyar Front* features a black and white photo of the cross with a ribbon similar to that of the Bravery



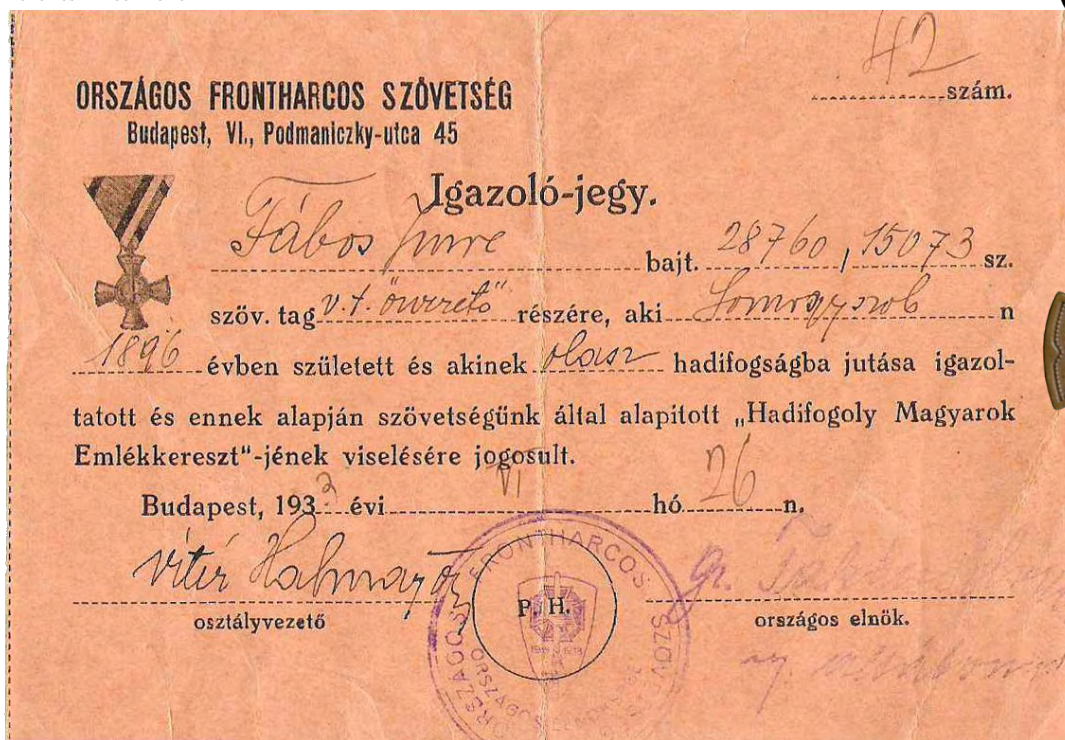
Detail from the June 1, 1933 issue of the *Magyar Front* illustrating the intended tri-fold ribbon.

Medal, with a stripe perpendicular to the narrow horizontal ones. There are also known examples with this type of ribbon. It would be very unusual for two distinct types of ribbon to have been produced for this award, so it is most likely that the ribbon depicted in the *Magyar Front* would be the correct one.

After the regulations were published and the crosses were manufactured, it was deemed necessary to obtain official authorization for the award from the Ministry of Defence. In the August 26, 1933 issue of the *Magyar Front* it was reported that the award of the commemorative cross would be suspended until it was approved by the ministry.

To date, no more information has been found concerning whether or not the award was approved, however, since it seems that it was not mentioned again in following issues of the *Magyar Front*, it may be assumed that the required approval was not given, and therefore, the Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross would have only been awarded for a very short time, between May and August of 1933.

OKOLICSÁNYI COLLECTION



The certificate for the Hungarian Prisoner of War Commemorative Cross. Dated June 26, 1933, it authorizes 00 Senior Private Imre Fábos to wear the decoration. (actual size)



Another original example with the type of ribbon pictured in the *Magyar Front*.

# Forward!

IHMHPS member James Marin is an avid military modeller and loyal enthusiast of all things Hungarian – his wife Michelle, has been his inspiration. James’ mother-in-law comes from a middle-class Jewish-Hungarian family of businessmen and professionals, three of whom were officers in the Austro-Hungarian army.

Although not Hungarian himself, James Marin is a devoted member of our association, and has decided to share some interesting photos and documents with us – material that he was able to accumulate through Michelle and his own patient dedication to historical preservation. This ephemera was included with an overview of the history of Jewish-Hungarian soldiers of both World Wars, however, I felt that this topic should be dealt with in greater detail in a future issue of the *Magyar Front*. For the time being I will paraphrase some of James’ words as a prelude to further study, and as inspiration to anyone searching for historical enlightenment.

Michelle’s grandfather, Károly Fleischl, served in the Imperial and Royal 10th Artillery Regiment for twelve years as a reserve lieutenant, from 1889 to 1901. Her uncle József Fleischl served during the First World War on the Eastern Front, with the Royal Hungarian 307th Infantry Regiment. He rose through the enlisted and NCO ranks to end up as a lieutenant, and he was awarded, among others, the Second Class Silver Bravery Medal. Imre Schulhoff, the younger brother of her father, was taken prisoner by the Russians during World War I, and was repatriated after the war in 1919.

James remembers: *“My mother-in-law once proudly told me, concerning her family, that ‘We considered ourselves Hungarians and that was all. We were so patriotic.’”* She was referring to a picture of Regent Horthy that hung in their house, and their feelings concerning the Treaty of Trianon. With *“infinite sadness”* she concluded, *“In the end though, our country thought of us as something else.”*

Following George Hennessy’s moving story in our Winter 2009 issue, I feel that we have now taken another step toward remembering the Hungarians who came before us with the respect that they deserve. We are still far from shattering all of our inherited prejudices, however, I am certain that at least for the IHMHPS, this step will not be the last one.

James’s patience and perseverance resulted in some of the documents pictured on page 14. He sent three letters to the Hungarian Military History Archives between November of 2008 and July of 2009, and received a reply later in August, in which he was informed that all draft and recruitment lists for men born in Hungary between 1850 and 1900 were

*Continued on page 14...*



**József Fleischl in 1915**

MARIN COLLECTION

COZINK COLLECTION

# THE HUNGARIAN CROWN GUARD ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOUR HELP

In association  
with the  
INTERNATIONAL  
HUNGARIAN MILITARY  
HISTORY PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY  
[www.NewFront.ca](http://www.NewFront.ca)



[www.koronaorseg.hu](http://www.koronaorseg.hu)

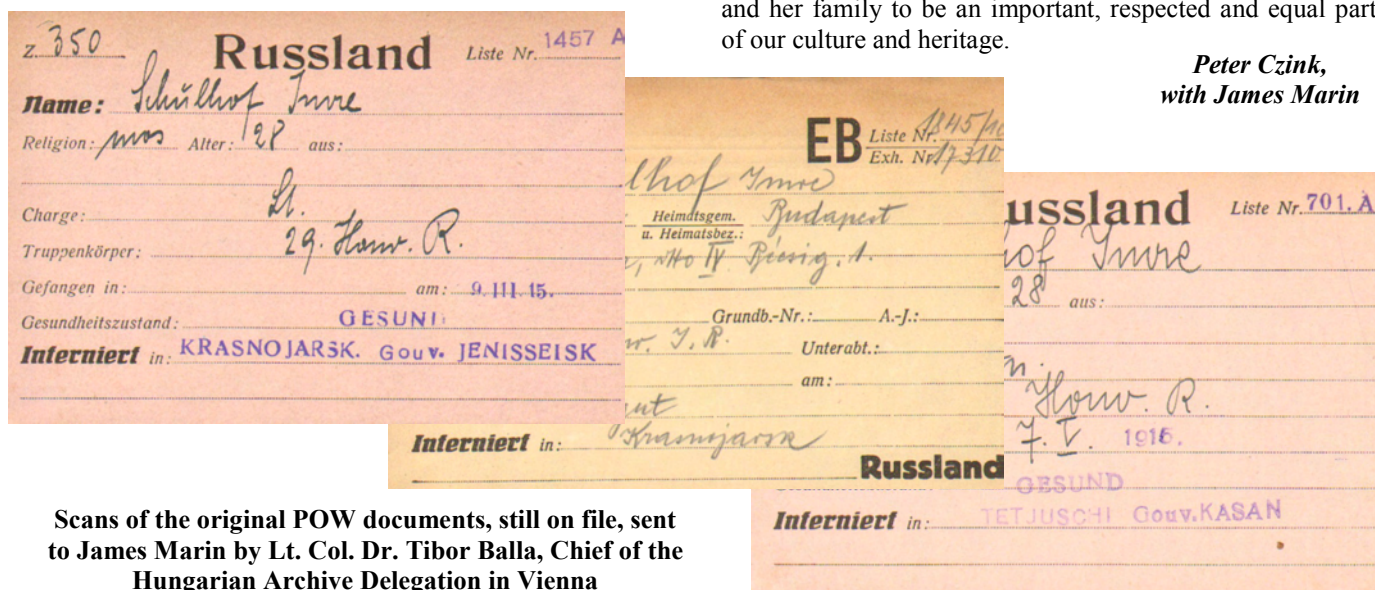


The Hungarian Crown Guard Association is looking for historical information, copies of documents, and photographs relating to the Crown Guard, the Holy Crown of Hungary, the *Szent Jobb* and the 1938 Golden Train. Many things were taken from Hungary following WW II, and the Association would be very grateful for information about any material that may be unknown to them.

...continued from page 12

destroyed during the Second World War. Since the subject of his inquiry was born in 1887, he fell into that group. They suggested he contact the military archives in Vienna, where Lt. Col. Dr. Tibor Balla, Chief of the Hungarian Archive Delegation is stationed. He received the following reply:

*“On behalf of the Hungarian Archive Delegation in Vienna, I inform you, that we have found three records about Imre Schulhoff. He served as a Lieutenant in the 29. Honvéd*



Scans of the original POW documents, still on file, sent to James Marin by Lt. Col. Dr. Tibor Balla, Chief of the Hungarian Archive Delegation in Vienna

*Infantry Regiment and fell into Russian captivity on 1915.III.9. He lived as prisoner of war in Tetjusi, and later in Krasnojarsk. We don't know when he returned home from Russia.”* In the meantime, in Budapest, Lt Col. Dr. Attila Bonhardt was instrumental in helping him ascertain information about his mother-in-law's other uncles József and Károly Fleischl.

I think that James' mother-in-law, Gabriella, can be assured that there are plenty of Hungarians who consider her and her family to be an important, respected and equal part of our culture and heritage.

**Peter Czink,  
with James Marin**



## Hungarian Army Uniforms 1945 - 1956

is a beautifully illustrated new Hungarian language reference book by Major Dr. Tamás Baczoni of the Military History Institute and Museum.

It's a companion volume to *Uniforms of the Royal Hungarian Armed Forces*, by Dr. László Tóth in hardcover (23cm x 31cm, 207 pages).

This comprehensive work details the uniforms of the immediate post-WW II Hungarian armed forces with full colour photographs of extremely rare, short-lived military items. The communist Rákosi era, Soviet inspired uniforms and equipment are superbly documented, as is the brief period of the 1956 Uprising.

Copies are sent directly from Hungary

The price of the book is \$70.00

Postage rates are:

Europe:

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# Our Shop



**Our New Front membership badges are ready!**

Left: IHMHPS machine embroidered badge (actual size 5.5cm x 8.5cm) **\$5.00 each (plus postage)**

Right: IHMHPS hand-embroidered blazer crest in gold and silver bullion on red, white and green velvet. (actual size 6.5cm x 10cm) **\$12.50 each (plus postage)**

Right:  
Our new IHMHPS membership pin. Shown actual size, this die-struck, beautifully made badge is very high quality, with a very secure, double pin-back.



**\$10.00 each (plus postage)**

*"Faithful to the tradition of Hungarian comradesly associations that have come before us."*



## Our Bookshelf

**Rise Up! The 1956 Hungarian Revolution - A People's Sacrifice \$10.00** Our 64 page booklet published for the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Uprising. Filled with exclusive articles, photos and illustrations, black and white with colour cover.

**Memoirs of a Hungary Soldier** (see Magyar Front July – August 2007 for more information) [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) - type "Gyokeri" into the search box and you'll find it. \$25.00 (soft cover, 105 pages)

**The Royal Hungarian Armed Forces 1919 – 1945: \$30.00 • The Fallen Generals: \$25.00**

**La Regia Marina 1919 - 1945: \$22.50 • The Armed Forces of Latvia 1918 - 1940: \$30.00**

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