

# MILITARY JOURNAL

Vol 2 No 2  
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THE MAGAZINE FOR THE MILITARY ENTHUSIAST

## CHAR B

Detailed history of this famous French tank with 1/35 scale centerspread and camouflage/markings drawings

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The history of Quisling's bodyguard with details of organization, ranks, uniforms, and insignia

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in the 1972 NVA Easter Offensive

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of World War II, Korea and Viet Nam

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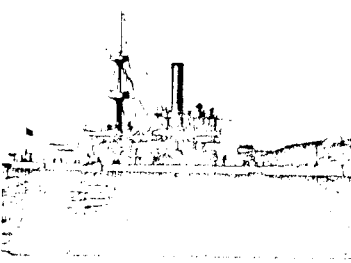
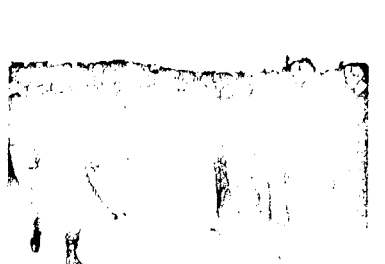
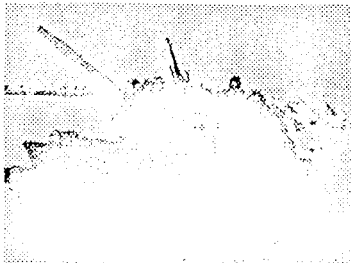
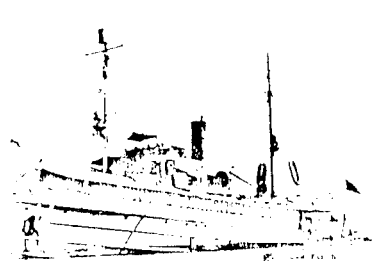
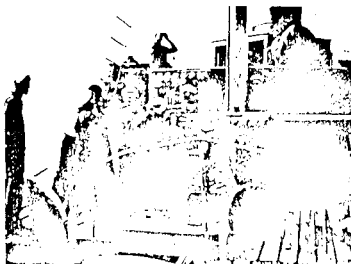
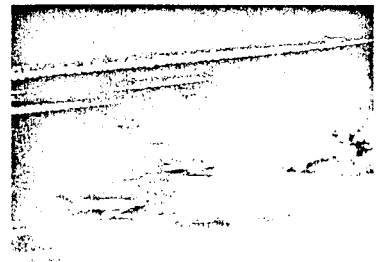
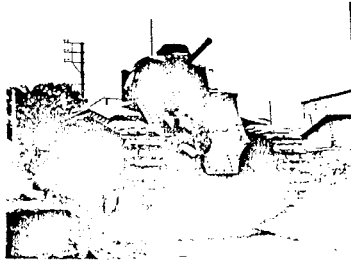
Estonian partisans land and fight behind Russian lines to liberate their country during WWII

## Commonwealth Medal Ribbons

Those colorful bits of material are more than just a suspension device

## Orders of Battle/ToE's

USMC Rifle company table of organization, Jul 1944



# ... and More!

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**THIS ISSUE:**

Volume 2 Number 2

**Førrergarden, Quisling's Bodyguard, on 16 or 17 Oct 1943 when Quisling inspected 1500 Hird men during the Hird Military Championships in Oslo (cover of 'Munin', No.4, Feb 1944). See article starting on the following page. (Photo via H P Taylor)**

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# FØRERGARDEN

The history of Quisling's Bodyguard – with details of its organisation, ranks and uniforms – from 1942 to 1945.

by Hugh Page Taylor

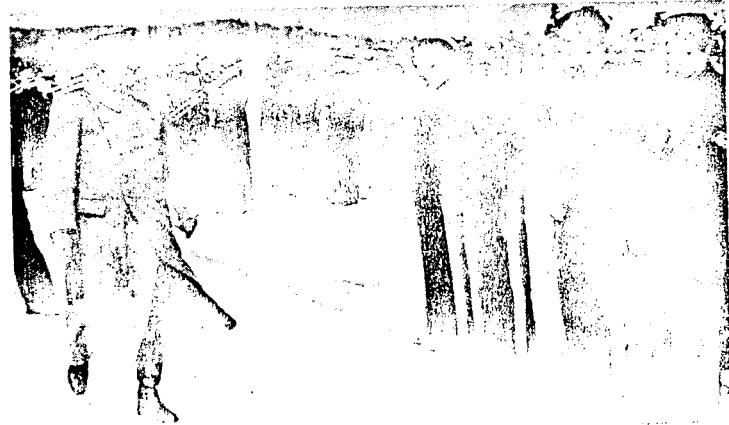
Vidkun Quisling – Norway's collaborationist leader under German occupation in the Second World War, whose name lives on in many of the world's languages as a synonym for 'traitor' or 'collaborator'.

When the Germans attacked Norway on 9 Apr 1940 King Haakon VII, his family, the Cabinet and most members of Parliament travelled 70mi (113km) north by special train to the relative safety of Hamar. For 62 days the Norwegians put up tough but hopeless resistance to the *Wehrmacht* and as this faded in early June the King decided to accept the British Government's invitation to move to London to set up a Norwegian leadership in exile and sailed with his family and the Nygaardsvold Government aboard HMS *Devonshire* from Tromsø on 7 Jun 1940.

Meanwhile, the confusion caused by the German attack had prompted Hitler to support Quisling on 9 Apr 1940 as self-declared Prime Minister in charge of a new Norwegian Government in Oslo. As chaos gave way to the hard reality of German occupation Hitler had Quisling removed from office on 15 Apr 1940 and four days later Norway became a *Reichskommissariat* under *Reichskommissar* Josef Terboven, *Gauleiter* of Essen.

Denied any effective say in Norwegian affairs, Quisling was relegated to leading his National Union Party for the next 21½ months. Then, on 1 Feb 1942, the commissarial ministry was replaced by a national government with Vidkun Quisling as Minister President. Quisling's great day had dawned at last and some of the hatred and contempt that Norwegians and others have held for him ever since can be traced to both the way in which he modelled himself upon Hitler and his taking over of some of the trappings of the exiled Norwegian King.

He called himself "Leader and Minister President" (*Fører og Ministerpresident*), which linked his leadership of the NS with his rôle as head of the Norwegian Government in a way very reminiscent of Hitler's title. He copied Hitler in calling his



Quisling, returning from his visit to Hitler at the Führerhauptquartier on the Führer's birthday (20 Apr 1943) inspects the FG at Fornebu, Oslo's airport. (All photos provided by author unless otherwise noted.)

country home "Eagles' Eyrie" (*Ørnerdet*) and even went so far as to rename the official residence in the seaside Oslo suburb of Bygdøy that went with his position as Minister President from Villa Grandt to Gimle, meaning 'home of the gods'.

For protection at his residence, his office in the Royal Palace, while travelling between them and for ceremonial duties, Quisling raised on the very day of his appointment to Minister President (1 Feb 1942) the 'Leader's Guard' (*Førerhordet* or *Føretrens Garde*), hereafter referred to simply as 'FG'.

The FG was raised as a branch of the Hird with its cadre supplied by the National Hird School at Leira. Quisling showed little sensitivity towards the majority of Norwegians when he dressed them in a uniform almost identical to that of the former Royal Guard, even down to the special tasselled forage caps. Of course with the Royal family gone from Norway (the King was officially

## FØRERGARDEN

Tjeneste.

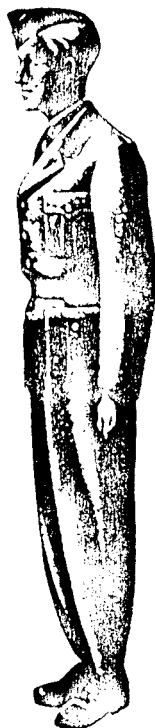
Grønn uniform med enkeltpent jakke. Solvknapper. Lange skibenklær. Båtue. Førerhordens merke på venstre arm. Brun skjorte med sort slips.



## FØRERGARDEN

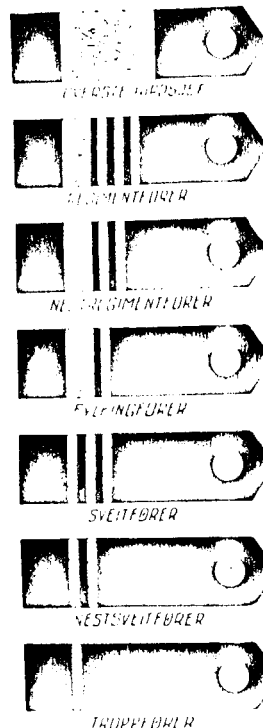
Galla.

Blå uniform med enkeltpent jakke. Solvknapper. Dobbelte, hvite beiser i benklærne. Båtue med dusk. Førerhordens merke som speiler på jakkeoppslaget. Solvkorset med sverd i solv på venstre arm. Brun skjorte med sort slips.

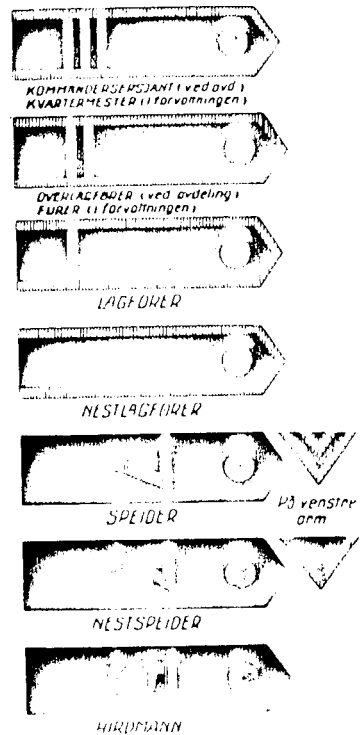


## RIKSHIRDENS DISTINKSJONER

### GULL

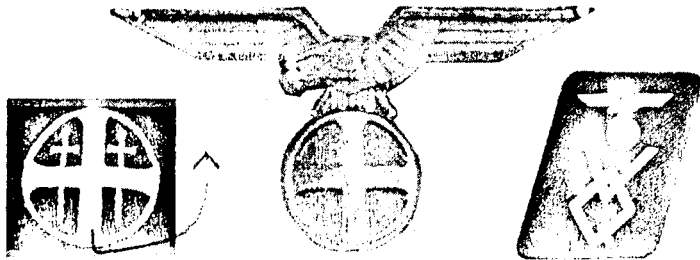


### RØDT



National Hird rank insignia chart from the 'NS-AÅrbok 1942'.

Blue and field grey uniforms ('NS-AÅrbok 1944')—note error in describing the latter as green (grønn).



TOP: Metal raven cap badge of the NS. Worn by FG on their Hird caps. Same design painted in white on left side of German M1935 steel helmets worn with blue FG uniform.  
LEFT: Silver and black Sun Cross with Swords badge of the Hird worn on left sleeve of blue uniform.  
RIGHT: Left collar patch of the FG (unlike all recorded instances, this patch is unpiped).

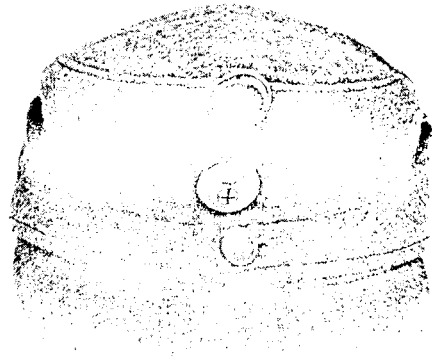
deposed on 25 Sep 1940) the Royal Guard had ceased to exist. The FG took part in the 8th National Meeting of the NS (*NS 8. Riksmøte*), an affair copied from Hitler's Nuremberg rallies, held in Oslo between 25-27 Sep 1942 wearing their blue parade uniforms.

February 1, 1943 marked the first anniversary of Quisling's leadership and was also the FG's first birthday. It took part in a commemorative celebration held at the *Slottsplassen* (castle square) in Oslo for the paramilitary organisations of the NS, but unlike all the others which were unarmed, its men carried rifles. Later in the year the FG took part in the Hird Military Championship (*Hirdens vernemesterskap*) in Oslo on 16-17 Oct 1943, attended by some 1500 Hird members.

The FG continued to exist purely as a bodyguard for Quisling until mid-Aug 1943, when together with the other branches of the Hird, the Norwegian Police and Norwegian Political SS, it was incorporated into the armed forces of the State. It had until then borne arms only to protect Quisling, henceforth it was to do so in the fight against the enemies of his regime.

Service in the FG was full-time for a period of 6 months, after which the majority of its members went on to serve in the Norwegian Volunteer Legion<sup>3</sup> and the *Waffen-SS* – a number are reported to have joined the 2nd SS and Police Company (*2. SS-og Politikompaniet*) by early 1944.

At the end Quisling's FG was as unable to protect and save him as was Hitler's *Leibstandarte* in Berlin or Mussolini's *Moschettieri* in Rome two years before. By May 1945 Quisling knew the war was lost and tried to negotiate a peaceful end to hostilities



Field grey ski cap. The rosette is not in the same colours as those shown in photos of the FG, which had a light coloured centre (possibly red with a yellow centre).

between his men and the Norwegian resistance. With this apparently in mind he reported to police headquarters in Oslo early on 9 May 1945 but found an unsympathetic reception and was promptly placed under arrest. Found guilty at his subsequent trial, Vidkun Quisling was shot by a 10-man firing squad at the old Akershus castle near Oslo at 1440hrs on 24 Oct 1945. The Royal Guard stood duty not far away outside King Haakon VII's palace as history's most infamous traitor died.

#### ORGANISATION

Originally of company strength and stationed at Fredriksborgvegen 38, near Quisling's official residence Gimle in the Bygdøy suburb of Oslo. In late 1943 the four different telephone numbers listed for the FG at Bygdøy were identified as follows:

<i>Gardesjefen</i>	–	guard commander
<i>Intendanten</i>	–	supply officer
<i>Vakten</i>	–	the guard
<i>Leiren Sogn</i>	–	Sogn camp

A second company had been raised by late 1944 and stationed at John Colletts Allé 20, Vest Aker. The Jan 1945 NS telephone directory confirms the two companies and provides the most detailed organisational breakdown of the FG so far available. Calls were passed through a central switchboard at the Royal Palace in

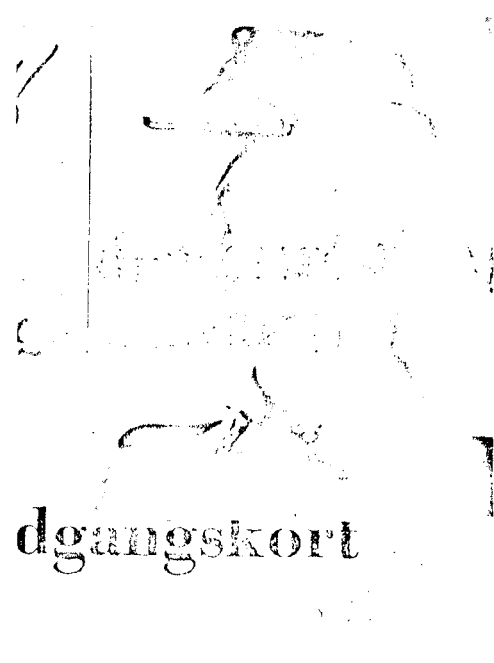
### Det er en ære å tjenestegjøre i Førerens garde.



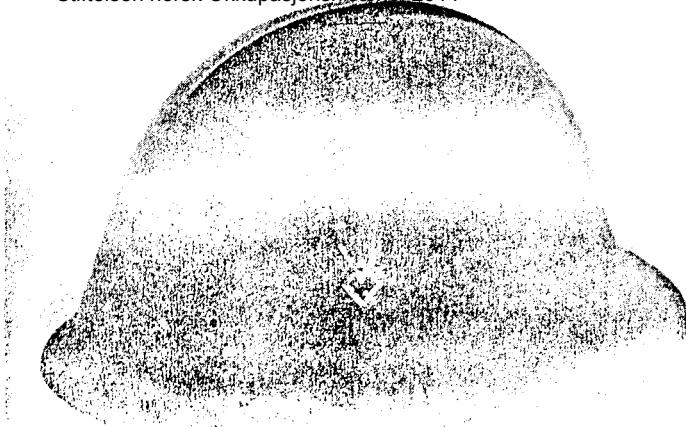
LEFT: Blue FG uniform worn with white belt and double shoulder belts and German M1935 steel helmet painted blue with NS raven. The collar patches appear to have just the letters 'VQ'.  
CENTER: Vidkun Quisling in the blue uniform of Supreme Hird Commander (*Øverste Hirdsjef*) in Oslo on 1 Oct 1942 as the 1st SS and



Police Company (*1. SS- og Politikompaniet*) paraded before their departure to the Eastern Front.  
RIGHT: Photo from an FG identity card. The holder wears the field grey uniform with collar patches and ski cap.



gangskort



The Norwegian M1931 steel helmet, painted grey and bearing the white 'VQ' monogram on the right side. (David B Powers)

Oslo to the various departments of the FG:

*Gardesjef Sverre Henschien* – Guard Commander Sverre Henschien

*Adjutant* – Adjutant  
*Intendant* – Supply Officer  
*Ordonnansoffiser* – Orderly Officer  
*Kvartermester* – Quartermaster  
*Kasserer* – Paymaster  
*Proviantforvalter* – Messing Officer

The following had separate telephone numbers:  
*Depotforvaltere* (Storekeepers) at John Colletts Allé 20, V. Aker  
*Kompaniet* ((1st) Company) at Fredriksborgvegen 38, Bygdøy  
*Kompanisjefen* (company commander) at Fredriksborgvegen 38, Bygdøy

*Kompaniet* ((2nd) Company) at John Colletts Allé 20, V. Aker  
*Leiren ved Sognsvatn* – Sognsvatn camp  
*Tjenestebolig* (Service Dept) at Huk Aveny 9b, Bygdøy

When raised at company strength the FG numbered some 70 men, but this was increased to approximately 250 when the second company was added. The exact number of young Norwegians who served in the FG as volunteers or conscripts is not known but an estimate based on the 6 months term of service, the fact that the FG existed for 39 months and taking initial and final strengths at 70 and 250, suggests a maximum of some 1000. The actual figure may well have been less.

Three guard commanders are known:  
 1 Feb 1942 – ? : *sveitsfører* Per Carlson (also spelt Carlsson)  
 Jul 1943 (?): *sveitsfører* Rolv Gulbrandsen  
 1944/1945: Sverre Henschien

RANKS

Lack of detailed dress regulations and contemporary colour photographs leaves some doubt over the ranks and rank insignia used by the FG. The fact that it was raised as a branch of the Hird and that at least two of its commanders carried Hird rank lead one to assume that the ranks and insignia of the National Hird were used. However, in view of its limited size (2 companies at most), it is possible that only a few of the available Hird rank were used by the FG, there possibly having been only one grade of private (*menig gardist*) and only one NCO (*Underfører*). The Guard Commander at first held the rank of a company command (*sveitsfører*) as well as the appointment *Gardesjef* (literally 'Guard Chief'). It is possible that when the FG was expanded the strength of 2 companies, each of these was led by a *sveitsfører* and so the actual *Gardesjef* was upgraded by one rank to *fylkingsfører*.

Even though a highly simplified system of ranks may well have been adopted, the full scale of available Hird ranks and rank insignia up to *fylkingsfører* is given below. It is further possible, unconfirmed that the gold and red bars and braid were replaced by silver and photographs suggest the *Gardesjef* wore special, all silver shoulder straps.

NATIONAL HIRD (RIKSHIRD) RANKS & INSIGNIA

A. Officers (*Hirdsførere*)

- Gold bars on either blue or field grey shoulder straps.
  1. *fylkingsfører* (ff.): unconfirmed if this rank was ever held in the FG. Two gold ½cm bars and one gold 2cm bar.
  2. *sveitsfører* (svf.) Three gold ½cm bars.
  3. *nestsveitsfører* (nsvf.) Two gold ½cm bars.
  4. *troppsfører* (tf.) One gold ½cm bar.

B. NCOs (*Underførere*)

- Red bars on either blue or field grey shoulder straps, all bordered with ½cm red braid.
  5. *kommandersersjant* (ks.)/*kvartermester* (kv.m.)\* Three red ½cm bars.
  6. *overlagsfører* (olf.)/*surer* (su.)\* Two red ½cm bars.
  7. *lagsfører* (lf.) One red ½cm bar.
  8. *nestlagsfører* (nlf.)

\*Special titles for the corresponding administrative NCOs.

C. Enlisted Men (*Mannskapsgradene*)

- Plain blue or field grey shoulder straps.
  9. *speider* (sp.) Two red chevrons on left arm.
  10. *nestspeider* (nsp.) One red chevron on left arm.

continued on page 5



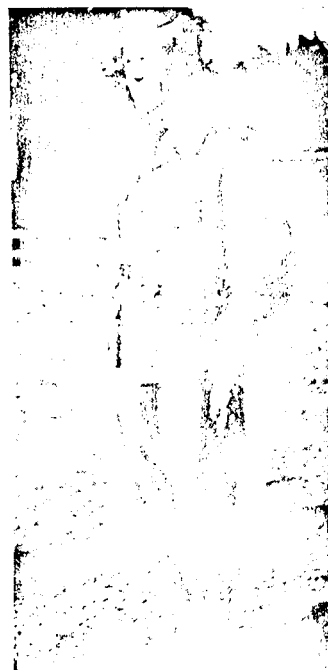
Førergarden får ny uniform.

Den tidligere skal bare brukes til paradeuniform.

Førergarden har i disse dager trukket i sine nye kledelige feltgra uniformer. Snittet i uniformen er akkurat som den vi hittil har sett bare med den forskjell at speilene er tatt vekk og at Førergardens merke er flyttet dit hvor ellers hirdmerket står. Denne feltgra uniformen vil bli brukt både i tjenesten til daglig og til permisjon. Den mørke gardesuniformen med hvite beisser i buksene og speil på jakkeoppslagene vil heretter bare bli brukt som paradeantrekk.

Menig gardist.

Underfører.



The new field grey uniform is announced in the NS press in Jul 1943--for full translation see text.

Cloth sleeve badge for the field grey uniform.