

Coast Artillery Enlisted Disks, 1930s and 1940s

The United States Coast Artillery Corps adopted a projectile on an oval at the intersection of crossed cannons as the officers' branch symbol in 1902, while enlisted men continued to use plain crossed cannons until World War I. By the time the army changed from bronze colored collar to gilt insignia in 1923, enlisted CAC men were using the 1902 symbol exclusively. In the late 1920s and 1930s the army issued one inch diameter collar disks with a background of lines and shields and then starting in the mid 1930s, the new pattern that had the branch design separable from the reverse that made cleaning easier. These separable insignia with a shiny background were used during World War II and this piece shows a few of these enlisted collar insignia.

Starting in 1924 the separately numbered CAC companies assigned to harbor defense commands were redesignaed batteries and were reorganized and placed into newly formed battalions or regiments. Due to the many missions and locations of these battalions and regiments, the organizations were not fully standardized and the number of batteries varied. Many harbor defense units were fixed but the army also used railway, tractor drawn, anti-aircraft, and trench mortar battalions and regiments to protect harbors and the coast. The lone trench mortar unit, the 1st Regiment, was transferred to the field artillery in March 1928.

One of the most interesting enlisted insignia is that of the Army Mine Planter Service that was the standard CAC cannons with projectile, which also added a sea mine in the lower angle. While not worn by commissioned officers, enlisted Army Mine Planter Service personnel had the sea-mine as part of their collar insignia. An insignia that had the mine struck as part of the basic CAC design is shown at the right.



Coast artillery regiments included a service company that reported directly to regimental headquarters, in addition to a headquarters company and various weapons related battalions such as for machine guns, search light, and cannons. Some sample two-piece disks are shown.

<p>No Coast Artillery unit had the number 123, so the use of this insignia is unknown. The 123d company became the HQ company for the 8th CA Regiment in 1924. A domed disk with tine fasteners shows it was made at the end of or after WW II.</p>	<p>A long screw-post back with a 2d battalion number. The crossed cannons are centered on the disk. The central oval has small vertical lines behind the shell and several narrow rings that make the edge.</p>	<p>This 2d battalion screw-post disk has the cannons higher than the insignia to the left while the number is less of a block style. The cannon and oval is smaller than the other 2d battalion disk.</p>	<p>A Service Company insignia with still a third type of central design. This has a screw-post fastener with a plain block S.</p>

			
<p>An E Battery insignia with a shiny back, a very plain letter, and a screw-post back.</p>	<p>This C Battery piece has a double line around the central oval. It has two times as fasteners.</p>	<p>This larger oval has a much larger shell than the other C Battery insignia. It has a screw-post back.</p>	<p>Very similar to the first 2d Battalion insignia in the top row, this is for H Battery, many of which were inactive in the 1930s.</p>
			
<p>A screw-back disk for a Searchlight Battery.</p>	<p>Combat trains were battery sized units in some CA battalions. Screw-post made by N. S. Meyers.</p>	<p>Probably for the combat trains of a 2d Battalion. Screw-post.</p>	<p>AMPS with screw-post.</p>

Some of the two-piece disks that became popular in the 1930s and continued through WW II show a great variation in designs, as shown above. The many variations may be due, in part, to the build-up of forces and the activations of National Guard units in 1939-1942.

Two Germany made insignia for anti aircraft battalions that were in World War II follow. The 48th Battalion fought in the Pacific Theater but was later assigned to support the 1st Infantry Division when that unit stayed in Germany. The piece was worn in 1948.

