

Enlisted State Collar Disks

In 1916 the army concluded that militia troops called into Federal service for the Mexican border would continue to wear on their collars, state letters placed on a one inch diameter disk. Some units wore other styles of enlisted collar insignia during this time. These included state seals, keystone shaped pieces, and others that had non circular designs.

Bronze disks exist for all of the 48 states although not all were worn. The Nevada National Guard and the Territory of Alaska National Guard were not yet organized so these collar disks should not exist, but at least Nevada is known. Insignia manufacturers probably assumed insignia would be needed for all states. The National Guard for the Territory of Hawaii was not mobilized until June 1918, and then only for training. Under federal guidelines, HAW disks were not required, but may have been used by National Guard members of the territory.

The state abbreviations come in many versions: with letters formed in an oval to fit on the disk, circular letters, and block letters. Block letters are applied, either with serifs or plain, or in integral letters.

By mid 1917 the US Army had created new styles of collar insignia for National Guard troops. One was the USNG monogram, soon replaced by the US with NG superimposed on a small box. Some scarce variations with the state abbreviations replacing the NG exist. Other disks display a state seal, which exist in gilt as well as bronze.

During World War I various states created State Guards or Home Guards sometimes called reserve militia or reserve troops, or similar names. Regulations called for these units to have uniforms and insignia that were different from those of federal troops. Some are shown.

Non circular insignia exist for some state units. The most common are the keystones from Pennsylvania, which the state established in June 1908 by Headquarters National Guard of Pennsylvania General Orders 15, with the direction they would be issued prior to July 10, 1908. After the Pennsylvania National Guard formed the 28th Division the Pennsylvania Reserve Militia used the keystones.



Shown below are four overlapping photos of some of the collar insignia depicted above, interspersed with individual photos of some of these insignia.









