

Unusual Post World War II Shoulder Ornamentation

The USMA Prep School



The US Military Preparatory School moved to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, in 1957 as the army was bringing in the Army Green uniform, then in 1975 the school moved to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. School members were enlisted personnel and wore standard army uniforms.

While at Fort Belvoir cadet rank was displayed by green shoulder boards bearing narrow yellow bands (left). Near the center of the board was a distinctive insignia of the Prep School and at the end near the neck was a cadet button. Only

the highest rank board carries a distinctive insignia, but all of these had them when they were in used. At the bottom of the photo is the reverse of a board showing the two narrow shoulder loops that held the board to the Army Green coat.

About the time of the move to Ft. Monmouth, the shoulder boards changed slightly to have wider rank bands that were black, as shown. These show the previous use of distinctive insignia, similar to the earlier versions.



Army Bands, 1950s.

In the 1950s the army issued a special blue uniform to members of army bands and honor guards. The unique uniform was mentioned in paragraph 23, AR 670-5, dated 20 September 1956, when it noted that a limited number of specially designated major command bands were authorized “a distinctive uniform for wear when attending ceremonies.... They will not be worn for any other purpose nor when off duty.” These short-lived uniforms had yellow nylon shoulder knots, a pair of which are shown.



Women’s Shoulder Boards, Mess and Evening Uniforms, 1970s.



In 1969 the army authorized five newly designed optional uniforms that were based upon two similar jackets, one white and one black. On these jackets women wore special branch colored shoulder boards. An example for a medical captain is shown.

