

FORGOTTEN 2

HOPE

Stonne Camouflage & Markings by Matt Baker

In the last dev blog, we took a look at the specific details that had gone into the camouflage and markings behind the vehicles that will be portrayed on our upcoming Flavion map in 2.6. In that dev blog we went over a lot of the basic concepts that regulated the camouflage and markings of the French and German vehicles in 1940. If you haven't had a chance, give that dev blog a read to understand how each army decided what to use when marking their tanks for battle.

Up next, we'll discuss the map Stonne, made by Sn00x, Stubbfan and Cpt Bocquier that depicts the 10th Panzer Division & Großdeutschland Division's struggle for the village of Stonne against the 3re DCR & 3re DIM in mid May, 1940.

Axis

We'll go over some of the main German vehicles portrayed on the Stonne map below;

Sdkfz 251/1 Ausf. B





The Sdkfz 251 on this map belongs to the 10th Schutzen Brigade of the 10th Panzer Division.

The Sdkfz 251 was a relatively new vehicle in May of 1940. Only having been fully developed just a few months earlier, and as a result, virtually none were ready for the campaign in Poland in 1939.

However, in March 1940, orders were cut to issue 15 gep.MTW (Sdkfz 251) to a Schuetzen-Kompanie in the 10.Panzer-Division.

Like many other vehicles, this halftrack is camouflaged in the 2-tone scheme laid out in the 1937 order.

As per regulations, the Balkenkreuz is carried on the hull sides and rear door.

Apart from these minimal markings, this halftrack carries no other identifying markings aside from the license plate number that specifies 'WH' for Wehrmacht, Heer (army) on the rear of the vehicle. The license plate number is also painted on the front, as was occasionally done.

Sdkfz 222



The Sdkfz 222 on this map belongs to either the 2nd or 3rd Zug of the Panzer Späh Kompanien of the Aufklärungs Abteilung 90 of the 10th Panzer Division.

The 'eyes' of the Panzer Division were provided by the Aufklärungs Abteilung, or reconnaissance unit. Each Aufklärungs Abteilung was made up of two Panzer Späh (armored car) Kompanien, one Kradschützen Kompanie (motorcycle) and a schwere Waffen Kompanie (heavy company for fire support).

Each Panzer Späh Kompanie had six mixed radio and staff armored cars, eight MG-armed Sdkfz 221 armored cars, four 2cm armed Sdkfz 222 armored cars, three Sdkfz 231 armored cars, and three Sdkfz 232 armored cars.

This Sdkfz 222 is in a single dunkelgrau color, possibly having been re-painted recently without the dunkelbraun camo applied.

It carries no identifying markings apart from the 4 Balkenkreuz on the front, rear and sides and the license plate number that specifies 'WH' for Wehrmacht, Heer (army) on the rear of the vehicle.

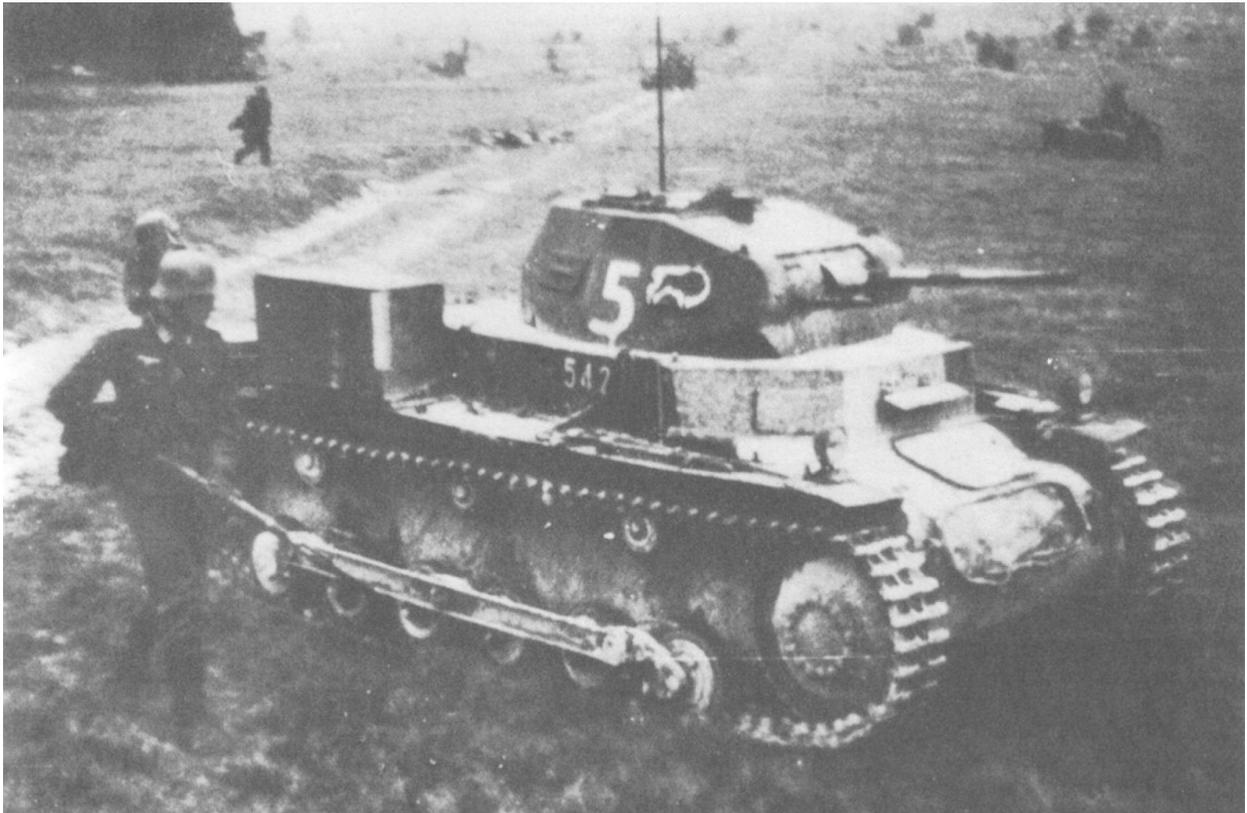
Panzer II Ausf. C





The Panzer II on this map belongs to the 2nd vehicle in the 4th Zug, 5th Kompanie, II. Abteilung, Panzer Regiment 7 of the 10th Panzer Division.

The markings are mainly copied from a real photo of a tank in France 1940.



Like many other vehicles, this tank is camouflaged in the 2-tone scheme laid out in the 1937 order.

This Panzer II carries its Balkenkreuz on the superstructure sides and left rear as per regulations.

The air recognition markings are carried horizontally across the rear engine deck as was sometimes done.

The companies of the 7th Panzer Regiment sometimes carried only the single company number on their turret, and many used the bison unit insignia sprayed over a stencil. There's theories that the bison and numbers were done in different colors to indicate the company, but we've shown it here as white. It's carried on the turret sides and rear.



The full tactical number '542' is carried on the rear superstructure as was common.

The Panzer II in the real life photo is an Ausf. b, as some of the Panzers in 1940 were a mix of older models. However the Ausf. C type that we have in-game, was very common and the markings of the company are typical as to what you'd see within that unit.

Panzer III Ausf. E





The Panzer III Ausf. E on this map also belongs to the 7th Panzer Regiment of the 10th Panzer Division.

It is camouflaged in the 2-tone scheme of dunkelgrau and dunkelbraun and carries a standard set of Balkenkreuz on the superstructure sides.

Like many other 7th Panzer Regiment vehicles, it carries the bison unit insignia sprayed over a stencil on the turret sides and rear underneath the commander's cupola.

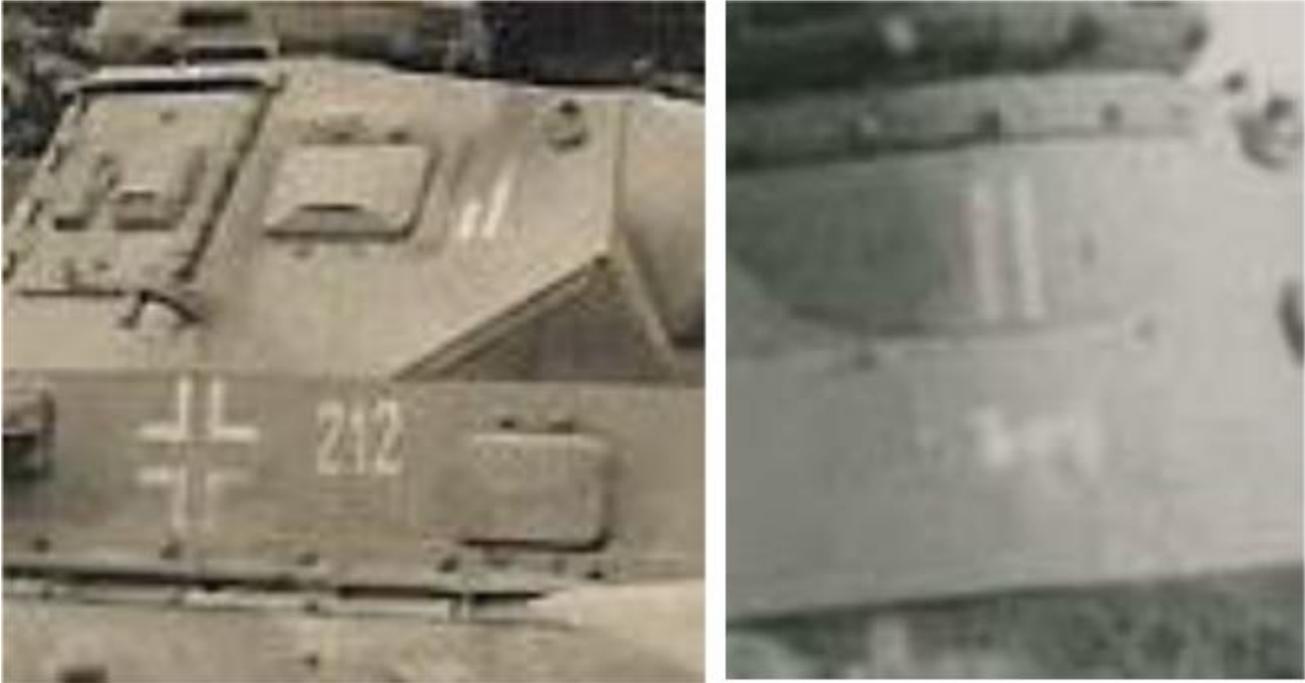
This tank also carries the 10th Panzer Division's insignia of a transversal bar in yellow on the front and rear mudguards. This insignia was rarely carried on 10th Panzer Division vehicles, but was specified in the orders provided by Inspektorat 6 in November of 1939.

Panzer III Ausf. F



The Panzer III Ausf. F on this map belongs to the 2nd Tank in the 1st Zug of the 2nd Kompanie of the I.Abteilung of the 8th Panzer Regiment of the 10th Panzer Division.

The markings are mainly copied from a real photo of the tank in France 1940.



It is camouflaged in the 2-tone scheme of dunkelgrau and dunkelbraun and carries a standard set of Balkenkreuz on the superstructure sides.

Panzer Regiment 8 used a Wolfsangel as a unit insignia and rarely used the divisional insignia. The Wolfsangel is carried on the lower rear turret as was common.



Panzer Regiment 8 tanks used a series of stripes on the turret rear (and sometimes sides) to identify the company; 1st, 2nd, & 3rd companies used 1, 2, or 3 *vertical* lines respectively, while 5th, 6th, & 7th used *horizontal* lines. This tank carries 2 vertical lines underneath the commander's cupola on the rear turret for the 2nd company.

This tank belongs to the 2nd Kompanie which was a leichte Panzer Company that was organized with Pz I, Pz II & Pz III tanks.

The tactical number '212' is carried on both sides of the superstructure.

Panzer IV Ausf. D



The Panzer IV on this map belongs to the 1st vehicle in the 1.Zug of the 7.Kompanie of the II. Abteilung, 8.Panzer Regiment of the 10.Panzer Division.

The markings are mainly copied from a real photo of the tank in France 1940, rather famously knocked out at Stonne.





It is camouflaged in the 2-tone scheme of dunkelgrau and dunkelbraun.

It carries Balkenkreuz on the left and right superstructure side as well as on the lower part of the rear hull as seen in photos.

The tactical number '711' is carried on the right rear superstructure side and the left rear of the tank. The one on the left superstructure is temporarily covered by the additional 'jerry can' stowage on our model.

This specific tank was one of the tanks in the first column that attacked up the road to Stonne past the 'Pain de Sucre.' It was the second tank in the column and was knocked out by French 25mm AT gun fire.

The French 25mm gun was commanded by a veteran of the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, Sgt. Durand. After knocking out the first tank in the column (700) he turned his sights on the second tank numbered '711' and fired multiple shots.

One of the rounds struck the side driver's visor, decapitating the driver and stunning the radioman. The devastation in the driver's compartment prompted the turret crew to abandon the tank, and when they later returned, they found that the radioman had later been killed by rifle fire when attempting to escape the tank.

After having been disabled, the surviving turret crew of number '711' re-boarded the tank and put a few counterattacking French tanks out of action during the battle.

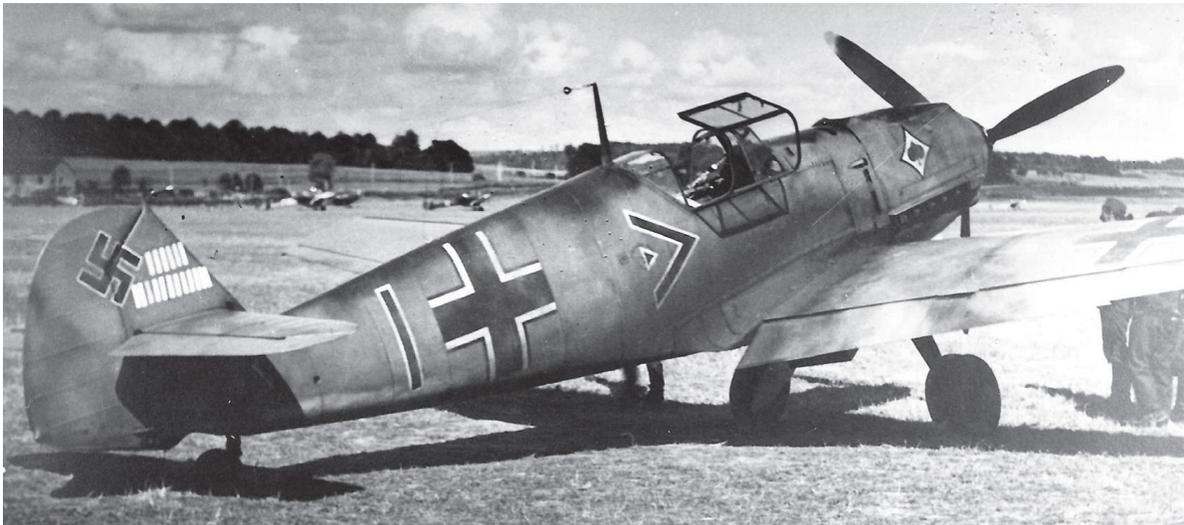
"The tank's gunner, Feldwebel Karl Koch, later recalled: "Between engagements, we were looking for ammunition from the (knocked out) panzers in front of us. After a while, a fourth tank appeared through the orchard. It was a real monster and we had no idea that France had tanks like that. We fired 20 shots at it without success. However, after a few more shots, we managed to knock off its track. After a while, a fifth tank appears, another B1 firing all its weapons. But it had not spotted us. We fired, but could not knock it out until a ricochet hit the turret. The next shot hit it in the rear. Calm returned and we abandoned our tank again because we had exhausted the ammunition." Koch had hit "Hautvillers", jamming the turret and knocking off the tracks on one side. The crew abandoned the tank and were captured. His other victim was "Gaillac" which eventually exploded, killing the whole crew.

Messerschmitt BF 109E-4



The BF109 on this map is an E-4 flown by Hauptmann Werner Mölders, the Gruppenkommandeur, III. Gruppe of Jagdeschwader 53 'Pik-As.'

The markings are mainly copied from a real photo of his BF-109 in France on May 27th 1940.



This was probably the aircraft he was flying from La Selve when he was shot down by Sous-Lt René Pomier Layrargues in a D.520 of GC II/7 west of Compiègne on 5 June, by which time his tally of 25 victories in World War 2 made him the second most successful 'Pik-As' pilot of 1940. Mölders was then captured by French soldiers and taken prisoner of war. He was liberated three weeks later upon the armistice with France.

22 days earlier, on the 14th of May, Jagdeschwader 53 went up against the RAF who were carrying out a series of near-suicidal bombing attacks with their highly vulnerable Battles and Blenheims. They were attempting to blunt the rapid German advance as the French defensive lines along the Meuse fell. This day would later be dubbed as the 'Day of the Fighters.'

In the days that followed, the III. Gruppe completed a series of 'Freie Jagd' (free hunt) in the Sedan area. On May 15th, as the battle of Stonne was raging below, Mölders scored his 11th victory by shooting down a Hurricane around Charleville at 1:05pm. It was possibly Hurricane P2870 of No 607 Sqn. which was recorded as being shot down between Givet and Dinant when Sqn Ldr L Smith was reported missing.

The camouflage of BF-109s in WW2 is far too lengthy to go into here. But, in general, the colors used by the Luftwaffe were defined by the State Ministry of Aviation (Reichsluftfahrt Ministerium), which established a standard for color shades, their production and application. These directives were promulgated through a series of service regulations (Luftwaffen Dienstvorschriften) designated L.Dv. 521.

In 1940 the camouflage was going through some changes and experimentation after experiences in Poland. With production of the BF 109E-4, planes would start to be painted at the factory in what would become known as the 02/71 or 02/71/65 scheme. This utilized RLM 02 & RLM 71 (light and darker greens respectively) for the upper surfaces of the aircraft and RLM 65 (a very light, almost white blue) for the bottom and about 3/4 of the way up the fuselage.

Around the summer of 1940, an application of 'mottling' to fuselage sides and/or the upper surfaces colors would start to appear. Believed for the most part to have originally been in RLM 02, it was usually sprayed along the sides of the fuselage and fin in varying degrees of density and pattern. On some aircraft it was occasionally intensified, usually where a color transition was made such as at the roots of the wings or tailplane.

During this same period, many units began to experiment with the use of gray shades mixed into the 'mottling' of the upper surfaces. Although the use of RLM 74/75/76 (gray shades) was not officially allowed until the November 1941 issue of L.Dv 521/1, it is a wholly convincing possibility that the various grays used during 1940 were those from which they were developed.

Although the introduction of these techniques seems to have started in the summer of 1940, the photo of Mölders plane seems to show this type of camouflage applied. It is also entirely possible that an order was originated, either at RLM level or from local area command with RLM approval, allowing individual units, notably JG's 2, 53 and 54, to determine the extent and style of application as was dictated by their operational requirements.

We've chosen this 'mottling' to be applied to Mölders BF109-E4 based on the above photo and a reference color plate created by Chris Davey. The upper surfaces are shown in RLM 02 while the sides are in 'gray' RLM 74 and the bottom in 'blue' RLM 65.

The markings for the BF-109 were dictated by Fl.Inst. 3 Nr.730/37 II 9 issued on 14 December 1937 by the Generalstab der Luftwaffe. They included a set of instructions and diagrams for the application of markings to fighter aircraft.

All aircraft carried the national identity marking (Balkenkreuz) on both fuselage sides and the top and bottom of the aircraft wings. They also carried a Hakenkreuz on the tail of the aircraft, but this is left absent on our planes.

A Jagdgeschwader was made up of three (later four) Gruppen, indicated with Roman numerals. Each Gruppe had three Staffeln, of 12 aircraft, labeled with arabic numbers; these were numbered continuously.

Stab Markings;

In the document, new locations and dimensions for Stab symbols were designated. In short;

A vertical bar aft of the national marking indicated III. Gruppe

A horizontal bar indicated II. Gruppe

No bar indicated I. Gruppe

All symbols were to be applied in black with white edging and a thin black outline (although this was not always done).

Staffel Markings;

The ordinary Staffel aircraft carried a number identifying the individual aircraft within the Staffel, and the color in which it was painted identifying the Staffel within the Geschwader;

1st, 4th, & 7th Staffel were in white

2nd, 5th, & 8th Staffel were in red

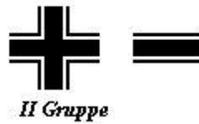
3rd, 6th, & 9th Staffel were in yellow

These colors were often repeated on the spinners on the nose of the plane. Staff and Gruppe markings were in black with white borders and the spinners usually kept in the base Black-Green 70 spinner color.

The aircraft of the officers had special markings, placed in front of the Balkenkreuz;



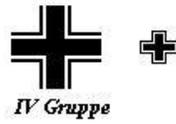
I Gruppe



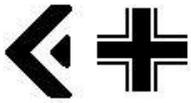
II Gruppe



III Gruppe



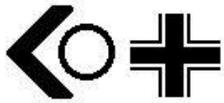
IV Gruppe



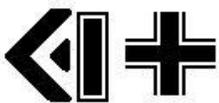
Gruppe Kommandeur



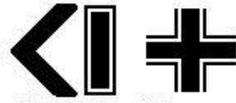
Gruppe Adjutant



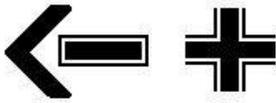
Gruppe Technical Officer



Geschwader Kommodore



Geschwader Adjutant



Geschwader Operations Officer



Geschwader Technical Officer



Geschwader Staff Major

The 'Pik-As' (Ace of Spades) emblem was applied to all of JG 53's aircraft following its adoption by the unit's new Kommodore, Generalmajor Hans Klein upon his taking over from Oberstleutnant Werner Junck in late October 1939. It was carried on either side of the nose of the plane.



Interestingly, for a short period during the second half of 1940, all three Gruppen of JG 53 removed the 'Pik-As' emblem and carried a red band around the nose. According to RAF intelligence sources in Air Ministry Weekly Intelligence Summary No.60, the emblem was ordered removed by Hermann Göring and a red band applied in its place, stating that the unit was to become known as the 'Red Ring Geschwader.'

Although this is not known for sure, as the definitive reason for the order has yet to be determined. It may have been nothing more than a temporary identification feature. This only started around August of 1940 and the 'Pik-As' would soon reappear.

Mölders plane is shown here with 10 'kill marks' on the tail, depicted on or about May 15th, 1940 before he scored his 11th victory.

Junkers Ju 87B-2 "Stuka"



The Stuka on this map is a Ju 87B-2 of the Stab of the III. Gruppe, Stukageschwader 51.

StG 51 was assigned to the I. Fliegerkorps of Luftflotte 3 which provided air support for Heeresgruppe A during Fall Gelb. This would be the main air support for the assault at Sedan.

This Stuka carries the standard camouflage used earlier in the war sometimes known as the 70/71 scheme. It consisted of a series of harshly angled lines on top of the plane made with RLM 70 & 71 colors (lighter and darker green respectively) and an underside of RLM 65 (light blue).

During world war 2 most Luftwaffe front line aircraft, other than those belonging to single-engined day fighter or ground attack units, carried a code of three letters and one number on the rear fuselage and often repeated on the underside of the wings (tho not always). Some units changed their identification codes during the war to keep the enemy guessing.

The first code was for the larger unit. In this case, '6D' was the code for Stukageschwader 51 at the time. The second code would give the Staffel or Gruppe with the second letter, and the identification of the individual aircraft within the staffel or gruppe with the first letter. In this case 'D' denoted the III. Gruppe Stab and 'C' was

the 3rd aircraft within the Gruppe Stab. The fuselage codes of this unit are variously described as pale gray or (more likely) light green during the campaign in France.

The Gruppenstab badge is a geographical reference, depicting the 'Eagle of Tyrol.'



Allies

We'll go over each of the French vehicles portrayed on the Stonne map below;

Citroën 11CV





The Citroën 11CV on this map possibly belongs to the Divisional Headquarters of the 3rd Division d'Infanterie Motorisée (Mechanized Infantry Division)

The Citroën 11CV was used as a staff car by the French. Therefore, it is most likely being used by members of the staff of the 3rd Mechanized Infantry Division that was present at Stonne.

Despite their name, the Mechanized Infantry Divisions were not fully motorized units, they had no organic vehicles to move all the infantry and even had an allotment of horses and wagons. Each regiment only possessed enough vehicles to move the regimental and battalion headquarters.

This vehicle is painted in the standard military green with ochre camouflage outlined in black.

The only markings that it carries is the yellow rectangle of the infantry carried inside a white rectangle.

The Citroën also carries license plate markings with the French tricolor followed by a 'W' and the vehicle serial. In the cases of French soft skinned vehicles, the letter in front of the number represented a particular district from which the vehicle was requisitioned. In this case, the 'W' would stand for the Nancy region, and all the registration numbers would fall between 710,000 - 750,000.

Citroën Type 23 U



The Citroën Type 23 U on this map also belongs to the 3rd Division d'Infanterie Motorisée

This vehicle is painted in the standard military green with brown camouflage.

It carries the yellow rectangle of the infantry carried inside a white rectangle on the front fender. The license plate marking has the French tricolor followed by a 'B' and the vehicle serial. In this case, the 'B' would stand for the Amiens region, and all the registration numbers would fall between 50,001 - 99,999.

The 3e DIM has its origins in the North of France, in Picardy where its motto "Pique-Hardy" comes from. This particular vehicle carries the Divisional insignia painted on the doors of the cab. The national tri-colors are represented in the red 'Pique' Ax in a white circle with 'Hardy' inscribed. The blue gear represents the motorized nature of the division.

Lorraine 37L & 38L





The Lorraine 37L & 38L on this map probably belong to the 16e Bataillon de Chasseurs Portés (BCP) of the 3rd Division Cuirassée de Réserve (DCR or Armored Division).

The armored divisions in 1940 would typically be outfitted with these types of vehicles for carrying infantry, ammo and fuel to the units.

These Lorraines are both painted in a scheme of overall army green.

The matricule (registration number) is carried on the front and rear of the vehicles and again has the french tricolor and then an 'M' standing for 'militaire' followed by the number block.

Renault UE



The Renault UE on this map probably belongs to the 3rd Division d'Infanterie Motorisée.

The Renault UE tractors were used in both normal infantry regiments and motorized infantry regiments. Each infantry regiment had a supply company and a vehicle company, each with six tractors for a total of 12. The motorized regiments added a support company with two UE tractors in each battalion for a total of 18 tractors per regiment. Each infantry division also had a divisional antitank company equipped with UE tractors towing the standard 25mm SA34 anti tank gun. The UE tractors were used in other types of units for other chores including towing fuel trailers, mortars, and other specialized equipment.

The Renaults on this map are again painted in a scheme of overall army green.

The matricule (registration number) is carried on the front of the vehicle and lacks the 'M' marking before the number block which was sometimes done.

These Renaults also carry the standard French army symbol for "towed load," a warning sign in blue with a yellow triangle on the roof of the vehicle.

Panhard 178



The Panhard 178 on this map belongs to the 2nd Escadron of the 1st Platoon of the 1st Company of the 6th Groupe de Reconnaissance de Division d'Infanterie (GRDI or Divisional Reconnaissance Group) of the 3ere DIM.

This divisional reconnaissance group includes various elements like motorcyclists but also armored cars and several light tanks.

This vehicle is painted in the standard military green with brown camouflage.

The matricule (registration number) is carried on the front and rear inscribed in a black rectangle and again has the french tricolor and then an 'M' followed by the number block.

On its hull sides it carries a blue spade outlined in white, signifying its position in the 1st Platoon of the 1st Company.

The National Roundel was often carried on cavalry vehicles and this one is displayed on the turret rear.

The Panhard also carries the divisional symbol of the 6th GRDI on the left hull side. It's theorized that the background color depend on the squadron that the vehicle belonged to (blue - 1, red - 2, green - 3, purple - 4, orange - 5)



Hotchkiss 39





Both the short and long barrel Hotchkiss 39 on this map belong to the 45e Bataillon de Chars de Combat (BCC) in the 7e Demi-brigade légère, 3ere DCR.

The markings and camo on both are mainly copied from real photos of the tank in France 1940, of which a color version exists.



This Hotchkiss was again painted at the factory as is probably the fourth type of the six schemes used during the production run. It consists of a pale green over the usual French army dark green. This scheme would've started around No. 40569 and continued through 40900 (roughly). As you'll note, the long barrel 'SA-39' gun is number 40901 exactly.

The matricule (registration number) is carried on the front and rear of the vehicle in white and has the french tricolor followed by the number block in white.

The tanks of the 45e BCC used no specific unit markings in most photos.

Char B1 Bis "Eure"



There are a number of Char B1 Bis tanks on this map, but none more famous than "Eure" that belonged to Capt. Pierre Billotte, the Commander of the 1st Company of the 41e BCC in the 5e Demi-brigade lourde of the 3ere DCR.

Of this tank, not many real photos exist of it at the time of the battle of Stonne.



The Char B1 bis tanks of the 3ere DCR were assigned to the 5e Demi-brigade lourde (heavy half-brigade) which consisted of both the 41e and 49e BCC. Each BCC had 31 Char B1 bis tanks.

Tank No. 337 "Eure" was built by FCM and was delivered to the 2/41e BCC at the Gien arsenal on December 8, 1939; it was assigned to Billotte's company on May 10 and became his command tank during the fighting.

The Char B1 tanks again carried camouflage and markings painted at the factory, and this tank shows a scheme of ochre over standard army green which is common of tanks produced at the FCM factory. The turret, which may have been supplied separately at some point, shows a slightly different scheme of Ochre and some brown painted with a black outline over the standard army green.

The Char B1s carried a set of regulation markings applied at the factory in the form of a 3-digit number, this one being '337.' These numbers were carried in white on the brace under the 75mm gun and on the right side access door.

The list of names for each tank was fixed by the Directorate of Armament Manufacturing. And this name 'Eure' falls under the 306-345 matricule which were named after rivers. The name is applied on the front over the tricolor flash and on the right side of the turret over the tricolor.

The Char B1s of the 41e BCC had their own unique system of turret markings to identify each tank within the unit. This consisted of a 'ribbon' and letters as well as shapes;

The first company used a tightened blue wavy ribbon outlined in white.

The second company had a stretched out ribbon outlined in white.

The third company had a stretched out ribbon without any outline.

Each section within the company was identified by a small white geometrical symbol painted either in an outline and positioned on or near the blue ribbons on the turret. They were also painted solid white within the 'panels' on the rear of the turret to indicate the position of the tank within the section.

The first section used 'discs,' the second section used 'squares,' and the third section used 'triangles.'

The position of each tank in the section is given by the number of shapes on the rear panels;

1st tank - single shape on the center of the left panel only. The right panel is blank.

2nd tank - two shapes positioned vertically on the left panel only. The right panel is blank.

3rd tank - two shapes positioned vertically on the left panel and one on the center of the right panel.

These 'panels' on the rear of the turret were painted in the French tri-color (red, white & blue) and outlined in white. They had a letter inscribed in the middle section to indicate the company that the tank belonged to;

'A' for the first company.

'B' (some sources say 'I') for the second company.

'C' (some sources say 'O') for the third company.

The letter 'A' on the back of "Eure" indicates the 1st Company, as does the tightened blue wavy ribbon outlined in white.

As the commander of the company it carried no additional shapes in the rear panels.

Char B1 Bis "Ricquewihr"



Another of the Char B1 Bis tanks on this map, belonged Second Lieutenant Stoltz on May 15th, of the 3ème Section of the 1ère Compagnie of the 49e BCC in the 5e Demi-brigade lourde of the 3ere DCR.

Of this tank, a few real photos exist from in France 1940 that the markings are mainly based on.



This tank displays a scheme of the St Chamond factory in brown over standard army green on both the hull and the turret.

The 3-digit number, this one being '356' is carried in white on the brace under the 75mm gun and on the right side access door.

The name 'Ricquewihr' falls under the 346-375 matricule which were named after wines. The name is applied on the front over the tricolor flash and on the right side of the turret over the tricolor.

The Char B1s of the 49e BCC again had their own unique system of turret markings to identify each tank within the unit;

The 1st company had Sky Blue bands around the top of the turret sides. These bands extended one third of the way down the side of the turret. Some tanks had the bands painted all the way round the turret while others had just the front half painted.

The 2nd company had Light Gray bands painted all the way round turrets extending from the base to half way up the turret while some tanks had no bands at all.

The 3rd company had Vermillion bands painted all the way round turrets extending from the base to half way up the turret while some tanks had no bands at all.

The sections within the three companies were indicated by playing card symbols;

1st company

-1st Section - Sky Blue band around the top of the turret with small white spades painted within the band. The number of spades, none, one or two perhaps indicating the position of the tank in the section.

-2nd Section - Sky Blue band around the top of the turret with small white hearts painted within the band. The number of hearts, one, two or three perhaps indicating the position of the tank in the section.

-3rd Section - Sky Blue band positioned for the front third only with no card symbols.

2nd company

-1st Section - Large white Spade symbols on turret and at least one tank had a Light Gray Band around the base while another only had the symbol with no band.

-2nd Section - Large white Heart symbols on turret and at least two tanks had a Light Gray Band around the base. One tank has a dot positioned to the right of while another has it positioned to the left which possibly indicates the position of the tank within the section. The third tank might not have had a dot at all.

-3rd Section - Large white Diamond symbol on the turret but there is no evidence of a Light Gray Band around the base.

3rd company

-1st Section - A small red spade positioned above the Vermillion band.

-2nd Section - No markings on the turrets.

-3rd Section - A mixture of bands and symbols. One tank had a Vermillion band only, a second had a small red diamond only, while the third had a Vermillion band and a small red diamond above it.

The sky blue band on the front third of the turret with no card symbols puts this tank in the 3rd Section of the 1st Company.

The two other tanks within the 49e BCC are represented on this map as wrecks. They are "Gaillac" #368 (1st Section of the 3rd Company) & "Chinon" #354 (1st Section of the 1st Company).



MS 406



The MS 406 on this map is the 2nd plane in Escadrille 103, Groupement de Chasse I/2

The G.C. I/2 was based out of Toul-Ochey near Nancy, France. It was operating out of the Zone d'Opérations Aériennes Est - Z.O.A.E. and was heir to the famous 'Stork' fighter units of World War 1.

In May 1939, the French adopted a standardized painting system; Gris Bleu Fonce (Dark Blue Grey) was the primary upper surface color and Gris Bleu Clair (Light Blue Grey) was the primary undersurface color.

On the upper surfaces, a pattern of one or more of 2 additional colors was added between Terre Foncee (Dark Earth) and Vert (Green).

Our MS 406 also has a lighter 3rd camouflage color added to the Terre Foncee and Vert, that is possibly the pre war Kaki (Middle Brown) that was originally applied to upper surfaces.

All French aircraft carried the French roundel in the French tri-color. It was carried on the upper and lower sides of the wings, and after January 1940, on the fuselage sides.

The French tricolor was also repeated on the tail rudder.

French aircraft carried a few different sets of numbers and codes;

The manufacturer's code 'S.N.C.A.O.' standing for Société nationale des constructions aéronautiques de l'ouest (one of the nationalized factories at St. Nazaire) is carried in red on the tail.

The type designation 'MS 406C1' is carried in black on both sides of the rudder.
The production number (for the factory) 'No 787' is carried below that.

The French aircraft also carried Matricules (army serial numbers) with one letter and 3 numbers in large white characters under the wings. By spring of 1940, these were starting to be painted out, but our MS 406 still carries the 'N768' number.

The aircraft number within its Escadrille was also placed on the plane. G.C. I/2 tended to use black numbers in a yellow circle. This one is number '2' for the 2nd plane in the squadron, and is placed on the tail, as per pre-1940 regulations.

By January 1940, there was an order issued to place these Escadrille numbers on the fuselage aft of the roundel, and in-turn paint out the Escadrille insignia. Many French pilots, having grown attached to their heritage and subsequent insignia, were reluctant to follow this order. As a result, some never got painted out or would wind up reappearing on the tail of the plane. Ours, has not yet been painted out.

The unit insignia dates back to WW1. During WW1, the name 'Cigogne' (storks, which are harbingers of spring in Alsace) came to be associated in people's minds with French B.L. 3 aircraft, and subsequently associated with French pride (Alsace was not, at the time, a French territory. Instead, being occupied by the German Empire). In 1916 the command of the Somme Combat Group ordered that clear symbols be painted on aircraft so that aircrews should be able to recognise other members of their own flight and regroup after dispersal during fighting. By this time, the flights had been grouped into squadrons. One of the squadrons' commanding officers, Commandant Felix Brocard, chose to make reference to the Alsatian storks by using a white stork with lowered wings as the emblem on the Nieuports of no. 3 flight. He then ordered the other flights of the squadron to choose emblems using storks in other postures. The modern emblem of the squadron bears three storks at three points in the wing-beat cycle. They represent respectively;
Flight 3 (wings low)
Flight 103 (wings high)
Flight 12 (wings spread)

This plane carries a 'stork' on the fuselage with the wings in a 'high' position, marking it as part of Escadrille 103. Both Escadrille 3 & 103 were attached to G.C. I from 1 September 1933 until 20 August 1940. Escadrille 103 was the 2nd squadron in the Groupement, hence the I/2 designation.

Hopefully these markings have been of interest to you, and you can further immerse yourself in the Battle for Stonne!

We hope you enjoy! 'Till next time!

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