

Batavian Troops

History

The Netherlands became the Batavian Republic in 1795 after the Army of the North commanded by General Charles Pithegru took advantage of the ice bridges caused by the severe cold and overran the country. Flanders was subsequently ceded to France.

Infantry

Line Infantry

The Dutch Batavian infantry were dressed in blue uniforms which closely resembled the 'habits' worn by the armies of the French Republic. The skirts of their coats **were made very long** and this is seen in many contemporary drawings. According to Richard Knötel the collars of their coats were also very high and their hats were bigger than the French pattern. At first the infantry were formed, as in the Revolutionary French Army, in Demi-Brigades, each of three battalions. Until 1795 the cockade had been orange, but was altered to black during the Batavian Republic period.

According to Knötel the facing colours in 1796 were as follows:

| Demi-Brigade | Collar | Lapels and Cuffs | Turnbacks | Piping |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|--------|
| 1 st | Red | Red | Red | White |
| 2 nd | Crimson | Crimson | White | White |
| 3 rd | White | White | White | None |
| 4 th | Red piped White | White | Red | Red |
| 5 th | Light Blue | Light Blue | Light Blue | White |
| 6 th | Light Blue | Light Blue | White | White |
| 7 th | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | White |
| Regt. Waldeck | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow |
| Regt. Sachsen-Gotha | Red | Red | Red | Red |

Buttons are all white metal.



Musician of the 21st Batavian Infantry Battalion 1803

Centre companies had blue shoulder straps piped as indicated. Grenadiers had red-fringed epaulettes and a red grenade symbol on each turnback.



Batavian Infantryman c.1800

Waistcoats and breeches were white. Black

knee-length gaiters were worn with black boots. Belting and equipment was white with a calfskin knapsack.

The black tricorne hat was normally worn with a white cockade loop terminating with a button on the left side. Above the cockade was worn a red-over-black feather plume, but this was probably only for grenadiers.

Leinhart and Humbert give the following additional information for the interim period that followed:

On 18th August 1796, the 3rd Demi-Brigade had white collars, cuffs, cuff-flaps, turnbacks and piping. The 2nd Demi-Brigade, on the 19th September 1796, received crimson collars, lapels, cuffs and cuff-flaps with white turnbacks and piping. On 20th December 1796, the 4th Demi-Brigade had scarlet collars, white lapels, cuffs and cuff-flaps and red turnbacks. Their collars were piped with white but the cuffs, cuff-flaps, pockets and turnbacks were piped red.

On 20th October 1803, the infantry was re-organised and were thereafter formed as battalions numbered 1 to 23, plus the ancient regiments of Waldeck and Sachsen-Gotha. The 22nd Battalion was known as the Colonial Battalion. The uniform remained basically the same, but with facings as below:

| Battalion | Collar | Lapels | Cuff | Cuff-Flap | Pocket Piping | Shoulder-Straps | Turnbacks |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Red piped White | Red piped White | Red piped White | Red piped White | White | | Red piped White |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------|--|------------------------|
| 2 | Blue piped White | Red piped White | Red piped White | Blue piped White | White | | Red piped White |
| 3 | White piped Red | Red piped White | Red piped White | White piped Red | White | | Red piped White |
| 4 | Crimson | Crimson piped White | Crimson piped White | White piped Crimson | White | | White |
| 5 | White piped Crimson | Crimson piped White | Crimson piped White | Crimson piped White | White | | White |
| 6 | Blue piped White | Crimson piped White | Crimson piped White | Blue piped White | White | | White |
| 7 | White | White | White | White | White | | White |
| 8 | Blue piped White | White | White | Blue piped White | White | | White |
| 9 | Red piped White | White | White | Red piped White | White | | Red piped White |
| 10 | Red piped White | White piped Red | White piped Red | Red piped White | Red | | Red piped White |
| 11 | Blue piped White | White piped Red | White piped Red | Blue piped White | Red | | Red piped White |
| 12 | White piped Red | White piped Red | White piped Red | White piped Red | Red | | Red piped White |
| 13 | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | White | | Light Blue piped White |
| 14 | Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Blue piped White | White | | Light Blue piped White |
| 15 | White piped | Light Blue | Light Blue | White piped | White | | Light Blue |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | Light Blue | | | Light Blue | | | |
| 16 | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | White | | White |
| 17 | Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Blue piped White | White | | White |
| 18 | Red piped White | Light Blue piped White | Light Blue piped White | Red piped White | White | | White |
| 19 | Yellow piped White | Yellow piped White | Yellow piped White | Yellow piped White | White | | Yellow piped White |
| 20 | Red piped White | Yellow piped White | Yellow piped White | Blue piped White | White | | Yellow piped White |
| 21 | Blue piped White | Yellow piped White | Yellow piped White | Blue piped White | White | | Yellow piped White |
| 22 | White piped Red | Red piped White | Red piped White | Red piped White | White | White piped Red | Red piped White |
| 23 | White | White | White | White | White | | White |
| 1 st Waldeck Battn | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | | Yellow |
| 2 nd Waldeck Battn | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | Yellow | | Yellow |
| Sachsen-Gotha Battn | Red | Red | Red | Red | Red | | Red |

Leinhart and Humbert show the 23rd wearing a black shako, and the 22nd also with a plain black shako with a simple white loop and button in the front topped by a black pompon. The 22nd also had white Brandenburg loops to the lapels.

Officers had a similar uniform, but in a long-tailed coat with silver epaulettes of rank to the shoulders. Black bicorn hats with a white-over-red feather plume. Short black boots were worn. A red, white and blue sash was worn round the waist under the coat.

Light Infantry

Light infantry were dressed in a French-style short-tailed blue jacket with blue lapels piped white. The collar, cuffs and cuff-flaps were red, buttons were white metal. Carabiniers had red fringed epaulettes, chasseurs green fringed epaulettes with red crescents. The hat was a winged shako that resembled that worn by the French light infantry of the period. It had a red hanging plume and cords for the carabiniers and green plume and cords for the chasseurs.

Blue breeches were worn tucked into white short gaiters, or alternatively blue overall trousers. Waistcoats were red. Belting and equipment was white.

Jägers

The four Jäger, or rifle, Battalions were dressed similarly to the line infantry, but wholly in dark green including waistcoat and breeches. The collar, cuffs, cuff-flaps, piping to lapels, pockets, edges of waistcoat and pocket on the waistcoat were all of the battalion's facing colour:

| Battn | Facings | Lapels | Buttons |
|-------|---------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | Red | Dark Green | Brass |
| 2 | Black | Black | White Metal |
| 3 | Black | Dark Green | Brass |
| 4 | Crimson | Dark Green | White Metal |

The turnbacks were decorated with a red bugle horn. The bicorn had a green plume and hat cords. All belting and equipment was of black leather.

Cavalry

Organisation

The Batavian Republic had two regiments of Heavy Cavalry, one of Dragoons and one of Hussars. In 1802 the Heavy Cavalry were converted to Light Dragoons. The 2nd Light Dragoons were disbanded in 1805, and the Dragoon Regiment was re-titled the 1st Light Dragoons, the previous 1st being re-numbered as the 2nd.

Heavy Cavalry, 1795 - 1802

The Heavy Regiments worn bicorns with a white plume. Coats were white with crimson turnbacks. The 1st Regiment had black collar, cuffs and lapels; these were light blue for the 2nd Regiment. Waistcoat and breeches were white; buttons white metal.

Shabraques were crimson for the 1st Regiment and yellow for the 2nd; lacing was white for both regiments.

Dragoons, 1795 - 1805

Dragoons were dressed as the French with a brass helmet, brown fur turban, black horsehair mane with a red plume on the left. The uniform was blue with a red collar, lapels, turnbacks, piping etc. Overalls were blue and piped with red along the outside seams and fastened by a row of white metal buttons.

Light Dragoons, 1802 - 1806

Headwear initially was a 'Tarleton' helmet with crimson turban and white plume. This was replaced about 1805 by a brass French style dragoon helmet. The jacket was initially a white short-tailed one with closed lapels. Collar and cuffs were black for the 1st Regiment and light blue for the 2nd. In 1804 the jacket became dark blue faced pink for both regiments.

Shabraques were crimson for the 1st Regiment and yellow for the 2nd; lacing was white for both regiments.

Hussars, 1795 - 1806

The hussars wore French-style hussar uniform with red facings, yellow braid, black mirliton cap with red wing, red-and-white cords and a red, white and blue plume on the left side.



Batavian Hussar Regiment

Artillery

Foot Artillery

They wore an infantry style uniform of blue coat, waistcoat and breeches, with red facings and brass buttons.

Horse Artillery

The uniform was similar to the early dragoon uniform with bicorn hat, blue coat and lapels with red collar and cuffs. Breeches were straw-coloured and worn with long boots.