

CHAPTER XXVI

COMPARATIVE WAFFEN SS RANKS WITH WEHRMACHT,  
BRITISH AND U.S. ARMY EQUIVALENT RANKS AND  
TATTOO MARKS

A. COMPARATIVE RANKS

Waffen SS or SS Legion Rank	Wehrmacht	British Army	U.S. Army
Schutze (Grenadier etc.)	Schutze (Gren. etc.)	Private, etc.	Private, etc.
Oberschutze	Oberschutz	Sen. Private	Sen. Private
Sturmann	Gefreiter	Jr. L./Corporal	Pfc.
Rottenführer	Obergefreiter	Sen. L./Corporal	Pfc.
Unterscharführer	Unteroffizier	Corporal	Corporal
Junker	Fahnenjunker Uffz	Officer candidate	—
Scharführer	Unterfeldwebel	L/Sergeant	Sergeant
Standartenjunker	Fahnrich	Officer Cadet	Mil. Academy Cadet
Oberscharführer	Feldwebel	Sergeant	Sergeant
Hauptscharführer	Oberfeldwebel	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant
Standartenoberjunker	Oberfahnrich	Snr. Officer Cadet	—
Sturmscharführer	Stabsfeldwebel	Staff Sgt. Major	Master Sergeant
Stabsscharführer	Hauptfeldwebel	Sgt. Major	Warrant Officer

*Officers*

Untersturmführer	Leutnant		2nd Lieutenant
Obersturmführer	Oberleutnant		Lieutenant
Hauptsturmführer	Hauptmann		Captain
Sturmbannführer	Major		Major
Obersturmbannführer	Oberstleutnant		Lieut. Colonel
Standartenführer	Oberst		Colonel
Oberführer	General Major	Brigadier	Brigadier General
Brigadeführer	Generalmajor		Major General
Gruppenführer	Generalleutnant		Lieut. General
Obergruppenführer	General		General
Oberstgruppenführer	Generaloberst	Field Marshal	General (with 5 stars)

The following titles and abbreviations were used to denote technical and professional functions :

SS Bewerber—SS Candidate.  
SS Führer Bewerber—SS Officer Candidate.  
F (Fachführer)—Specialist.  
KS (Kraftfahr Sachverständiger)—M.T. Specialist.  
HKS (Höherer Kraftfahr Verständiger)—Snr. ditto.  
F.R.A. (Reserve Führeranwärter) Res. Officer designate SS.  
T.U.F.W. (Technischer Unterführerwaffenwesen) Tech NCO Ordinance Branch.  
T.F.K. (Technischer Führerkraftfahrwesen) Technical Officer MT.  
T.F.N. (Technischer Führernachrichten)—Technical Officer Signals.  
T.F.W. (Technischer Führerwaffenwesen)—Technical Officer Ordinance.  
T.F.W. (ing) (Technischer Führerwaffenwesen)—Technical Officer Engineers.

## B. TATTOO MARKS

1. Tattoos. Tattoos which will be of value to the Field Eligibility personnel will fall normally in three categories which will be described below. The Nazi Government as a result of its desire to categorize as far as possible all of its manpower, instituted the system of tattooing whereby the elite could be differentiated from the normal personnel as well as from the undesirable.

2. The various tattooing marks and their purposes were as follows :

- (a) Concentration camp victims had a number tattooed on the left forearm. This number corresponded to certain case histories which were to be found in the SS records. All concentration camp victims did not have a number tattooed on their arm since its presence or absence depended on whether or not the administration of the particular concentration camp felt it expedient or had the necessary materials with which to carry out the tattooing.
- (b) Members of the S.S. and the Waffen S.S. were tattooed with a blood mark underneath the left armpit. This blood group mark matched the blood group mark to be found on the S.S. persons filed at the S.S. Headquarters in Berlin. Again, whether or not an individual Waffen S.S. member had a blood group mark depended on the exigencies of the war and whether the facilities were available for tattooing. Frequently it occurred that persons who were conscripted in the latter days of the war were not tattooed because of the chaotic situation at that time.
- (c) Some members of the S.S., and particularly those who had become members early in the Nazi regime were tattooed with the runic S.S. mark under the left armpit. After 1940 very few persons were thus tattooed unless they were members of Hitler's personal bodyguard or foreigners whose Nazi history was of long standing.