

Military Colours of Hamburg Flags of the armed Citizens from 1684 to 1817

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Abstract Widely unknown is that Hamburg has kept permanent self-defence forces of varying quality since the early 17th century. Calling it an army would surely be exaggerated. Besides some ephemeral formations there were three institutions existing for some decades:

- 1) the City Soldiery, a mercenary troop
- 2) the Citizens' Sentinels, a compulsory militia
- 3) the Citizens' Militia, a conscript militia

There are almost 200 flags of these institutions still existing, dating back to the late 17th, the 18th and the early 19th century. They are kept in the Museum für hamburgische Geschichte. These silken flags are not on display to the public due to their poor condition.

The majority are company flags of the Citizens' Sentinels, which were structured according to parishes. They are rather artwork than military colours and each of them is unique.

The oldest existing military colour dates back to the year 1684, the most recent one to the year 1817.

Introduction

After the heyday within the Hanseatic League all kinds of military affairs in Hamburg played only an unimportant role.

Efforts relating to the self-defence at sea had been modest, they had been poor ashore. War was an improvident business. The preferred manner facing its troubles was an intelligent policy of treaties. When indicated high fees were paid and the arms were shouldered only, if it was inevitable. This policy of war as an ultima ratio turned out conducive to the prosperity of the city. Some German terms being hard to translate are added in braces.

1 General Information

1.1 Hamburg's Military Sovereignty (Wehrhoheit)

Relating to defence Hamburg emancipated herself from her liege lords, the Counts of Schauenburg, very early by the Barbarossa Privileges, especially the Elbe Privilege of 1189¹⁾ and gained military sovereignty.

- Hamburg wasn't obliged to give military assistance to the Counts of Schauenburg in case of war
- relating to the defence of the city Hamburg needn't confer with the liege lord



- within a radius of two miles (approx. 15 km) around the city it wasn't allowed to build castles or any fortifications

The Great Elbe Privilege of 1628 (other sources say 1626), granted by Emperor Ferdinand II, guaranteed to the city 2):

- „on and alongside the river downstream to the North Sea and five miles (nearly 40 km) upstream“ warships were allowed
- within this zone no foreign fortifications were allowed

Though Hamburg was a Lutheran city, the Catholic Emperor in Vienna had a strong interest in unhampered functioning of this important emporium.

Between 1705 and 1711 the military sovereignty is de facto cancelled. Due to serious discords between a pro Danish party and a pro Guelfish party couldn't manage to keep law and order. On the emperor's instance the city was occupied by troops of the Lower Saxonian Imperial Circle. The stationing costs were paid by Hamburg's citizens. An imperial agency needed six years to abolish the existing grievances, among those a lack of financing of the armed forces.

Hamburg's position was finally consolidated by the Gottorp Treaty of 1768 between Hamburg and Denmark 3)

- Denmark accepted the final direct imperial rule (Reichsunmittelbarkeit) of the city
- Denmark besides some islands and sands south of Hamburg ceded the pawned districts of Reinbek and Trittau to Hamburg
- Hamburg gained the application of the most-favoured nation clause to her trade with Denmark and Norway and to the Øresund's Toll.
- Hamburg gave back all pawned districts to Denmark
- Denmark needn't refund its remaining debts

In 1867 Hamburg abdicated her military sovereignty by a military convention with Prussia. Since 1868 the city was defended by Prussian troops. 4)

1.2 Self-defence of the city within the municipal Administration

As mentioned above Hamburg wasn't restricted by direction and guidance of her liege lord. First of all there had been a self-defence system rotation from house to house. 5) In cities the self-defence since the Middle Ages was usually maintained by the guilds. This arrangement was useful, because people of the same profession used to live in the same quarter. Thus they could be alarmed very easily. 6) Especially in Hamburg the defence was ordered by guilds and districts (Ämter). In 1437 a district had to deploy 10% of all males fit for military service. 7) During the 14th century there existed 25 districts having altogether 167 shooters. 8) As time went by these structures didn't fit no more. Hamburg's population increased. People from different guilds had been mixed up in their quarters. A different structure was needed. Due to the new circumstances the membership in a military unit now was ordered by residence. Thus everywhere bigger units of city militias arose. E.g. the London Trained Bands, a well-trained disciplined militia in the times of Cromwell, usually gathered in their regiments members of different guilds living in the same quarter. 9) The same trend came to appearance in German cities. Hamburg introduced a reclassification into quarters probably since 1458, proven since 1517. In 1517(?) the number of 1050 conscripts of St. James Parish is reported. 10) Finally in 1557 the Citizens' Sentinels arose being in charge of security patrols on the city walls.



1.3 City Soldiery

1.3.1 City Soldiery in General

The proper military protection in the early 17th century was run by some 50 up to 100 mercenaries, professional soldiers having the self-image of being craftsmen. The soldiery consisted of foot soldiers (musketeers and grenadeers), cavalry (riders and dragoons), later on also artilleryists, in Hamburg called constables, in order to operate the cannonry. 11) Like a master brought with him his journeymen, so the captain brought with him his lansquenets. He collected the wages from the employer sharing out them to his soldiers due to their contracts.

Let's look back on times of the Hanseatic league. Then the citizens themselves fought bravely on battlefields or the high seas, led by their aldermen. Since the early 15th century this code of practice was degraded step by step:

- 1408 exemption from military service by paying a compensation fee to the city treasury 12)
- 1420 first mission of complete squads of mounted mercenaries during a war against Duke Erik of Saxony 13)
- 1477 recruitment of a professional wall master under supervision of two aldermen in order to maintain walls and cannonry 14)
- around 1600 introduction of permanent infantry companies, 15) ; it was advantageous for the city, which had to pay less officers, and also for the captains, who received an additional per capita quota on top of their guerdon.
- 1616 introduction of a city captain (Stadtkapitän), having the rank of a colonel; 16) already before 1599 there existed a city constable (Stadtwachtmeister), 18) who became the captain's deputy in 1616, since 1631 his title was city major (Stadtmajor) 17)
- 10th March 1628 introduction of a permanent war council under the chairmanship of the burgomaster. 19)
- 1699 introduction of permanent cavalry 20)

1.3.2 Infantry including Grenadeers

Especially in the early decades the soldiers had been constantly hired and fired. E.g. in 1599 there was one sergeant having 16 soldiers. In 1608 there remained just the guardians of the city gates. 1617 there were 100 soldiers commanded by a colonel, assisted by a lieutenant, an ensign and a sergeant. The colonel criticized this little number as completely insufficient. 21)

1625 there existed a complete company having 150 soldiers. In 1626 during the 30-Years-War the Catholic general Tilly threatened the city. 22) Due to this menace there existed a regiment having 10 companies, among those a colonel's company (Leibkompanie) having 410 soldiers and the other companies each with 230 soldiers, altogether 2480 soldiers. At the beginning of 1628 the contingent was restocked up to 18 companies each with 300 soldiers, altogether 5400 soldiers. But already May 1628 – the threat wasn't quite over - all the companies were diminished down to 200 soldiers each. During the Danish siege in 1686 there were just 12 companies having 150 soldiers each, altogether only 1800 soldiers. Apart from that complete regiments of other states were temporarily put under oath and Hamburg had to pay for the guerdon of the foreign soldiers.

Around 1765 there existed one regiment having four companies. Colonel, lieutenant colonel major and 2nd major formed the operational headquarter. Every company had officers as follows: captain, lieutenant, sub-lieutenant, warrant officer (Feldwebel), staff sergeant (Führer), 3 sergeants, 6 corporals, 2 drummers, 10 lance corpo-



als (Gefreite), between 147 and 155 privates, plus two civilians: pay roller (Musterschreiber) and corpsman (Feldscher). The 1st and 2nd company also had a piper, the colonel's company had 15 additional musicians, since 1769 also an adjutant 23) Around 1770 the main guard-house at Großneumarkt Square was permanently manned by 66 soldiers. 24)



Image 1. Military review of the City Soldieri at Großneumarkt Square (1800), we see cavalry, followed by artillery, grenadeers and musketeers. But we see no flags, because they were delivered later in 1802.

In 1683 an additional company of grenadeers, having 250 soldiers, was deployed but the company was disbanded very soon due to a reorganization in 1711 . 25) The personnel was incorporated into the 12 existing infantry companies. 36 grenadeers were added to each company. According to the marching order at the end of the 18th century there existed a complete battalion of grenadeers. 26)

1.3.3 Cavalry

In 1686 Hamburg's cavalry consisted of two companies of riders and two companies of dragoons, altogether 160 soldiers, who all were recruited after the Danish siege. 27)

The first permanent unit in 1699 consisted of 24 mounted infantry soldiers, commanded by a lieutenant.

On demand of the imperial commission the cavalry was restocked in 1709 up to one squadron with two companies. 28) Colonel Johann Woldenberg implemented the plan. He went back to the infantry in 1716. 29) The cavalry, just like the infantry, had an excellent reputation.

1.3.4 Artillery

Artillery according to classical meaning existed since the end of the 15th century together with the emergence of firearms. 30) The oldest Hamburg field guns of were casted in 1470. The city 1475 was walled in 1475. In 1477 the first casting house was founded. 31) After the end of the 30-Years-War in 1653 there had been altogether 120 field guns grouped on 22 bastions. 32) In the beginning the guns were operated by the citizens. Due to a regulation from 1576 exercises every four or six years(!) were required. 33) Since 1565 there existed artillery masters, put on a par with an officer. Since 1610 they had to inspect the fortification together with the city captain and the city constable. 34)

Since 1626, after the Sentinels' Wach- und Feuerordnung had been introduced, the artillerists were separated from the Sentinels, but since 1761 two men, who were "skilful in a constable's business belonged to every company of the Citizens' Sentinels35)

Despite of the extended fortifications around 1625 there had been just 15 constables. There number must have increased enormously during the following years, for some 30 up to 40 artillerymen were needed in order to man just one bastion. In 1671 there were 60 artillerists, the personnel was restocked by infantry soldiers. Finally in 1672 an own artillery company was introduced.³⁶⁾ During the siege in 1686 the artillery was reinforced by Swedish soldiers. After the siege there remained 70 gunners and the same number of auxiliaries. The proportions between experts and auxiliaries remained 1:1 and in 1722 the total number was 194. ³⁷⁾ During the following decades there had been further reductions in staff. In 1804 the city walls were removed, most field guns were destroyed and the metal was recycled. In 1806 the city was occupied by the French and artillery became redundant and was thus dissolved and incorporated by a decree of the Senat on 8th November 1810. ³⁸⁾

1.3.5 Guerdon and social Benefits

A captain of the infantry gained the guerdon of 20 privates, a lieutenant of 10 privates. Once at the beginning there was a single extra-payment of one and a half monthly guerdon in order to buy the personal equipment without ammunition. Elsewhere there were no frequent subventions for food, clothing and accommodation. Since 1761 the uniforms were paid by the city. ³⁹⁾

In 1709 a cavalry captain earned 125%, a lieutenant 150%, a common dragoon 400% of the guerdon in comparison with his colleague from the infantry. The generous salaries were partially cut by a reform in 1717 that way that a common dragoon since then just received the double of an infantry soldier. ⁴⁰⁾

In 1636 the last artillery master was put under oath, since 1650 he was on the payroll as an artillery lieutenant, receiving less guerdon than his colleagues from the other branches of service. ⁴¹⁾

1.4 Citizens' Sentinels

1.4.1 The Origins of the Citizens' Sentinels

In 1557 the city gates were guarded by the newly formed Citizens' Sentinels, a militia, for the first time. In 1565 a wall order (Wallordnung) was issued. One militia's squad (Rotte) was formed by the males - fit for military service - of ten flats, three squads formed a quarter, four quarters a company, also called a pennon (Fähnlein), commanded by a captain. ⁴³⁾ In the beginning the militia was armed by cross bows. In December 1576 there were all in all 16 companies. ⁴⁴⁾ Each company was in charge of a certain segment of the walls. The vigil was outsourced to the Soldiery's professionals already in 1610. ⁴⁵⁾ The number of companies increased in 1617 to 19 companies of different strength (between 266 and 538), altogether 6978 militiamen. Ehlers confirms the data and adds that the city at that time had about 36,000 inhabitants. ⁴⁶⁾ He just counts 6720 militiamen. The authorised strength of the companies according to him was between 512 and 256 soldiers. Four up to eight quarters belonged to each company, four squads with 16 men each to a quarter. ⁴⁷⁾ Thus one of three males would have been a member of the Citizens' Sentinels.

The militiamen had a civilian profession. The service within the militia was extra official. Furthermore they were in charge of procuration and maintenance of their personal equipment.

There were no uniforms. As the militiamen up to the 16th century could be clearly

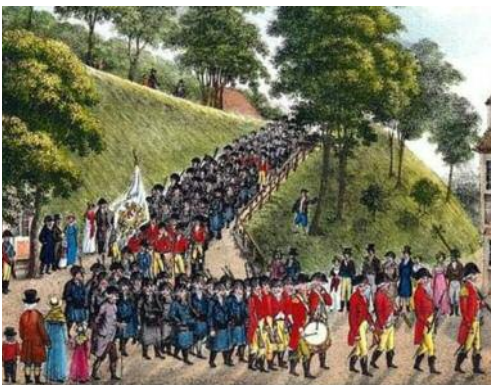


Image 2. One sees an ensign of the Citizens' Sentinels in 1634 (top), the deployment of one company with a white flag at Dammtor at the beginning of the 18th century (above) and an officer of St. James Regiment dressed in an 18th century uniform (left)

recognized by helmet and armour, there was no need of uniforms. 48) At the beginning of the 18th century a scarlet tunic and a periwig were introduced at least for the officers of the Citizens' Sentinels. 49)

1.4.2 Fortification's Reconstruction

At the eve of 30-Years-War it was bubbling beneath the surface anywhere in the Holy Roman Empire and the citizens of Hamburg felt threatened by the political situation. The appearance of artillery as an independent branch of the service and the production of effective heavy ordnance changed the proportions between defence and attack completely. In Hamburg they recognized that their walls couldn't stand a bombardment by modern cannonry.

Thus the Dutch fortification architect Johan van Valckenburgh was appointed to build a new fortress replacing the masoned walls by ramparts with round bastions. One rampart divided the Alster River and thus the so called Alster Lake was created. The range had to be extended. St. George suburb was integrated. St. James Parish Church became the imaginary centre of a circle, having a diameter of nearly 2400 meters. On its perimeter the walls were erected. In the western part of the city the "newer new town" was also integrated. Finally there was added a 4-point star shaped extra fortification, right in front of the city walls. 50)

As a result of the completion of the fortification and the above mentioned privilege, granted by Ferdinand II, Hamburg during the 30-Years-War remained an isle of peace right in the middle of death and chaos. As a further result many foreign merchants, trying to escape the war, settled down in Hamburg and caused an enormous economic boost

Enthusiasm about the brand new fortifications cooled down very quickly, when the government recognized that the perimeters couldn't be manned by mercenaries without ridiculous financial efforts. 51) In 1638 the number of mercenaries had increased up to 1500 men. A complete manning by mercenaries would cost a fortune. The non-personnel-costs for the new fortress itself and the acquisition of new field guns already had been enormous. The city was neither enabled nor willing to spend extra money for additional personnel-costs. 52) The city again needed a new defence constitution (Wehrverfassung).

1.4.3 The Role of the Parishes

Already during the construction works of the new fortification in 1619 the government decided the reorganization of the militia. Besides their proper parochial function the parishes got a civil-administrative, a fiscal and a military dimension. Due to those functions the parishes in Hamburg persisted until 1860.

In Hamburg the parishes were named by the "main churches".

- St. Peter was the parish of the citizens of the oldest settlement core. St. Peter was the oldest church mentioned first in 811, 20 years earlier than neighboured St. Mary. The parish was mentioned first in 1195.

- St. Nicolas was the parish of the citizens of the (1st) new town of the Counts of Schauenburg located west of the oldest settlement core. The parish was first mentioned together with St. Peter in 1195.

- St. Catherine was the parish of the fishermen and traders on the marsh islands of Cremon and Grimm in the South of the city. The parish was first mentioned in 1251.

- St. James was the parish of the citizens of the extension east of the old city along Steinstraße. The parish was first mentioned in 1255. 53)

- St. Mary, the cathedral, finished in 831, stood side by side with St. Peter, wasn't a



parish but an exclave of the Archbishops of Bremen, represented by a local chapter. It was subordinated under Hamburg's sovereignty in 1803 and demolished very soon. 54)

The property of the main churches was administered by jurors (Juraten). 55)

-In 1458 the council limited the power of the jurors' colleges by law (Rezeß, being more a city constitution regulating the competences of the city's political organs).

In 1529 by another law (Langer Rezeß) the power of the new civic colleges, based upon the jurors' colleges, was extended. They were codetermined on a basis of parity by members of the four parishes. Decisions were made by the majority of parishes (!), not by the majority of votes. 56)

-St. Michael was the parish of the citizens of the extension west of the new city walls, the so called "newer new town". It belonged to St. Nicolas Parish at the beginning of the 17th century. Due to a strongly increasing settlement and population the district was separated by pressure of the civic captains of the Sentinels in 1644. But the district gained full emancipation as the 5th parish not before 1677 and the composition of the civic colleges was changed even later, in 1685. Being now composed by five parishes the impasses of former days no longer occurred.

1.4.4 Reorganization of the Sentinels in 1619

Since 1619 the recruitment was based upon the four parishes. In their military context the districts were called colonelships (Colonellschaften). 57) The parishes were divided into quarters. Each parish deployed one regiment, which therefore was also called a parochial regiment (Kirchspielregiment). Each Regiment had 10 companies. The companies were divided as follows:

1 company = 3 quarters = 12 squads.

The strength of a company was 180 militiamen, other sources say up to 200. 58)

Based on 16 militiamen per squad we have 64 men per quarter and 192 men per company. This was the authorised strength, but we don't know whether they were reached. 59)

Klessmann confirms nearly 7000 men fit for military service in 1619. 60) Based on 40 companies we would have 175 men per company. According to him the number of militiamen had increased to more or less 9800 men in 1679. 61). Based on 50 companies we would have 196 men per company. We had however 52 companies, because the St. James Regiment had an 11th suburban company for St. Georg. Just after reorganization the Citizens' Sentinels had 41 companies, in 1644 a 2nd St. Georg suburban company was added as 12th company of the St. James Regiment.

The upgrading of St. Michael to a main church bestowed 10 brand new companies on the Sentinels. Probably this was the main reason of a separation from the St. Nicolas Parish.

But as many poor people were living in the new parish, it remained difficult to fill up the regiment during the following years. 62)

The structures of 1619 were codified within the Wach- und Feuerordnung in 1626. 63) The regulations afterwards proved to be the main obstacle for the militia's clout and converted the Citizens' Sentinels, which deteriorated into a mixture of a fire brigade, a constabulary and a riot squad. Furthermore it turned out to be an efficient instrument in order to block any reform. The imperial commission in 1711 as well as the city parliament (Bürgerschaft) in 1760 failed in their attempts to break up the crusted



structures due to the pertinacious resistance of the captains' college.

The burgomaster was the militia's commander in chief and the chairman of the war council (Generalissimus), which controlled the militia. Members of the council were the five commanders of the parochial regiments, two members of the civic colleges (Oberalte), two tax inspectors (Kämmereibürger) and eight commissioners.

Each regiment was commanded by a lord colonel (Colonell Herr), who always was a member of the city council. The assembly of lord colonels elected the civic captains (Bürgerkapitän/ Hauptmann), who were chiefs of a company and appointed for life. Besides the captain every company had a number of COs and NCOs according to modern terms:

lieutenant, ensign, lieutenant ensign, pay roller (Musterschreiber), staff sergeant (Führer), quartermaster, constable (Wachtmeister) and several squadmasters (Rottmeister). 64)

The pay roller, according to modern terms a civilian, was in charge of the pay roll. All officers had to swear the citizen's oath of Hamburg.

The lord colonel was supported by a deputy, a lieutenant colonel (Colonell-Bürger), who was elected among the civic captains.

All civic captains formed a college, which every year elected a chairman (Präses) and a Schaffer a mixture between a treasurer and a recording clerk, who was in charge of the cash register of a regiment and of the widows as well. The latter also organized an annual banquet, the "convivium", an annual meal.

Being elected a civic captain mustn't refuse his appointment. As in Hamburg there was the motto that earning money is better than service within the military, there had been manifold opportunities to escape the unpopular service. The commanders could ransom themselves by paying a special fee (Wachgeld). 65) Actually this meant that they could do business as usual, while an underpaid substitute was on duty within the Sentinels. This practice, together with the captain's appointment for life time, was not particularly auspicious for the militia's clout. It happened that a captain held his command for more than 30 years.

It was controversial and doubtful from the very first moment, whether there was any military use of the Sentinels. The commander of the Soldiery, Dodo von Inn- und Knyphausen, in 1621 criticised drunk and lack of discipline among the militiamen. 66)

In normal times the city walls were manned in turns by two companies every night. For 1681 the complete pay roll is conveyed. According to this roll there had been: 67)

- a) a (lord) colonel (Colonell Herr) and a lieutenant colonel (Colonell Bürger) for each regiment
- b) for each of the 57 companies a civic captain, a lieutenant, an ensign, a lieutenant ensign, a constable (Wachtmeister), a pay roller, a piper and a messenger (Läufer)
- c) plus three quartermasters, three corporals and three drummers, i.e. one for each quarter
- d) finally four squadmasters for each quarter, i.e. one for each

Based on 180 militiamen per company the militia consisted altogether of nearly 11,000 soldiers.

The ordinary militiamen were unpaid men in compulsory service.

When Hamburg was threatened by Danish siege and occupation in 1686, the Sentinels took part but they just confirmed their bad reputation. The city survived by



reason of their strong fortifications, the well trained city soldiery and the support by 2000 soldiers of the Duke of Lüneburg-Celle. Probably also the announcement of the Great Elector to intervene accelerated the Danish withdrawal.

Dead, but not buried, that was the situation of the sentinels since the middle of the 18th century. Gaedeckens describes the sentinels as defunct since then. Professional instructors were made redundant because the people of Hamburg were not willing to defend their city. When French forces occupied the city on 19th November 1806, there had been no resistance and the service was finished, but the citizens kept their weapons.

After 1686 the Sentinels were in action twice: So they overpowered an insurrection of craftsmen in 1791. Despite of the bad reputation the French occupants a few times had the funny opinion to use the Sentinels in order to defend the city, in 1809, when the French had to follow the irregulars of Major Ferdinand von Schill. When in 1813 anti-French riots broke out, 13 companies were raised again in order to restore the (French) law and order.

Officially the Sentinels had been already dissolved by the French commander Davout on 10th December 1810, when Hamburg was incorporated into the French empire. 68)

Nevertheless new colours were granted to the sentinels in 1813 and 1814 after the 1st liberation. Furthermore the companies formed the base of the later Citizens' Militia, established by Mettlerkamp. During a period of transition the militia was reformed that way, that there were just two regiments left: the regiment Altstadt (old town) with the battalions St. Peter, St. Nicolas, St. Catherine and St. James and the regiment Neustadt (new town) with the battalions Great St. Michael and Little St. Michael. 69)

In 1811 due to a French decree all the weapons had to be handed over to the French. After the so called 1st liberation, when Russian troops commanded by Tettenborn conquered Hamburg, the Sentinels were rearmed on 12th March 1813 but just to be disarmed again and been disbanded on 30th May 1813, when the French had come back. After the final (2nd) liberation on 30th May 1814 the Sentinels and the ephemeral Citizens' Guard (Bürgergarde), which had been created in 1813, were re-established. On 15th June 1814 the Sentinels had to overtake all guard houses again from the Citizens' Guard.

The attempts of the city to establish an effective military instrument, consisting of young men, besides the sentinels failed due to the resistance of their civic captains being afraid to lose their privileges.

On 10 September 1814, the city council and the city parliament decided to establish a new Citizens' Militia. On 26 October 1814 was announced that due to the Wach- und Feuerordnung from 1626 every man had to do his duty within the militia. Finally on 22 January 1815 the sentinels were replaced by the new Citizens' Militia. The civic captains and their widows gained life long pensions.

1.5 Citizens' Militia

In view of the debilities as described above after the wars of liberation a new formation should be established, which united the advantages of the Citizens' sentinels, if they had any advantages, and the ephemeral Citizen's Guard.

The target was an elevation of the clout by introducing a compulsory service for all males from 20 years up to 45 years. 70)

The resistance of the Sentinels' captains was heavy, thus at first the Citizens' Guard was dissolved and the Sentinels were restored.



In 1815 a subdivision into six battalion-districts was planned. Each district had six quarters being homes of a regiment. Each regiment consisted of 200 militiamen, altogether a number of 7200 soldiers was advised.

Additional units were scheduled as follows: 71) one company of rifles (Jäger) and one company of sharpshooters for each district, both consisting of 100 men, two squadrons of cavalry, one company of artillery, one company for St. Georg, another company for the region between Hamm and the so called wood villages, east of St. Georg, finally another company of rifles for the Ritzebüttel district, all together another 1000 men. Furthermore there should have been reservists.

The commander in chief had the rank of a lieutenant colonel. Each battalion was granted a colour. Officers out of the Citizens' Sentinels and the Citizens' Guard were freed from service due to their own request. 72)

The size of a company was adapted to the requirements several times. The cavalry should be reduced down to one squadron and the artillery should be restocked up to two companies.

In January 1815 the militia had about 2000 men, one year later 4700 men. In 1830 within seven battalions there were altogether 6810 infantrymen, 147 cavalrymen, 414 riflemen, 475 artillerymen plus 12 staff officers, altogether 7858 men. 73)

Already in 1826 the regulations were changed and the age of the conscripts was reduced from 22 years up to 35 years, because the old regulations were considered to be "too burdensome". 74)

Also the districts of the battalions had to be adapted several times due to disproportionate strength of the units. In 1849 a reorganization was attempted, which was however refused. The Citizens' Militia's prime function should no longer be the defence of the city but the perpetuation of law and order. After many quarrels in 1852 new regulations were passed, which designed an official duty for all militiamen from 22 years up to 40 years. Between 1841 and 1866 the strength levelled off around 8900 men, another 3000 men since 1861 preferred to pay *Wachgeld* in order to escape the unpopular service. 75)

When the militia was dissolved in 1868, it consisted of eight battalions infantry (478 up to 789 men), one battalion artillery (316 men), one battalion rifles (249 men) and cavalry (112 men), altogether only just some ca. 5700 men. 76)

2 The Colours

2.1 Inventory of Colours of the Museum für hamburgische Geschichte

Some flags of the Citizens' Sentinels had been hung up in the military hall of the museum until the 1980ies. Due to continuous and excessive losses of material the museum was forced to remove them.

The minor part today is kept horizontally, together with their staffs, in cupboards, especially manufactured for flags. The major part is kept furled in the museum's magazine. But all flags have been described by filing cards. We have an amount of military flags as follows:



City Soldierly	2 flags
St. Catherine Regiment:	26 flags
St. James Regiment:	35 flags
St. Michael Regiment:	27 flags
St. Nicolas Regiment:	34 flags
St. Peter Regiment:	32 flags
Citizens' Militia:	5 flags

This summary doesn't contain the „non-active-members“, which either had to be destroyed due to the gravity of their damages or which had gone lost. Also not included are exercise flags, jalonneur flags and table flags of the Citizens' Militia. Hence today there still 154 flags of the Citizens' Sentinels and some 30 other military flags, which are not completely listed above.

Furthermore there exist, partially in high resolution, photos of 31 flags ordered by regiment as follows:

City Soldierly	2 flags
St. Catherine Regiment:	4 flags
St. James Regiment:	5 flags
St. Michael Regiment:	8 flags
St. Nicolas Regiment:	6 flags
St. Peter Regiment:	6 flags
Citizens' Militia:	5 flags

The oldest flags of each regiment of the Citizens' Sentinels, which can definitely be dated, are from 1707 (St. Peter), 1710 (St. Catherine), 1717 (St. James) and 1721 (St. Nicolas and St. Michael).



Image 3. shows the former military hall of the Museum für hamburgische Geschichte, shot in 1928. Above there are hanging the flags of the Citizens' Sentinels. Without any doubt the flag on the right hand can be identified as a flag of St. Peter Regiment (1710 – 1719). Daylight and draught caused heavy losses of material, as a result the flags had to kept in the magazine.

The most recent flags, here all regiments of the Sentinels are represented, come from the years 1813 and 1814.

All flags are made of painted silk. In case of the Sentinels the reverse is a mirror image of the obverse. Nearly the complete inventory is, which was usual at the end of the 19th century, preserved by a net, made of filaments of cotton or linen. 77)

There exist just tiny B/W photos of the two flags of the City Soldierly from 1684 and 1709, which are still preserved, within their filing cards. Their colouration became possible based on the detailed descriptions as given by Grot. 78)

2.2 Colours of the City Soldierly

2.2.1 Early Infantry Colours

We have only little information about the early infantry colours of the City Soldierly. We know from Gaedechens that the colonel's company (Leibkompanie), as usual in those times, had a white flag, while the other companies had monochrome colours. 79)

Gaedechens mentions three reasons: 80)

On the one hand in the 17th century company flags had been considered to be the private property of a captain, which had been hung above the grave on the occasion of his funeral, together with his family arms. Even earlier due to the permanent hiring and firing there had been the ceremony of "tearing the colour", when a company was dissolved. During the ceremony each of the present soldiers received one piece of the sheet.



Image 4 shows the only preserved Hamburg military colour from the 17th century, the colour of the grenadeer company; colourized according to the descriptions as given by Grot the photo taken from the filing card of the Museum für hamburgische Geschichte.

2.2.2 Colour of the Grenadeer Company of 1684

Cohesive with the deployment of a grenadeer company in 1683 also a square flag was endowed to the company in 1684. 81)

According to the description as given by Grot the sheet is made of crimson silk. The trimmings are painted. In the centre is a golden castle having three towers and an ajar portcullis. The castle is surrounded by a wreath of holly (ilex aquifolium) in natural colours. Four black grenades with golden flames are evenly spread over the wreath. Outside of the wreath the four digits of the year „1684“ are placed into the corners. Inside the wreath above the castle is a golden inscription „Nemo me impune tangit“ (Nobody touches me unpunished). At the bottom of the wreath there are hanging two cinnabar grenade bags. Two muskets with bayonets crossed per saltire are forcing the middle of the wreath. 82)

2.2.3 Description of Colours of the 2nd Infantry Regiment of 1686

Based on the description within the chronicles of a man named Sperling from 1686, the year of the Danish siege, Gaedeckens described the flags of the 10 companies of the newly deployed 2nd infantry regiment as: 83)

- 1st company: „Jehova“ (in Hebrew characters) and the motto: „Der Herr ist mein Banner und mein Schild“ (The Lord is my banner and my shield)
- 2nd company: a mountain, standing in the water, with a circumscription: „Ich stehe fest“ (I stand firmly)
- 3rd company: a light on a candlestick, ignited, with an inscription: „Ich zünde anderen an“ (I enkindle for others)
- 4th company: a lion with an inscription: „Ich fürchte mich für nichts“ (I dread nothing)
- 5th company: a crane with a headline: „Ich halte gute Wacht“ (I keep good watch)
- 6th company: the sun shining onto the sea with a headline: „Geschwind und unermüdet“ (swift and tireless)
- 7th company: the Goddess Fortuna with an inscription: „Das Glück zu ergreifen muß man keine Gelegenheit versäumen“ (You mustn't miss any opportunity in order to grasp luck)
- 8th company: a fellow with arrows, which he tries to break on his knees with an inscription: „Je mehr je stärker“ (the more the stronger)
- 9th company: the city arms with an old grenadeer's bayonet
- 10th company: three leaves of holly, on top a grenade with a headline: „Greifstu nach mir, so stech ich Dir“ (If you grasp me, I'll prick you)

There is nothing mentioned about the colours. More or less all flags will be based upon family arms of the commanding officers. When the regiment was dissolved in 1695, the flags were given away to the commanding officers.

2.2.4 Description of Infantry Colours between 1724 and 1802

In 1724 there are six flags per battalion. 84)

According to the following pages we may conclude that it had been altogether 12 flags. In 1757 they are replaced step by step, four companies receive their flags on 26th March, four companies on 15th September, four companies on 28th December, described by Gaedeckens as follows:

„Like the embroidered standards, which had been granted to the dragoons in 1710, the selfsame colours will have displayed the red city arms in a white shield with supporters and coronet and a headline 'Pro libertate.'“ It had been painted flags made of

silk. We have to remark that the "city arms" on the dragoons' standards hadn't been red but yellow instead.

Within a drawing of 1794, illustrating the marching order, for the infantry regiment there are displayed two battalions infantry with 10 companies each and a grenadeer battalion with also 10 companies. The grenadeers had no proper flags, the infantrymen of the 1st battalion had a white and a blue flag, the infantrymen of the 2nd battalion had two blue flags. 85)

In 1797 just four flags were needed. 86) The above mentioned drawing suggests that already in 1794 just four flags had been in use.

The old flags were confiscated, the new ones due to the sudden death of the commander probably were delivered not before 1802. The image of a military review in 1800 (see above image 1) doesn't show any flag.

The flags are described as follows:

- a white colonel's colour (Leibfahne) with Hamburg Arms
- a blue flag of the 2nd battalion with Hamburg Arms
- another two blue flags to be used on special occasions, during military reviews, in order to flank the colonel's colour and in order to be used by single companies. Their inscriptions acclaimed:

- 1) "Senatus Populusque Hamburgensis" (Senate and People of Hamburg)
- 2) "Patriae, Civibus, Legi" (for Homeland, Citizens and Law)
- 3) "In Civium Salute Republicae Salus" (the Welfare of the State (is based upon) the Welfare of the Citizens)
- 4) "Civium Securitati" (for Safety of Citizens)

2.2.5 Cavalry Standards in the 17th and 18th Century

Already in 1675 standards for two cavalry are said to have been endowed. The 1st company had a white standard with the inscription "Pro Libertate" (for Freedom), the 2nd company had a green standard with the inscription "Pro Patria (for Homeland). 87)

It is known that standards have been endowed for two dragoons companies, which had been deployed by Colonel Woldenberg on 26th August 1709. Grot 88) describes the standard of the 1st company as follows:

The standard was sewn from two pieces of white, flowered damask silk. It was manufactured in hussar's cut (remark of the editor). It had golden fringes. In the centre was a castle, having three towers with an ajar portcullis. The castle was flanked by two lions of golden embroidery. Above was a golden coronet with red and blue gemstones. Golden beams came out of the corners. Above the castle was a motto "Pro Libertate" (for Freedom). The standard had a white staff and a gilded, open-worked finial with a Hamburg Castle.

The standard of the 2nd company disappeared after the company was dissolved in 1716, the standard of the 1st company still exists. According to Gaedechens only one of the two companies was dissolved and its flag was kept in the armoury. 89) Furthermore Grot mentions that the standard of the 2nd company had had "the same pattern, but a red sheet with a white stripe in the middle".

2.2.6 Artillery Flag in the 18th Century

It is just mentioned that in 1724 the artillery had a proper flag and that it was a white flag in 1763. Further details are not known. 90)



Image 5. displays the standards of the first permanent cavalry units within Hamburg's City Soldiery. The standard of the 1st dragoons company (left) still exists. The image of the standard of the 2nd company (right) was reconstructed according to the description of Grot. Hence the image is speculative.

2.3. Colours of the Citizens' Sentinels

2.3.1 Sources and Whereabouts

As the militiamen had not even proper uniforms, from the very beginning conspicuous flags were required, which could be clearly distinguished from one another. The flags of the companies of the same regiment had the same colour of sheet. At this juncture the St. Peter Regiment had red flags, the St. Nicolas Regiment blue ones, the St. Catherine Regiment yellow ones and the St. James Regiment white ones. The St. Michael regiment, which was deployed later, got green flags. Apart from that the flags were in no way standardized. Their existence is proven by a picture, showing an ensign and a pay roller of the Citizens' Sentinels in 1634 (see above image 2 (left)) According to Gaedechens the flags' colours were fixed within the fire rules of. Before there should have been no discrimination of the flags by colour.⁹¹ As there exist neither flags nor coloured images from this period, this claim can't be rechecked. The flag colours were finally confirmed in 1711 by a decree of the imperial commission. This is remarkable insofar, as at this particular time from the Emperor's point of view the problem of Hamburg's direct imperial rule had been already solved. ⁹² Primarily the flags were hoisted on collecting points, where the company gathered in case of fire. Gaedechens claims that all flags had been no regimental colours but only company flags, because due to the structure of the sentinels no regimental colours were needed and the regiments had no proper ensigns. There should have existed a "main banner" transported on a waggon during military reviews. But the pattern of this banner is not known.

Unfortunately we have to admit that we know very little about the flags of the City Soldiery, the Citizens' Sentinels and parts of the Citizens' Militia due to the poor existing sources. All governmental files of Hamburg had been destroyed during the Great Hamburg Fire in 1842. Allied bombing during WW2 destroyed other important sources. ⁹³ In case of the Sentinels we know at least by means of the basic colour, to which regiment a flag had belonged. Sometimes we even know, which company it is, because its number is placed somewhere onto the sheet. Sometimes the company can be concluded, because the initials of the civic captain are on the sheet. We can't be sure, whether we have just inauguration flags of the captains. Usually the flag were financed by the captains' till ⁹⁴, which normally was plump by punishment fees. In view of the arbitrary designs of the flags in detail we can suppose that the captains commissioned the production of the flags. The dates on some flags are much later than the captain's appointment. Gaedechens mentions a ratio of 3:4 according to a prescription, originally applied to the regiments of the Franconian Imperial Circle in 1672. ⁹⁵ This claim explicitly can't be confirmed by empirical observations relating to flags listed within the inventory of the Museum für hamburgische Geschichte. The ratios of the flags are pairwise different. At this juncture the original ratio sometimes just can be estimated due to the different conditions of the flags.

In 1811 all flags had to be handed over to the French occupants. A few flags were hidden successfully. The French brought the rest to Magdeburg and later on to Wesel. There they had been captured by the Prussians in 1813, which brought them to the Berlin Armoury. ⁹⁶ Prussia gave back some 40 flags to Hamburg in 1863 (or 1868) at the instigation of H.M. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who died in 1861. 1876 according to Gaedechens they had been kept in Hamburg's naval armoury.



2.3.2 Types of Colours of the Citizens' Sentinels

First we have to ascertain that all flags of the inventory despite of some similarities in design are unique specimens, so that we can't really talk about types. 97) It attracts however attention that the 18th century flags are painted and adorned more laboriously than those granted on occasion of the 1st liberation. The latter brought the unit into focus, whilst the former made reminiscences to the commanders. There had been no military purposes but it adulated the personal vanity of the appointed captain. The embodiment of details was completely arbitrary. Justifiably so the 18th century flags should be more considered to be an artwork than a vexillum. It also attracts attention that the colours of older flags have been preserved much better. Perhaps a silk of minor quality was used for the 19th century flags. For their colours over two centuries had been either bleached or darkened. As a result the flags of all regiments today have nearly the same colour. The dark red flags of the St. Peter Regiment, which can be clearly distinguished from others, are an exception. Reading the filing cards of Museum für hamburgische Geschichte, in the end we gain sufficient exploration.

2.3.3 Basic Elements of pre-1810 Colours

Though all the flags from this period, as mentioned above, are unique specimens, we are able to work out some basic elements, which can be found on nearly every flag, by studying the filing; even if single elements might be missing.

These basic elements were: 98)

1) the Hamburg Arms:

They were usually displayed with a red castle with open door and portcullis in a silver (= white) shield, with pitched roofs but without cross and stars on the tops. I found two exceptions with golden, masoned castles in blue shields. The forms of the shield were completely different.

2) an image of the parochial patron saint:

The depiction of saints on military colours in the 17th century according to Neubecker was a typical feature on Catholic flags. 99) Presumably in Lutheran Hamburg they just attached a flag to its proper parish.

The saints could be easily recognized by his standard attributes due to iconography. In Christian context the artist is however allowed to make a choice out of a bulk of available attributes.

The usual attributes are:

- of St. Catherine: crown, branch of palm, sword and a broken wheel
- of St. James: scallop, hat and baton
- of St. Nicolas: mitre and crozier, three golden balls or apples are rare
- of St. Michael: sword and scales

St. Petrus: key and book

3) a Protestant symbol:

This is either a Jehova sun or a trinity eye or an arm out of the clouds, because for Protestants it was inadequate to give a personal depiction of God. Representing God it was placed in a privileged position, 100) usually in the middle above the main theme or in the centre of the flag.

4) the main theme:

It is the only element having a fixed position in the centre of the flag. Often a woman is depicted, representing the city. There are also themes consisting of a group of persons, therefore called "central group" in the filing cards, always being an allegorical



Image 6. shows the parochial patron saints at the facade of the current town hall with typical attributes f.l.t.r. St. Peter, St. Nicolas, St. Catherine, St. James, St. Michael in the posture of the dragon slayer. They are depicted similarly on the flags of the citizens' sentinels..



depiction. Part of the theme is always military equipment, i.e. weapons, flags, drums, ammunition, like on the flag of Haiti. They allude to the conduct of war as task of the militia,

- 5) a motto, which is often corresponding with the main theme
 - 6) the coat of arms of a civic captain commanding the company, sometimes there is a 2nd coat of arms. There manifold forms of shields adapted to the intentions of the artist, who has painted the flags.
 - 7) the initials of a civic captain
- They help like his arms to identify the captain. Unfortunately this isn't always possible.
- 8) the number of the company
 - 9) a date
 - 10) an ornamentation surrounding the ensembles, e.g. Rocaille, baroque strap work, staff constructions and leaves of oak, laurel or acanthus.

Gaedechens, based on the fire rules fixed in 1676, gives a summary as follows: "The flags were fairly big, carefully painted with allegorical depictions, among those Minerva or other goddesses and the parochial patron saint were seldom missing. Alongside of this the arms of the city were placed into a humble position."

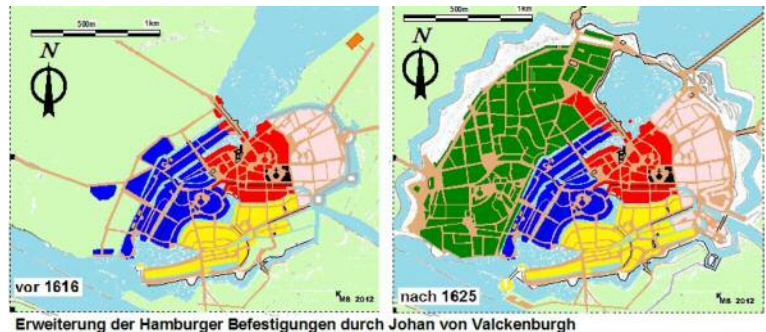
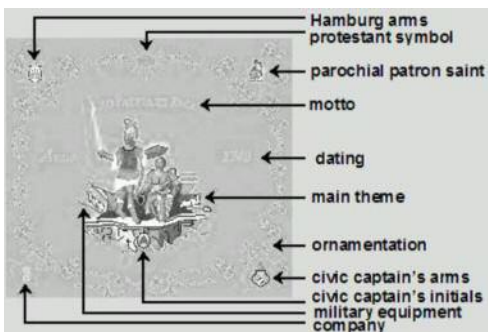


Image 7 The original contains all the basic elements except the company number. The two images (right) show Hamburg's fortification before and after its reorganization by van Valckenburgh illustrating the problems which caused the reorganization of the sentinels in

1619. Except St. James (pink) all parishes are depicted in the basic colours of their flags: St. Peter (red), St. Nicolas (blue), St. Catherine (yellow), St. Michael (green). St. Mary (black) wasn't a parish but an exclave of the Archbishops of Bremen.

As mentioned above the basic elements were put in place arbitrarily. E.g. the patron saint sometimes is placed into a corner, sometimes into the centre of hoist or fly, sometimes in a cartouche or as part of a creeper, finally also as part of the main theme. This is valid for all the basic elements except the main theme.

2.3.4 Samples of pre-1810 Colours

All specifications about the sizes are taken from the corresponding filing cards of (height x width). It can't be excluded that the flags originally had been slightly bigger. The flags are ordered by age of their parishes and thus by the old numbering of their regiments.

2.3.4.1 St. Peter Company Flag of 1700

The sizes according to filing card are 174cm x 214cm. In the centre of the dark red flag is a grey crane, armed golden and holding a golden ball in his left claw, the symbol of vigilance. This gives us an example of a classical "vigil flag". The crane is standing on a green basement. Above the crane is a golden, levitating trinity eye. The ensemble is surrounded by two golden wreaths of laurel twice connected. At the top is an embowed golden inscription "VIGILANTIA TE". From the following word just a single "I" is left. Between inscription and wreath is a coat of arms of an unknown civic captain. The shield is divided per pale with crucified St. Andrew on the dexter side and three horizontal chamfers in a blue field on the sinister side. The shield is



Image 8 shows the oldest preserved company flag with a crane as a symbol of vigilance in a central position.



Image 9 Company flag of St. Peter Regiment of 1763 with several basic elements absorbed in the main theme.



Image 10 Company Flag of St. Nicolas Regiment of 1737, here the Hamburg Castle – deviating from the usual pattern showing a red castle in a white shield – is displayed golden in a blue shield.



Image 11 The well-preserved company flag of St. Nicolas Regiment shows expressive Rocaille ornaments. The patron saint is placed into a cartouche at the hoist.

crested by a cross and flanked by the initials "APC".

On the middle of hoist and fly are golden vertical inscriptions "Anno" (hoist) and "1700" (fly). In each corner are acanthus ornaments. About 1/3 of the sheet is destroyed. This flag is the oldest flag of the collection. 101)

2.3.4.2 St. Peter Company Flag of 1763

The sizes according to filing card are 135cm x 153cm. Here we have a "typical" 18th century flag.

First the rich Rocaille ornaments on the edges and as adornments of the main theme attract our attention. Within these adornments are: a shield displaying the Hamburg Arms and on a small column St. Peter, holding a key and finally the date. The religious symbol here again is a trinity eye in the middle above.

At the centre top and bottom are two cartouches containing the motto of Hamburg's citizens in Latin in golden capitals: "LIBERTATEM QUAM PEPERERE MAIORES" and "DIGNE STUDEAT SERVARE POSTERITAS" (the freedom, which had been obtained by the elders, should be kept in dignity by the descendants). It is the same motto that can be seen above the main entrance of the current town hall. Together with two captain's arms here we have on this flag all basic elements apart from the captain's initials and the company's number. 102)

2.3.4.3 St. Nicolas Company Flag of 1737

The sizes according to filing card are 158cm x 200cm. It is a blue flag having a bordure of golden baroque strap work (Bandelwerk). Integrated into the bordure is an image of St. Nicolas with mitre and crozier in the canton. In the middle of the top is a trinity eye. In the middle of the bottom a date "Anno 1737". In the middle of the hoist is the coat of arms of captain Nicolas Krüger. In the middle of the fly is another coat of arms of an unknown captain. The central element of the flag is a group of three.

Under a baldachin a woman is sitting on a golden throne. She wears clad armour with a red cloak and a black head. Between her breasts is a red gem stone. In her left arm she is holding a bundle of arrows connected by golden laces. In her right hand is an upright golden sword. Her left arm is leaning on a rococo shield showing the arms of Hamburg (golden, masoned castle in blue shield, a rare version). Outside the baldachin she is flanked by two grey bearded water spirits (or gods/Aquarii), nearly naked and pouring water out of big clay jugs. Both are covered by green water grass. Behind the ghost at the fly is a spade. The baldachin is flanked by a blue scroll fimbriated golden. On the scroll is a motto in capitals: "IENE ZU BESCHÜTZEN"(hoist) "MUS MIR DIESES NÜTZEN"(fly) (= to protect those, this must be of good use for me). The throne stands on a pedestal. Water from both jugs is bathing the postament at both sides. 103)

2.3.4.4 St. Nicolas Company Flag of 1771

The sizes according to filing card are 141cm x 186cm. The flag is excellently preserved, which is significant for most photographed flags of this regiment. Here we have a typical 18th century flag with daedal Rocaille ornaments, St. Nicolas (central hoist), the commander's arms (central fly and the date (on both sides of lower edge) are incorporated into the adornments.

As main theme we have a woman surrounded by military equipment with a shield

displaying the Hamburg Arms in her right hand. Above is the motto „DIE FREIHEIT IST UNSCHÄTZBAHR“, (=Freedom is invaluable), topped by a trinity eye. 104)

2.3.4.5 St. Catherine Company Flag of 1721

The sizes according to filing card are 162cm x 210cm. I mention this flag, because it is an atypical example from the 18th century. Unfortunately one third of the sheet is destroyed. Thus we can't exclude that there had been some other basic elements at the hoist side, perhaps St. Catherine or the Hamburg Arms. Also the main theme is atypical insofar, as it doesn't display a group of persons. It is a 7-point flaming star (though the filing card says, it's a sun), superimposed by another 7-point star slightly rotated. On its indentations are written the names of seven virtues. In the middle of the ensemble a Jehova sun is surmounted. The circumscription could be completed as: „PHOSPHORVS SALVTIFER REPVBL(ICA E HAM)BVRG“ (= The morning star brings salvation to the state of Hamburg). According to my wife however it should be (more likely) "(HAM)BVRG PHOSPHORVS SALVTIFER REPUB(ICA E)" (= Hamburg is the morning star bringing salvation to the state). 105)



Image 12 shows one of the older flags of St. Catherine Regiment, very atypical in design and in the order of its basic elements. Here the Jehova sun is not in the upper part of the sheet.

> Image 13 Arms of civic captain Johann Peter Reimbold, acc. to roll-of-arms painted by Lorenz-Meyer (left) 106) and the remarkable, filed modification displayed on the sheet (right) 107).



In both upper corners is a coat of arms, one of them can be attached to a civic captain. The arms at the fly are nearly completely destroyed.

2.3.4.6 St. Catherine 8th Company Flag of 1740

The sizes according to filing card are 165cm x 200cm. Due to the yellow shade of the sheet and to the image of the patron saint in the upper fly corner this flag can be clearly attached to the St. Catherine Regiment. The Hamburg Arms are in the upper hoist corner. On this flag we have two different arms of civic captains, one in the lower fly corner, the other in the middle of the base of the pedestal replenished by the captain's initials. The assignment to the 8th company could be done by identifying the commander as Johann Christian Crummel. The main theme consists of a warrior and a woman, according to source interpreted as Mars and Hammonia. The central group is flanked by the date and above is an embossed inscription "PRO PATRIA ET PACE" (for homeland and peace). As religious symbol we find again a Jehova sun in the middle above. An interesting detail in this flag is the diadem, held by the woman by her left arm. Sufficiently augmented it turns out as a so called „Hamburgian coronet“, i.e. a coronet having small, red Hamburg castles instead of the usual adornments like indentations, pearls gemstones etc.108)



Image 14 Flag of the 8th company of St. Catherine Regiment, remarkable from a bifocal perspective. It contains two coats of arms of civic captains. Furthermore the woman holds a Hamburgian or hanseatic coronet in her left hand.

2.3.4.7 St. James 2nd Company Flag of 1796

The sizes according to filing card are 133cm x 168cm. By the white colour of the sheet this flag is recognized as a flag of St. James Regiment. Alongside the hoist a quarter of the sheet is destroyed. By the general view we are tempted to assume that there had been no further details. Several basic elements are missing. The adornment has been simplified, a rectangle formed by four bamboo sticks and connected by



Image 15 flag of the 2nd company of St. James Regiment. Manufactured in the late 18th century the complex adornments gave way to more simple baton-ornaments and the main theme of this flag is acc. to Gaedechens the most frequent theme of the sentinels'

flags, displaying Minerva as representative of the intelligent conduct of war with Mars representing the brute warfare.

Image16 > The crane as a symbol of vigilance here is hiding beneath the seam of Minerva's garment.

clasping creepers of ivy. Date and the company number are at the front of the altar of the main theme. 109) Incidentally St. James himself is missing on all flags of his regiment documented by photos.



2.3.4.8 St. Michael Company Flag of 1741

The sizes according to filing card are 135cm x 175cm. It was this flag, which could be admired just for one weekend by an interested audience on occasion of the annual show day of the Museum. Though half of the sheet is destroyed, the main theme is kept to the greatest possible extent, a woman holding a wreath of victory in one hand and a branch of palm tree in the other hand. A mirror monogram in the base of the woman's pedestal displays the initials of the commander. Extensively destroyed are also the adornments and the motto. Thus we aren't able to say, whether further basic elements, like e.g. the Hamburg Arms are missing or just completely destroyed. 110)



Image.17 shows a company flag of St. Michael Regiment having an average destruction rate. Above in the middle probably had been a

Jehova sun. In the centre of the basement is a nice example of a captain's initials realized as a mirror monogram.

2.3.4.9 St. Michael 7th Company Flag of 1802

The sizes according to filing card are 141cm x 153cm. The flag is worth to be mentioned, because it is the only one, of which I have found at least a little image of Neubecker. 111) On the other hand it contains an Element, which often has been used on flags as a symbol of vigilance; a crane holding a ball in one claw. 112) This detail is alluding to the proper function of the Sentinels. In this case it is a mere accessory, it plays however the leading part (see above St. Peter Regiment 1700) on older flags. Here the crane is tiny on top of a pyramid's stomp, so tiny that I noticed him first by means of reading the filing card. That's probably the reason why Neubecker omitted him in his painting. With the help of the high resolution photos of Sönke Ehlert it was possible to make him visible later one.

The flag only lacks in the motto and the Protestant symbol. Hamburg Arms and patron saint are incorporated into the main theme. The remaining basic elements are part of the bow ornament, consisting of leaf of oak and laurel. St: Michael is displayed as dragon slayer on most flags not bearing his classical attributes. 113)



Image.18 On this flag of the St. Michael Regiment the crane on top of the pyramid's stomp is hardly recognizable.

> Image.19 shows the complete flag of the 7th company of the St. Michael Regiment. Neubecker published a picture of it in 1939 within a flag primer. The patron saint here is in the middle of the basement.



2.3.5 Colours granted on Occasion of the "1st Liberation"

The 1st liberation was the liberation from French occupation by General Tettenborn in 1813. He was in Russian service and also the commander of the Hanseatic Legion, a troop of volunteers, formed by the citizens of the Hanseatic Cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck. According to Neubecker there had been unit formed exclusively by citizens of one city but there also existed also mixed units. 114) In order to avoid reprisals by the occupying power the legionnaires decide to fight formally under Russian supreme command.

As mentioned above, the Citizens' Sentinels had been already dissolved at the end of 1810 by the French commandant. That couldn't stop the liberated Hamburgian citizens to lend new flags to their „heroes“. Those flags were clearly simpler than their predecessors had been.

Usually the displayed the (Greater) Hamburg Arms, i.e. a shield with crest and two lions as supporters. In all samples, reported by photos, it is a white shield with a red castle. Indications of a unit and a date were added. Also the bordures had become clearly simpler. Meanders now were the predominant pattern. The basic colours, which had been confirmed in the 18th century, were kept. Also the new type of flags was far away from standardization.

2.3.6 Samples of post-1810 Colours

According to the snapshots the displayed flags at first sight all have the same greenish yellow shade . Looking into the filing cards we are quickly disabused.

2.3.6.1) St. Nicolas 5th Company Flag of 1813

The sizes according to filing card are 131cm x 118cm. The flag is made of light blue silk, seems however to be white. The Hamburg Greater Arms, i.e. with crest and supporters, is placed upon a pedestal in the centre of the flag. The whole ensemble is surrounded by a golden chain. The flag has a bordure of oak leaves. Beneath the pedestal is a golden inscription "NIKOLAI REGIMENT / 5te COMPAGNIE" .115)

2.3.6.2 St. James 4th Company Flag of 1813

The sizes according to filing card are 116cm x 134cm. The flag is made of white silk. The sheet is nearly completely covered by golden inscriptions "J.G.B.", "Anno 1813, den 12ten März" and "BÜRGER COMPAGNIE / in / HAMBURG / Jacobi Regiment No.4". The flag has a bordure of golden oak leaves and acorns. The affiliation to Hamburg here is established by one of the inscriptions. 116)

2.3.7 Colours of the Citizens' Militia

The infantry battalions differed in the colours of their pompons 117) as follows: 1st (red), 2nd (blue), 3rd (yellow), 4th (white), 5th (green), 6th (orange), 7th (light blue), 8th (dark green), 9th (crimson) and 10th (brown). The first quintuple of colours was also the set of sheet colours of the Citizens' Sentinels. Since 1848 a cockade in the German colours was added.

The colours of all infantry battalions according to Gaedechens displayed on a white sheet the (Greater) City Arms with lions on the reverse and the Hanseatic Cross in a wreath on the obverse. Here it shouldn't be unmentioned that the wreath of oak leaves just formed a semi-circle on the lower half. The upper half was formed by a motto in golden letters „Gott mit uns“ (God with us). The small Hamburg flags within the crest had been replaced by 10 monochrome bannerets with golden, cross shaped finials. The colours of the bannerets were those of the infantry battalions as listed above. The flags of all battalions looked more or less the same, but different



Image 20 shows flags of the type, granted in 1813 and 1814. The flags are clearly simpler than their predecessors and made of material of minor value. There are no longer hints pointing to the

commanding officers. Even if it doesn't seem so after 200 years, here we see one flag of the St. Nicolas Regiment (left; blue) and one of the St. James Regiment (right; white).



Image 21 Typical flags of the infantry of the Citizens' Militia (1815 – 1868). The obverse (left) is inspired by the flags of the Hanseatic legion – just a wreath of oak leaves was added- whilst the reverse (right) ties up to the flags of the Citizens' Sentinels, the crest has been adapted to the new circumstances. The finials were made of brass and showed the Hamburg

Castle with an open gate and topped by a Hanseatic Cross. The whole was surrounded by one branch of palm and one of laurel. Beneath was a brazen slip knot. The displayed obverse belonged to the 5th battalion (green cravat) and the reverse, here as a hanging flag, belonged to the 4th battalion (white cravat).

cravats, having the battalion's proper colour, were hanging down from the finials bearing the motto „ Libertatem quam peperere maiores digne studeat servare posteritatis“ (reverse) and „Wir schwören, die Freiheit zu bewahren, würdig ihrer Stifter“ (obverse)

Exercising the battalions used interim flags in the battalion's proper colour, some of them were bonnily embroidered. The companies used little jalonneur flags in the battalion's colour bearing the company's number. They were carried by an NCO within his gun barrel.

The flags of the rifles were green with a white horn and number.

The cavalry already since 1816 had a proper standard with complete city arms on a white sheet. Beneath the finial was a big cockade. 118) Until 1811 the Hamburgian military wore monochrome, black cockades, which had been stuck upon their hats. During the Wars of Liberation they were replaced by white cockades with a red cross, which since then was called Hanseatic Cross. The cockade of the cavalry standard probably also looked that way and it is very likely, that it was replaced by a pattern having the colours black, red and gold. 119) From the cockade the cross forged ahead to the standards of the Hanseatic legion, the Citizens' Guard and later on to those of the Citizens' Militia, which had no longer a special connection with the Hanseatic League 120)

When the Citizens' Militia was dissolved on 29th July 1868, all the colours were given back into custodial care of the civil authorities. 121)

2.3.8 Current Condition of Colours

Though our inquiries always will come up against limits due to the poor sources, it will be possible by the help of non-vexillological material, to get more detailed information about particular flags. One might affiliate a coat of arms or some initials with a certain captain. Or comparative enquiries of filing cards might complete some motifs, which may result in a better interpretation of details within an allegorical depiction.

We can also find a few flags of the Citizens' Sentinels within the paintings of the brothers Christopher (1771-1842) and Peter Suhr (1788-1857). Unfortunately within these paintings the flags are of little importance and thus they are not suitable as drafts of a flag image. The paintings give us however an ostensive view of life in 18th century Hamburg. Also the web portal of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg displays some of these paintings within her historical pages.

Relating to the City Soldiery things are even worse, as we have just two flags left and we depend on mere descriptions within written sources.

On the other hand we know everything about the infantry colours of the Citizens' Militia, but unfortunately nothing about the flags of the other branches of service, where we also have to depend on the descriptions as given by Gaedechens.

The last pictures demonstrate, what we have to face in the future.

Restoring just one flag according to coincident statements of Gudrun Hildebrandt and Ernst-Heinrich Schmidt will cost about 300 man-hours. Schmidt adds, we should give one third on top due to usual interruptions. Hence the whole restoration needs about 2000 man-days. The total amount would devour the complete, annual budget of three big German museums. It is obvious that this would be hard to realize.

At least Neubecker must have known these flags and there could be a lot of useful in-



Image22 is displaying either a flag of the Citizens' Militia or Hanseatic legion (left) and one of the St. James Regiment (right). From the left flag there remained only the cross and the fringes. The damages are caused by the



cotton net by impacting the smoother silk of the sheet. The left flag had been destroyed, because there had existed several samples, the right one is kept within a special flag cupboard.

formation within his inheritance. Dieter Linder, a heraldist and a friend, told me that the complete inheritance had been sold to a German heraldic association. Having no interest in flags the vexillological material reportedly was resold to the NAVA. Any help, any image, any description is welcome, especially relating to the unique flags of the Citizens' Sentinels.

It might be profitable from time to time to click the following link:

<http://crwflags.com/fotw/flags/de%5Ehhcse.html>

Bit by bit will be displayed reconstructions there, based on filing cards and photos provided by Museum für hamburgische Geschichte.

Finally I don't want to miss thanking the staff of the

Museum für hamburgische Geschichte, Holstenwall 24, 20355 Hamburg,

email: info@hamburgmuseum.de,

especially Dr. Ralf Wiechmann, my scientific custodian;

as well as the librarians Bärbel Mende and Wiebke Müller, who were always helpful finding sources;

Sönke Ehlert, a photographer, whose high resolution photos made it possible to trace even the tiniest details of the flags.

Special thanks to the textiles restorer Gudrun Hildebrandt, on whom I could rely for photos, filing cards as well as massive support and engagement from the start. Without her help I would never have started my investigation.

I don't want to miss mentioning Dr. Ernst-Heinrich Schmidt, the former head of Wehrgeschichtliches Museum Rastatt, who explained to me in one weekend more about problems in the restoration of flags than I had heard about in all my previous life.

Last but not least I want to thank Christopher Southworth of FOTW for his continuous, discrete and very effective support finding the correct English technical terms.



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Images

images nos. 4;5;6;7;13;16;17;18 Klaus-Michael Schneider

image no. 2 [gae72], appendix I (left); brothers Suhr (middle); Klaus-Michael Schneider I (right)

image no. 1; brothers Suhr

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image of the author by Christian B. Schneider

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