



Restorer's Workshop

SSH-36 HELMET

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SSH-36 is the first Soviet mass-produced steel helmet, which had to replace the French Adrian M16 and Finnish Sohlberg M17 helmets. The design of the SSH-36 was influenced by the French Adriano, which was used by the Tsarist Russian army in WWI. The production of the helmet named SSH-36 started in 1935 at Lysvensky Metallurgical Plant. A year later, the army was equipped with this type of helmets.

The SSH-36 helmet is hemispherical with a protruding visor and side slopes. It was made of 1.1 mm-thick steel and weighed 1,200-1,300 grams (depending on size). The SSH-36 helmet was available in 4 sizes and the helmet comforter was available in 8 sizes (from 53 to 60). The helmet had a ventilation hole at the top with a cover riveted to the helmet. The helmet comforter was made of fabric or leather attached to an aluminum strip, the function of which was to absorb blows and provide additional ventilation. The helmet was attached to the helmet with three rivets. The chin straps of the helmets were made of leather or tarpaulin, and their length was adjusted using square buckles. SSH-36 was painted dark green.

SSH-36 received its first baptism of fire in Spain, where the civil war took place in 1936-1939. The Soviets supplied helmets to the Spanish Republicans. Another helmet test took place in 1938 in the Far East, in the battles with

Japan at Lake Khasan and in the summer of 1939 when the Japanese army invaded the territory of Mongolia and confronted with the RKKA (Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, often shortened to the Red Army; the name was used from 1918 to 1946) in the border region at the Khalkhin Gol River. After this battle, the helmet began to be called "Khalkhingolka". After receiving the fire baptism in the region of Khalkhin Gol River, SSH-36 had to experience the cold of Finland during the Winter War; these helmets were also worn during the occupation of western Ukraine, which belonged to Poland, and Belarus. Wearing these helmets, the occupiers also entered Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in 1940.

The helmet reached the restorer's workshop having lost its original appearance and in bad condition: with the formed foci of corrosion and with pitting rust in some places; the surface was covered with dirt, substances of unknown origin and cracks; the detail covering the ventilation hole was lost, and the helmet comforter was not preserved. It was decided to conserve the helmet, i.e. to remove corrosion products and dirt and to cover it with preservation materials.

The exhibit was cleaned with special restoration tools: the accumulated dirt was cleaned, and the corrosion foci were softened and removed by mechanical means. The metal surface was levelled and covered with restorative conservation materials. The result is that the exhibit commemorating the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania has been conserved, the green colour of the paint covering the helmet has been revealed under a layer of rust, and the exhibit has been given an expository look.



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