



Magyar Warriors Volume 1: The History of the Royal Hungarian Armed Forces 1919-1945

Dénes Bernád, Charles Kliment

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The Hungarian armed forces (known as the Honvédség) were built up in the 1930s, their expansion gaining momentum once Hungary became free of the strict post-WWI Trianon treaty limitations in August 1938. Politically, Hungary was looking for a strong ally, who would help it to recover at least some of the territories containing sizable Magyar ethnic populations that had been lost after the First World War. Initially, in the mid-1930s, Italy gave political assistance and supplied military material, then - on the eve of WWII - Germany also lent support.

In November 1938, Hungary managed to peacefully recover a chunk of its former territory from Czechoslovakia, followed by the Sub-Carpathian area during a brief border war in March 1939, then the northern part of Transylvania from Rumania in August 1940. Later, in April 1941, the Bachka region and parts of Baranya were also taken back from the dismembered Yugoslavia, in a swift military action. The rub was that Hungary was sucked into the cauldron of the Eastern front, and soon the Honvéd (Hungarian soldiers) found themselves deep in Soviet territory, outgunned and outnumbered by the Red Army. Later on, from August 1944, the beleaguered Honvéd had to fight against the mighty Soviet army in defense of its own territory. Alongside tiny Croatia, Hungary remained the last German ally up to the bitter end.

This comprehensive reference, to be published in two volumes, and the fruit of over twenty years of meticulous research, strives to provide a complete picture of the Hungarian armed forces between the years 1919-1945. It starts with a brief history of the Magyars, describes the political situation in Hungary before and during WWII, the building of the armed forces, the growth of domestic arms manufacturers, the organization of the armed forces units and how they changed during the war. The various campaigns of the war are described in great detail, illustrated with many photographs and maps.

This, the first volume, contains approximately 550 photographs, many previously unpublished, as well as numerous tables and maps of the various campaigns. The authors drew on official Hungarian and German archives, and a multitude of private sources, both from individuals living in Hungary and Hungarian émigrés from the Western Diaspora. The result of this Herculean effort is a two-volume series destined to be the reference work on the topic, a must for people fascinated by military history, or generally interested in the 1100-year-long rich history of Hungary and its Magyar Warriors. Volume 2, to be published in 2011, will cover all small arms, artillery, soft-skin and armored vehicles, motorcycles, as well as aircraft, the insignia, markings and camouflage of armored vehicles and aircraft, both of Hungarian indigenous design and those supplied by Germany and Italy, complete with technical data, production and delivery figures. An extensive selection of b/w photographs and color plates will be included.

REVIEWS

what a terrific tome! Helion's series promises to be the definitive history of Hungary's military between the World Wars. It's brilliantly researched, competently compiled and exhaustively illustrated. And it carries my highest recommendation. Get this vital venture. Then line-up behind me for Volume 2! Rabidly recommended!

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