



Imperial German Orders, Medals & Decorations

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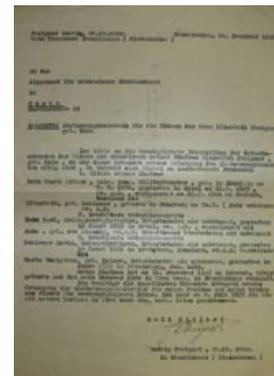
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An Imperial Russian Group of Order Decorations and Badges

Even though I would consider myself a die hard imperial German collector I could not pass on the following group of documents, badges and photo. Who was this man and what did those two badges represent?



Thanks to two documents included with the group of decorations, used during the immigration process into Austria during the time of the III. Reich, we can identify him as mechanic 1st class of the air squadron at the Rumanian front Ewgenij (Eugen) Karlowisch Hahn. A translated copy of his army papers lists him also as a recipient of the Imperial Russian Order of St. Anne and St. Stanislaus in the 3rd Grade for distinguished service. Both are easily identifiable common Russian order decorations and shown in the picture above. Following the two documents:



But what do those two badges represent?



After trying a internet search on the years "1899-1901" the following surfaced: "Admiral Makarov of the Russian Navy commanded Yermak, the first icebreaker to venture into the Arctic seas in its expeditions of 1899 and 1901."[1]



the icebreaker Yermak

Expanding on the term "arctic" and the above mentioned year bracket more interesting and seemingly related information on the two badges surface:

"Russian/Swedish arc of meridian expedition (Russian section) from Tromsø; June 26, 1899 - September 13, 1900. During the 1890s, the Swedish and Russian governments agreed to conduct a joint expedition to measure an arc of meridian over about 4° of latitude in Svalbard, to help determine more exactly the form of the earth. This expedition was the min Russian contribution to the experiment. Sweden had sent out a preliminary expedition the previous year (see 1898[F]); like Russia, it send out its main expedition in 1899 (see 1899-1900[B]).

The Russian established their base (named Konstantinovskoye) at Gåshamna on the southern shore of Hornsund. A group of astronomers sailed north from there on the icebreaker Ledokol, intending to carry out geodetic work in the Sjuøyane, but the ship was stopped by ice off northwest Spitsbergen and returned to Hornsund. At the end of July, the ships returned with geodesists to Storfjorden. There two parties carried out the full program of geodetic and astronomical work at Kapp Lee and Kvalpynten, Edeøya, while a third erected station signals at four points on the west coast of the fjord, at Svanbergfjellet in the northeastern interior of Spitsbergen, and at Mistakodden on Barentsøya. After returning the parties to Hornsund, the ships departed for Norway, leaving behind a wintering party of 19 men headed by Sergiyevskiy.

During March and April, reconnaissance parties explored overland routes to the two triangulation stations on the southeast coast of Spitsbergen: Hedgehogfjellet and Keilhaufjellet. In early May, two men occupied the latter station for the main series of observations; an attempt to climb Hedgehogfjellet for the same purpose was unsuccessful. The ships arrived back with fresh supplies and a summer party on June 8 and 10. Soon after, one party left again for the Hedgehogfjellet, and Bakan carried another party to Boltodden on the Spitsbergen shore of Storfjorden. By July 7, the expedition had regrouped at Hornsund, where it was decided to explore the northeastern interior of Spitsbergen, around Svanbergfjellet and Chydeniusfjellea. Ten men and the expedition's dogs were landed in Billefjorden on July 30 for this task. They established a station and signal and made observations at Newtontoppen in the Chydenius range, and at Backlundtoppen, completing their work on August 30. Meanwhile, the ships carried the rest of the expedition to Storfjorden to complete observations at the station there. By early September, the greater part of the Russians' work was finished, and the whole expedition sailed back to Tromsø.

In addition to this main objective, members of the expedition carried out studies of geology, gravity, meteorology, and natural history. A Russian expedition returned to Svalbard the following year to complete the observations (see 1901 [B])."[2]

Hahn is listed as mechanic and winterer, Russian arc of meridian exp. 1899-1900 [3]
He earned his badge staying behind as one of the 19 men in Hornsund.

[1] Mary Katherine Jones, "Swedish Scientific Expeditions to Spitsbergen, 1758-1908"; Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek vol. 29 (2008), nr. 1 & 2 [ISSN: 0168-2148]

[2] from Clive Holland. "Arctic Exploration and Development c.500 b.c. to 1915 an encyclopedia" 1994, page 425

[3] from Clive Holland. "Arctic Exploration and Development c.500 b.c. to 1915 an encyclopedia" 1994, page 592