

Book Uniform Visor Cap Markings of the USSR, by Randall Stewart, 2020.

Measures 7" x 10", laminated soft cover, 142 pp., self-published, the third and final version of this book (as promised by the author), printed on high-quality paper with hundreds of high-resolution photos, and exhaustive descriptions written by a collector for collectors, in a language used by collectors, with Russian words and letter codes carefully translated into English and explained in English.

Brand-new never-used condition.

It is hard to imagine a serious collector of Soviet visor caps, uniforms, and militaria in general, without this reference source. Not only does it provide comprehensive and totally reliable systematized information on the most obscure part of Soviet visor hats - manufacturer's labels and interior stamps, but it also has a section on how to spot fakes among them, and does it in the language used by collectors. It is also noteworthy that even though the book focuses entirely on visor hats, some abbreviations and codes in these labels and stamps may be encountered on other items of military headgear, adding yet another facet to the value of this book as a cross-reference source.

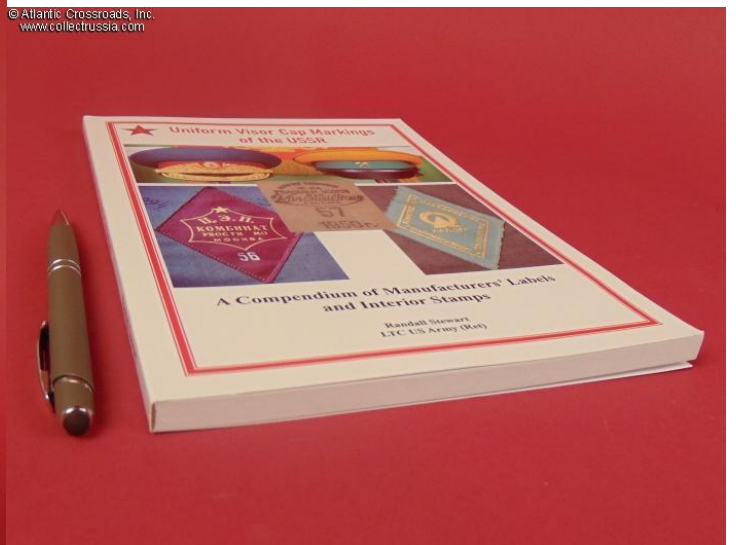
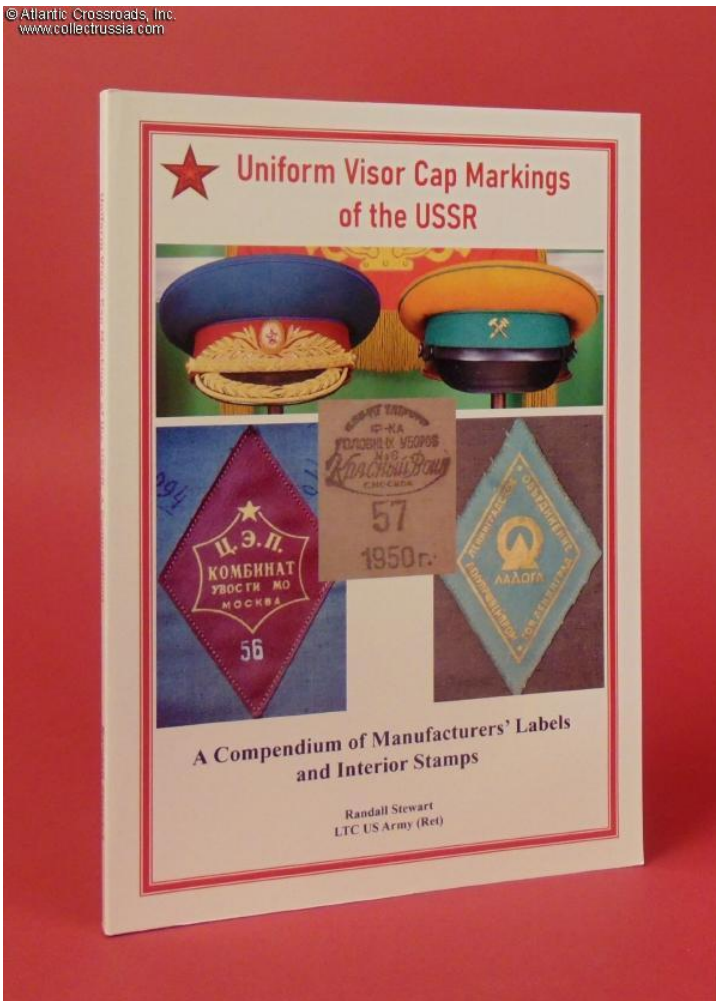
To summarize, if you collect Soviet hats and do not have this book to guide you, you open yourself to potential risk. There are many fakes, manufactured as early as the 1990s, well-made, some of them well-worn, some of them very expensive.

Randall Stewart is one of the world's best experts and collectors of Soviet militaria. For twenty-one years, he served as a U.S. Army Military Intelligence and Foreign Area Officer focusing on the Soviet military, eventually becoming the senior Russian armed forces analyst with the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Please note that the pen in our photo is for size reference.

Item# 41913

\$40.00



INTRODUCTION

I have been collecting Soviet-era furazhki (visor caps) for over 40 years. In observing thousands of such caps, I have seen and pondered over scores of different sets of markings placed there by either manufacturers or owners of those caps. The "fun" of collecting anything includes finding out the history of those collected items, and it was the same for me about the factories that produced Soviet furazhki (and its cousin, the furazhka-beskozirka, worn by sailors). This was of course made more difficult by the fact all markings from (and most information on) these organizations were in Cyrillic and, adding further difficulty, were often abbreviated. And beyond identifying producers, there was a host of other markings one ran across impressed or written onto the lining or sweat bands of these caps. These were often even more cryptic than the manufacturers' labels! **And there we have arrived at the purpose of this book!**

Within the following pages you will illustrations of every furazhka manufacturer's production label or stamp used from 1945 to the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 that I have observed during my collecting experience. While there are undoubtedly still a few small producers I have missed; I feel confident you will find 99+% of markings that you will ever encounter illustrated within these pages. I can say the same for other associated markings—from inspectors, unit and personal, and museums/film houses—that are found stamped or written onto lining or sweat bands of these caps.

I've broken my discussion down into sections corresponding to types of interior markings common to most Soviet caps; although not all of these are found on every cap. These are, in order: manufacturers' labels and stamps, unit and personal markings, quality control stamps, inventory marks, year of manufacture and size notations.

Cap interior with variety of manufacturing, personal and unit markings



BACKGROUND

Soviet uniform visor caps were manufactured by two general categories of clothing/sewing firms: factories and smaller workshops. Factories—often aggregated into combines or unions—typically produced caps in mass under Government contract for issue to troops, but also usually produced smaller numbers for retail sales. For example, caps produced under contract for the Ministry of Defense were issued to military conscripts and cadets, while officers and extended service sergeants purchased their caps from military sales stores or, rarely, directly from the manufacturer. All Soviet factories making caps for the military marked their products with stamps on the cap lining or printed their manufacturing information onto thin white labels, which were sewn to the inside crown. These labels could be made of leather, fake leather (so-called "leatherette") or, more rarely, from treated paper. At least one factory even embossed their information onto vinyl melted into the fabric lining.

Smaller workshops/sewing houses provided a secondary source for visor caps, producing such caps on a custom basis for individual purchasers. Caps made by these entities usually did not have a textual label; being either completely devoid of markings or utilizing blank labels in various geometric forms. With the basic design and assembly skills needed to produce these caps being inherently transferable across the entire range of visor cap types, these workshops could produce virtually anything a customer wanted. However, the most commonly encountered workshop-made caps were those commissioned for naval and MORFLOT (merchant marine; who were often co-located at large sea ports), AeroFlot and Railway personnel.

Stamped markings predated the practice of applying silk-screened or embossed text on artificial or actual leather labels; with Soviet stamps going all the way back to the time of the Revolution. These stamps could be of almost any shape and size, with rectangles and free-form designs being the most common. Two examples from different factories are shown below—dated 1941 and 1942.



While many stamps were "unified," with all required information within a single outline (as shown above); others had less information within each stamp—requiring two and sometimes even three smaller stamps to fully identify the manufacturer, year of production, size, quality, inspection approval and even work team.

Occasionally, a collector will also run across labels outside these three shapes even into the 1980s. However, as mentioned before, these non-standard shapes were invariably the product of local workshops and typically are blank, with no manufacturer information at all. These blank labels are most commonly found inside MORFLOT (Merchant Marine) and AeroFlot caps, whose personnel were the most numerous customers of these workshops often located near sea and airports.



In addition to variations in shape, manufacturers' labels came in a wide range of colors—black and shades of gray and brown were the most common, but white, reds and blues, and even multi-colored labels existed. It appeared that factories—while perhaps having preferred colors—used whatever color leatherette was available. Text colors also varied—gold, white and black being the most common; with silver, yellow, orange and red text used less often.



Horseshoe label

ЦЭП КОМБИНАТ УВС
МОСКВА

(ЦЕНТРАЛЬНЫЙ
ЭКСПЕРИМЕНТАЛЬНЫЙ
ПРОИЗВОДИТЕЛЬНЫЙ
КОМБИНАТ (УПРАВЛЕНИЕ
ВЕЩЕВОГО СНАБЖЕНИЯ
(МИНИСТЕРСТВА ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
МОСКВА



43 ЦЭПК МОСКВА (small 43; 6 pointed shape)
43 (ЦЕНТРАЛЬНЫЙ
ЭКСПЕРИМЕНТАЛЬНЫЙ
ПРОИЗВОДИТЕЛЬНЫЙ
КОМБИНАТ) МОСКВА
[43 Central Experimental
Manufacturing Combine, Moscow]

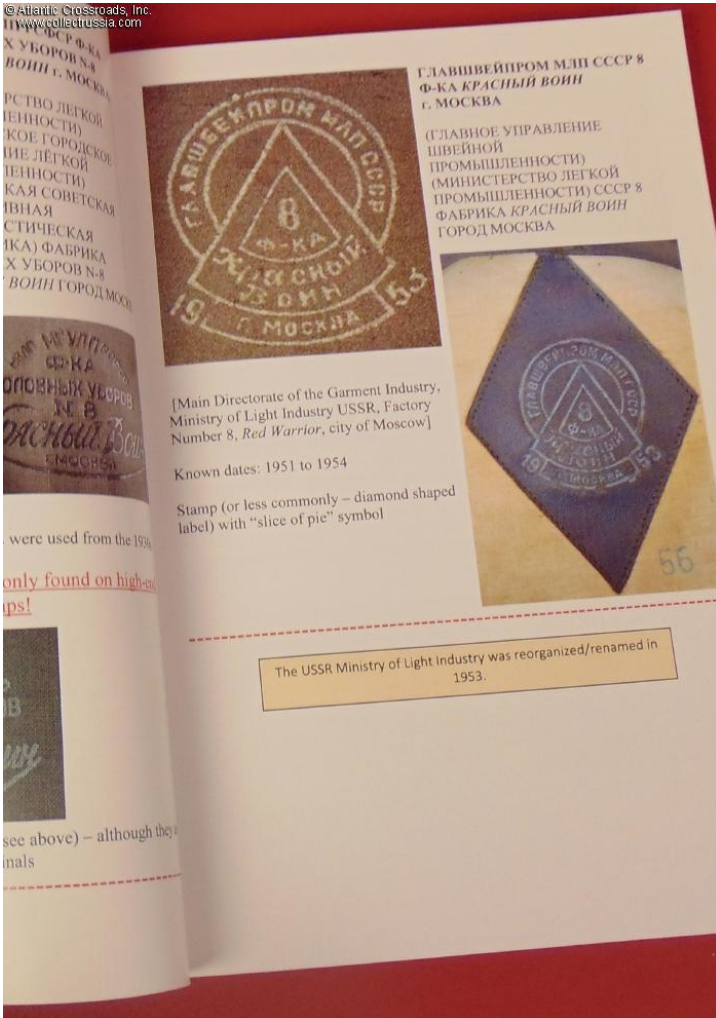
Known dates: 1972 to 1977; usually dated



Diamond label shown under black light

Teardrop-shaped labels may either be scalloped or smooth along the outside edge. Soviet-period horseshoe-shaped labels are always smooth.

ted shape
shown to



ГЛАВШВЕЙПРОМ МЛП СССР
Ф-КА КРАСНЫЙ ВОИН
Г. МОСКВА

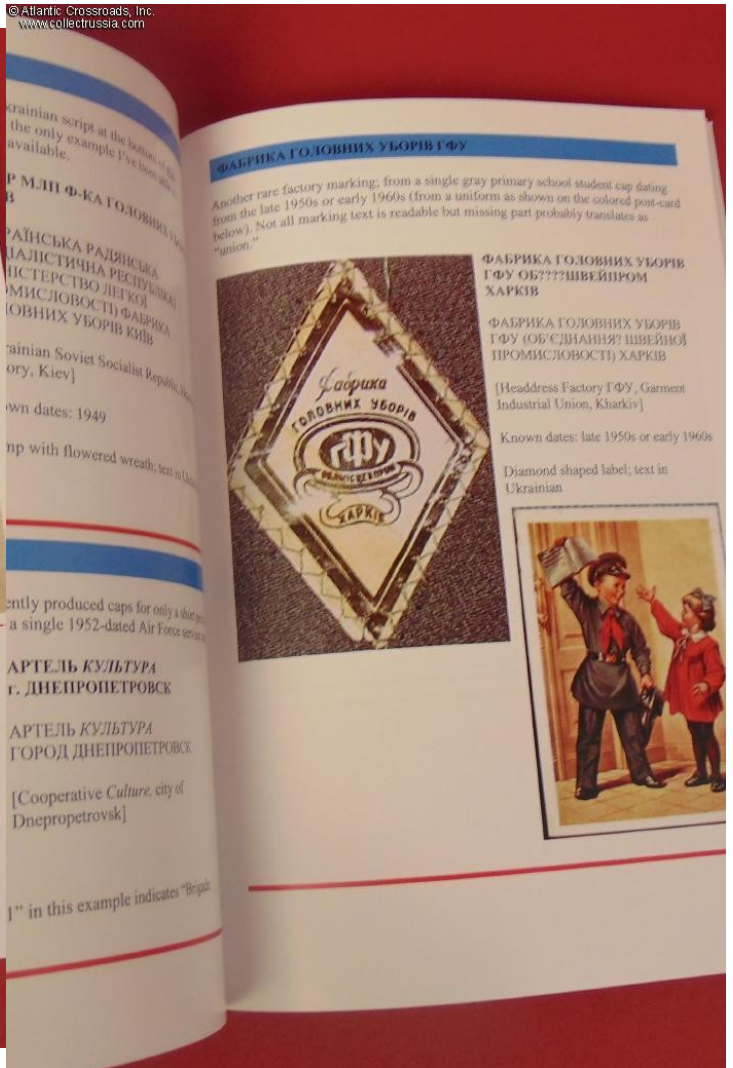
(ГЛАВНОЕ УПРАВЛЕНИЕ
ШВЕЙНОЙ
ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ)
(МИНИСТЕРСТВО ЛЕГКОЙ
ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ) СССР
ФАБРИКА КРАСНЫЙ ВОИН
ГОРОД МОСКВА

[Main Directorate of the Garment Industry,
Ministry of Light Industry USSR, Factory
Number 8, Red Warrior, city of Moscow]

Known dates: 1951 to 1954

Stamp (or less commonly – diamond shaped
label) with “slice of pie” symbol

The USSR Ministry of Light industry was reorganized/renamed in
1953.



ФАБРИКА ГОЛОВНИХ УБОРОВ ГФУ

Another rare factory marking, from a single gray primary school student cap dating
from the late 1950s or early 1960s (from a uniform as shown on the colored post-card
below). Not all marking text is readable but missing part probably translates as
“union.”

ФАБРИКА ГОЛОВНИХ УБОРОВ
ГФУ ОБ'ЄДНАННЯ ШВЕЙНОЇ
ХАРКІВ

ФАБРИКА ГОЛОВНИХ УБОРОВ
ГФУ (ОБ'ЄДНАННЯ ШВЕЙНОЇ
ПРОМИСЛОВОСТІ) ХАРКІВ

[Headdress Factory ГФУ, Garment
Industrial Union, Kharkiv]

Known dates: late 1950s or early 1960s

Diamond shaped label; text in
Ukrainian



ently produced caps for only a short
a single 1952-dated Air Force service

АРТЕЛЬ КУЛЬТУРА
Г. ДНЕПРОПЕТРОВСК

АРТЕЛЬ КУЛЬТУРА
ГОРОД ДНЕПРОПЕТРОВСК

[Cooperative Culture, city of
Dnepropetrovsk]

l” in this example indicates “Brigade”



As you can also see on the previous markings and in the picture below, the owner of
the cap usually also added his name (or initials) onto the top lining. While sometimes
done in ink (especially by officers), the “preferred” method for conscripts remained
knock.



While unit, issue date and personal information were usually recorded in separate
symbols or locations across the roof of the cap, the photograph below shows an
unusually precise approach to recording this information. The data is the same as
discussed above: last name of the conscript followed by his service number, then his
military unit (В/Ч) FPN and, lastly, the date this cap was issued to him, i.e.:
December 1966.

