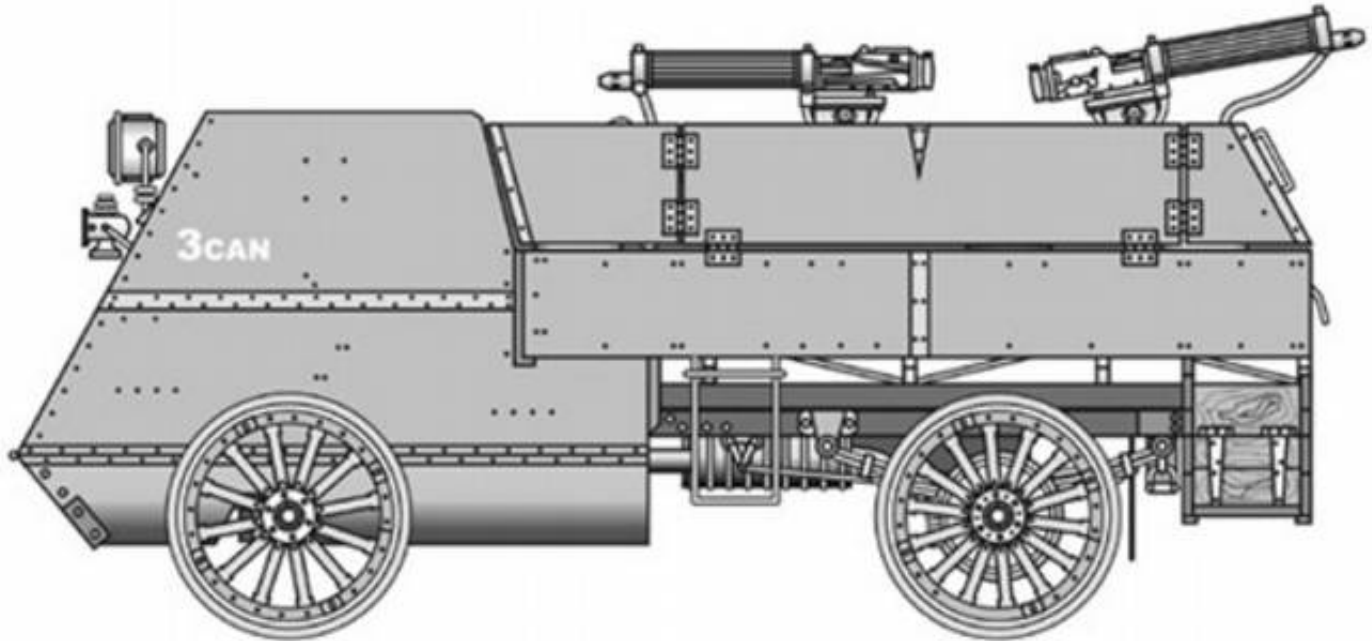


The Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade, Part 2

Equipment



A Canadian light armoured car of the Autocar type [1](#).

Data [2](#)

Crew 8 men - commander, driver and 2 x 3 men

Length 4,50 m

Width 1,8 m

Height 2 m

Weight 2,7 t

Motor Gasoline; 2 cylinders

Speed 35 km/t

Radius Unknown (fuel consumption 2,5 l/km)

Armour 9,5 mm

Weapons 2 Vickers machine guns

The American Autocar Company in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, began production of cars in 1899. The carriage is from a 30 cwt truck, type XXI, which among others was tested by the U.S. Army in 1912.

In September 1914 Raymond Brutinel bought 20 vehicles, which were then equipped with armour plate at the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Pennsylvania.

During the First World War, the British Army bought 460 vehicles of the XXI type, 6 of which remained in England whereas 189 were sent to East Africa and the remainder to France.



Autocar armoured cars and trucks

Fra Armoured Acorn - The Canadian Armour Website.

The photograph is not dated, but may derive from the time before leaving Canada, cf. the first illustration in Part 1 of this article.

The number of Autocar XXI trucks equipped as armoured cars are not clear. It may be that only the 20 trucks bought by Brutinel in USA were thus equipped.



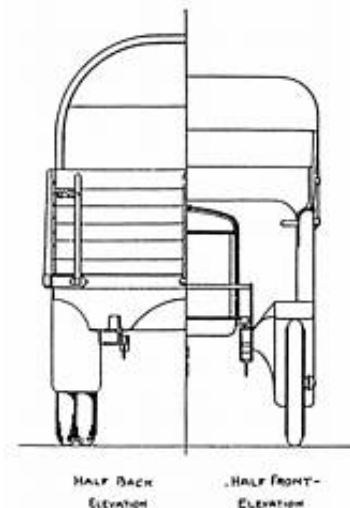
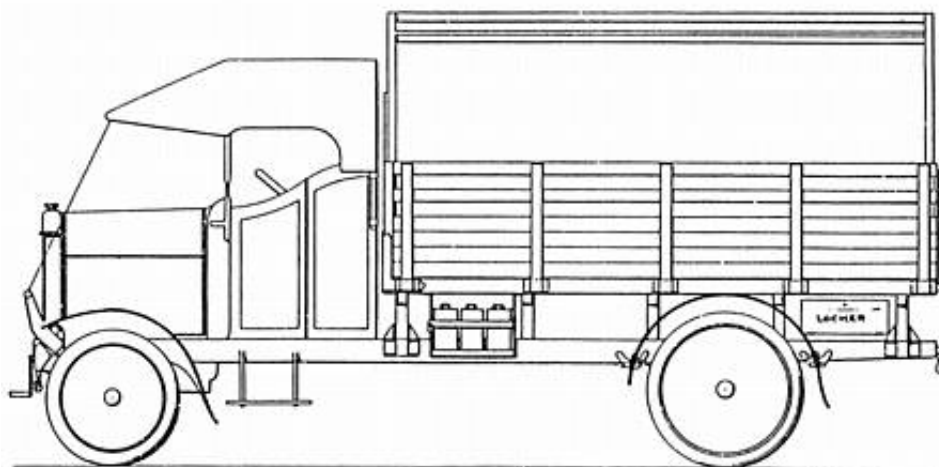
Autocar light armoured car.

Fra Armoured Acorn - The Canadian Armour Website.

During the June-July 1918 reorganisation, cf. Source 6, the Canadian Motor Machine Gun Mechanical Transport Company did receive a number of 3-ton/30-cwt lorries.

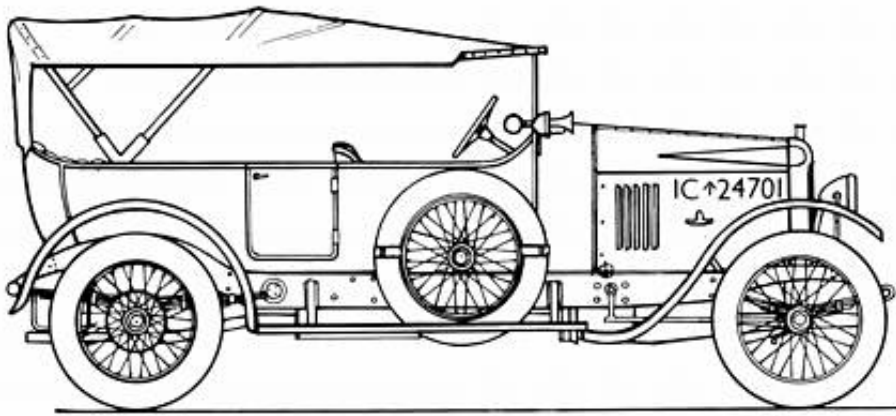
After inspection of two Machine Gun Batteries on 20 July 1918 by Brigadier Brutinel, it was decided to convert 40 trucks as machine gun lorries.

The conversion included among other things equipment for mounting of two machine guns, and seats for the crews. The frames for the canvas tilts were removed and stored below the body in order to be used for bivouacs.



British 3-ton standard lorry.

From Source 11.



Vauxhall staff car[3](#)).

The Transport Company did the conversions and step by step the Autocar armoured cars were substituted by the new machine gun carriers. A photo of the machine gun carrier is sadly missing. The sources are not quite clear as to if all armoured cars were exchanged for machine gun carriers.

A small number of cars were included in the two Machine Gun Companies, and the Commanding officer of the 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade used a Vauxhall staff car.

Each battery was further equipped with a number of Ford Model T trucks and a number of Triumph motorcycles.

Thus equipped Brutinel's Brigade did take part in the Campaign of the last 100 days.



Korporal Walter Carlill,
Yukon Motor Machine Gun Battery[4](#)).

Uniforms and badges

The soldiers in the Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade were equipped with the British khaki uniform Model 1902 and the Model 1908 webbing equipment. Please refer to the articles Den engelske feltuniform Model 1902 and Uniformsplanche - Det canadiske Ekspeditionskorps, 1914 (available in Danish only).

Cap badges



Cap Badge -

1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade.

From Source 14.

It is not clear how the cap badge of the 2nd Motor Machine Gun Brigade looked like, and Lenard L Babin, the author of Source 14, mentions that he have never seen this type of badge.



Cap badges - Eaton, Borden and Yukon Motor Machine Gun Batteries.

From Source 14.

The *YT* in the Yukon Battery's badge means Yukon Territories.



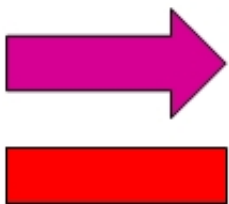
A Captain from Yukon Motor Machine Gun Battery, 1918.
From Source 16.

The Battery's badges are carried as cap badge as well as collar badges. The Captain wears the ribbon of the Military Cross.

The dark patch carried on the Captain's right shoulder is not like any known unit patches. The arrow as well as the rectangle appears to be of a lighter colour than the patch, and may show the patch of the 1st Motor Machine Gun Brigade, thus dating the photo before the transfer of the Yukon battery to 2nd Motor Machine Gun Brigade.

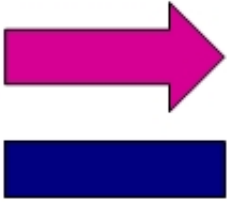
The sources do not indicate if the batteries kept their old badges, or whether they were exchanged with new badges of the 2nd Motor Machine Gun Brigade.

Shoulder patches



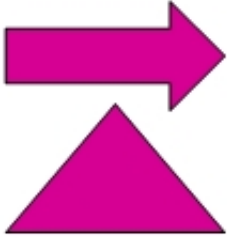
Sketch:

1st Motor Machine Gun Brigade



Sketch:

2nd Motor Machine Gun Brigade



Sketch: 1st

Motor Machine Gun Brigade

Transport Battery.

In Source 5 it is mentioned that the 2nd Motor Machine Gun Brigade used a shoulder patch consisting of a maroon arrow and a dark blue rectangle. A sketch of this badge is found in the War Diary. The arrow was used as a standard symbol by the machine gun units in the British Army.

I have made the sketch of the 1st Motor Machine Gun Brigade patch based on information found at the Digger History homepage and the samples of Canadian shoulder patches.

The Kaiser's Bunker homepage show a uniform jacket from a unit called 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade Transport Company. The sketch to the left is based on this sample. Although the colour is described as *dark burgundy*, the patch on the jacket appears more bright red.

According to Source 5 the Brigade Battle Line Transport subunits, deriving from the Canadian Motor Machine Gun Mechanical Transport Company, were designated batteries; consequently the designation title used on the Kaiser's Bunker homepage may not be correct.



British or Canadian soldiers passing an Autocar light armoured car, 1918.
From Armoured Acorn - The Canadian Armour Website.

Formation Badges used on Vehicles

The photo may be from the April-May 1918 battles, thus showing an armoured card from the 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade.

However, I am not aware of the colour of the badge shown on the back of the vehicle.

Post war developments

After the First World War the traditions of the 1st and 2nd Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigades were perpetuated by the by two units of the non-permanent part of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps. These units became the 1st and 2nd Armoured Car Regiments on 1 October 1935.

As of 15 December 1936, when the Canadian Machine Gun Corps ceased to exist, the 1st Armoured Car Regiment became a part of the 6th Duke of Connaught's Royal Canadian Hussars.

Colours and Battle Honours

A set of Colours were presented to the 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade on 29 March 1919 in the town of Carlisle, England, where the Commanding Officer, R.K. Walker was born.

The Regimental Colour was a present from the town, whereas the King's Colour was funded by the unit. Not Battle Honours were officially granted at that time (it happened during the 1920'ies), but the Colours displayed the following unofficial Battle Honours: *Ypres, Vimy, Amiens og Cambrai*. Further, the Regimental Colour displayed the inscription *Presented by friends in Cumberland, England, March 1919*. The Regimental Colour was later taken to Seaford [5](#), where it was trooped in front of the men. Source 4 contains a five page story, written by one of the participants.

The War Diary further contains a clipping (see Page 1 and Page 2) from a newspaper from Ottawa, not dated unfortunately, describing the laying-up ceremony in Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa. In here, a resume of the Brigade history is found too.

A set of Colours were presented to the 2nd Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade at a ceremony in Seaford on 3 April 1919. The ceremony is documented in a paper clipping in Source 5, including a

summary of the Brigade history. Two photos from the ceremony is shown in here too.

The 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade, Canadian Machine Gun Corps - the unit which after the First World War perpetuated the traditions of the original Machine Gun Brigade - was awarded the following Battle Honours:

Mount Sorrel, Somme 1916, '18, Flers-Courcelette, Thiepval, Arras 1917, '18, Vimy, 1917, Hill 70, Ypres, 1917, Passchendaele, Bapaume, 1918, Rosieres, Avre, Amiens, Scarpe, 1918, Drocourt-Queant, Hindenburg Line, Canal du Nord, Cambrai, 1918, Valenciennes, Sambre, FRANCE AND FLANDERS, 1915-18.

A copy of the 1928 General Orders concerning Battle Honours from the First World War is found on The Regimental Rogue homepage.

In conclusion

Although my article does not give answers to all questions one may ask in connection with the Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade, I hope that I have provided the outline of the story of a most interesting military unit, which because of its originator and first Commanding Officer was way ahead of its time.

Sources

1. *The First contingent, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914, Part 1 & 2* by Jack L. Summers, Military Illustrated, July and August 1990.
2. *Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919 - Official History of the Canadian Army in The First World War* by Colonel G.W.L. Nicolson, Ottawa 1964. The book can be found on the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group "Matrix Project" homepage.
3. *The Canadian "Emma Gees" - A History of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps* by Lieutenant-Colonel C.S. Grafton, published by the Canadian Machine Gun Corps Association, 1938. The book is available online via the 6th Brigade Machine Gun Company & 2nd Battalion, Canadian Machine Gun Corps homepage.
4. War Diary - 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade.
5. War Diary - 2nd Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade.
6. War Diary - Canadian Motor Machine Gun Mechanical Transport Company (June 1918 - January 1919).
The War Diaries (Sources 4 to 6) are available via the Libraries and Archives Canada homepage; see War Diaries of the First World War.
7. *1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade*, from Land Forces of Britain, The Empire and The Commonwealth.
8. *The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of the "Emma Gees" (Part 1)* by Major K.A. Nette, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. The Article was first published in the Infantry Journal No. 8 - Winter 1979. Available via The Regimental Rogue homepage.
9. *War Cars - British Armoured Cars in the First World War* by David Fletcher, HMSO Books, London 1987, ISBN 0-11-290439-4.
10. *Making Tracks - British Carrier Story 1914 to 1972* by P. Chamberlain and C. Ellis, Profile Publications Limited, Windsor 1973, ISBN 0-85383-0886.
11. *British Military Transport 1829-1956* by David Fletcher, published by the Tank Museum, HMSO Books, London 1998, ISBN 011-2950570-6.
12. *Training, Multi-national Formations and Tactical Efficiency: The Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade in 1918* by Michael Holden, University of New Brunswick. Available at the Conference of

Defence Associations homepage.

13. *Letters from Private Richard William Mercer, 1st Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade*. The letters are available on the 6th Brigade Machine Gun Company & 2nd Battalion, Canadian Machine Gun Corps homepage. They contain a wealth of information, giving a good insight in the unit history.
14. *Cap badges of the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919* by Lenard L Babin, New York. Available via the Digger History homepage.
15. *Spearhead of the Empire - The Canadian Corps in 1918* by Greg Novak, Command Post Quarterly, Nr. 11.
16. *The Canadian Army at War* by Mike Chappel, Men-at-Arms Nr. 164, Osprey, London 1985, ISBN 1-85045-600-2.

Per Finsted

Notes:

- 1) The drawing, made by Chris Peters, is found on the homepage of The Royal Canadian Armoured Corps Association (Cavalry). I have not been able to trace the meaning of the 3CAN inscription.
- 2) Data derives from various sources, among others Pershings' Doughboys U.S. Army WW1 Living History Group.
- 3) From *Vauxhall goes to War* by Ken Musgrave, Military Modelling, September 1984.
- 4) From The Yukon Battery, 2nd Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade (World War I).
- 5) Seaford (not far from Eastbourne on the southern coast of England) was the main Canadian base area in England during the First World War.