

# About Danish infantry 1932-1941, Skytskompagniet, of the 4

## The machine gun division

The machine gun division was introduced so late in the period that the currently available source material does not refer to it in the same detail as other units and equipment types. For the time being, the following must therefore be regarded more as a suggestion of how the machine gun division could be organized and equipped.

Images from Source 3 must be taken with some reservations. This is a publication from the Danish Industry Syndicate - i.e. an advertising print matter - which is why the pictures do not show Danish soldiers and/or equipment, which were necessarily introduced into the Army in the version shown. The persons are wearing uniforms etc. in the style of those used in the Army, and can therefore be easily confused. However, the pictures are good enough to - in the absence of better material - serve as principle sketches.

### Sharing strap

- 1 platoon
- leader 1 second-in-
- command 1 tank driver
- 1 ranger 2 orderlies 1
- watchman
- 

### 4 machine gun groups, each with

- 1 group leader and 10 privates:
    - 1 gunner 2
    - helpers 3 supply
    - men 2 cartmen
    - 2 horse-drawn
    - carriages
  - 2 horses
  - 2 representations [1\)](#)
  - 3 cartridge carts
- 
- 1 20 mm machine gun M.1938, with accessories

### Ammunition

Each man has 40 8 mm cartridges, cart drivers and cart men however 80.

Each group's 3 cartridge trays hold 150 20mm cartridges.

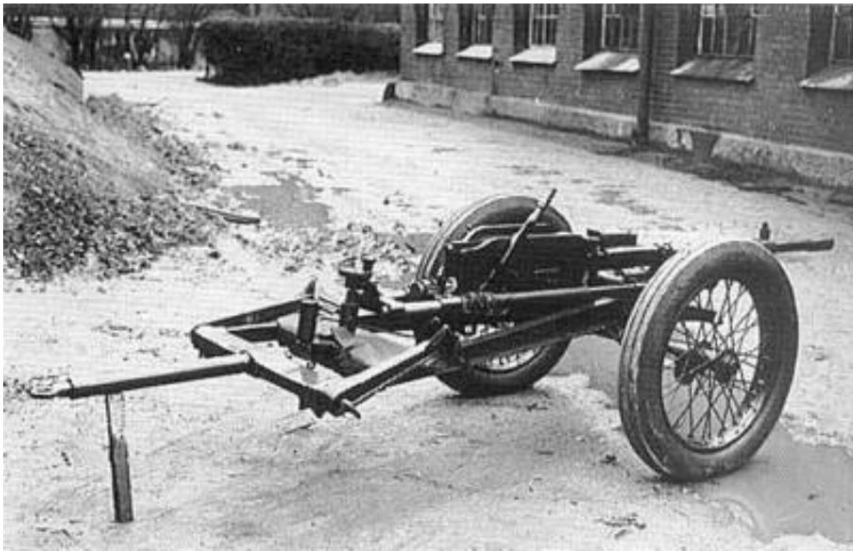


*20 mm machine gun M.1938, in the field made M.1938. From Source 6.*

The machine gun is of Danish design (Madsen) and has a firing range of approx. 3 km.

The main parts weigh (approx):

- Machine gun 55 kg
- Field made 45 kg

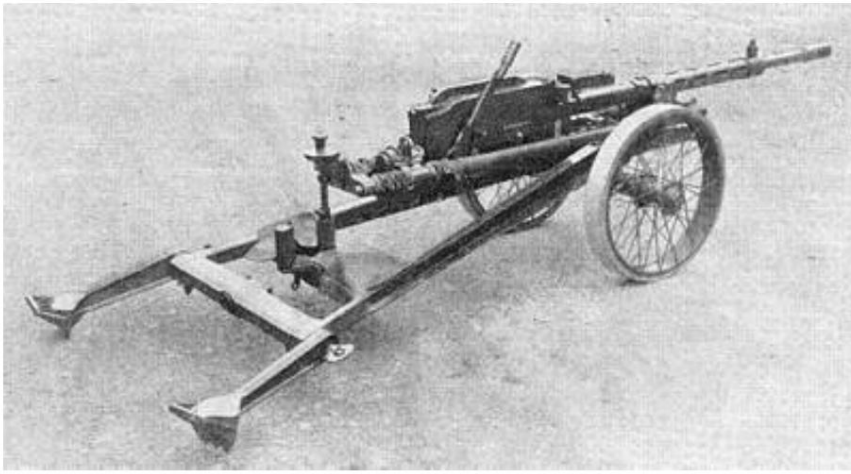


*20 mm machine gun M.1938, in the field made M.1938, on transport wheels. From Source 6.*

Maximum visor distance is 1,800 m; practical shooting distance is 500 m.

The drum magazine contains 15 grenade cartridges.

The cartridges are armor-piercing and equipped with a tracer; initial speed 790 m/sec.



*20 mm machine gun M.1938, in the field made M.1938, on transport wheels.  
From Source 4.*

Available pictorial evidence suggests that transport wheels with solid rubber rings, such as those shown here, were used by the motorcycle-mounted machine guns, while the transport wheels for the horse-drawn machine guns were fitted with "motorcycle tires".

## **Distance meter**

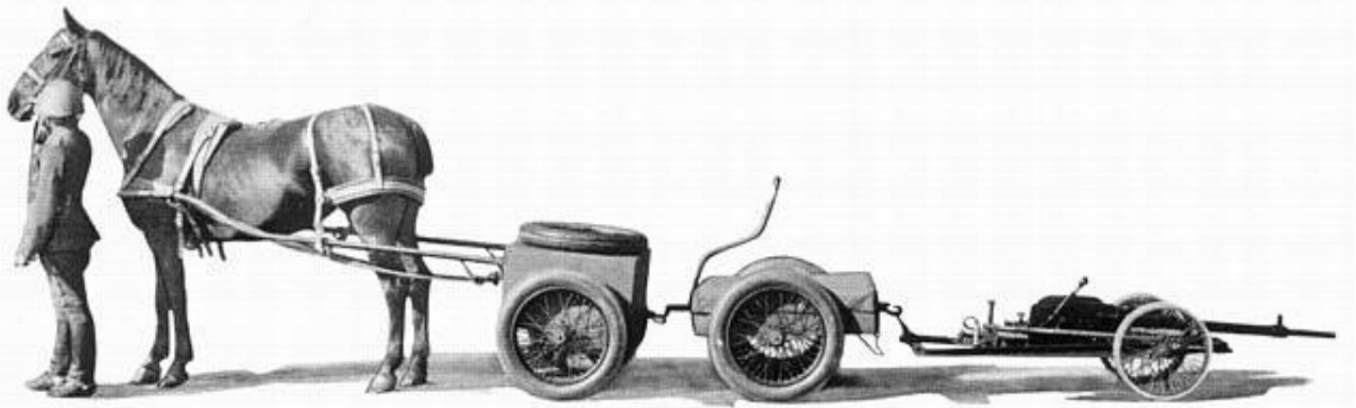


*Distance meter M.1915. From Source 5.*

As in the other divisions in the Skytskompagniet, the machine gun division also used the M.1915 rangefinder.

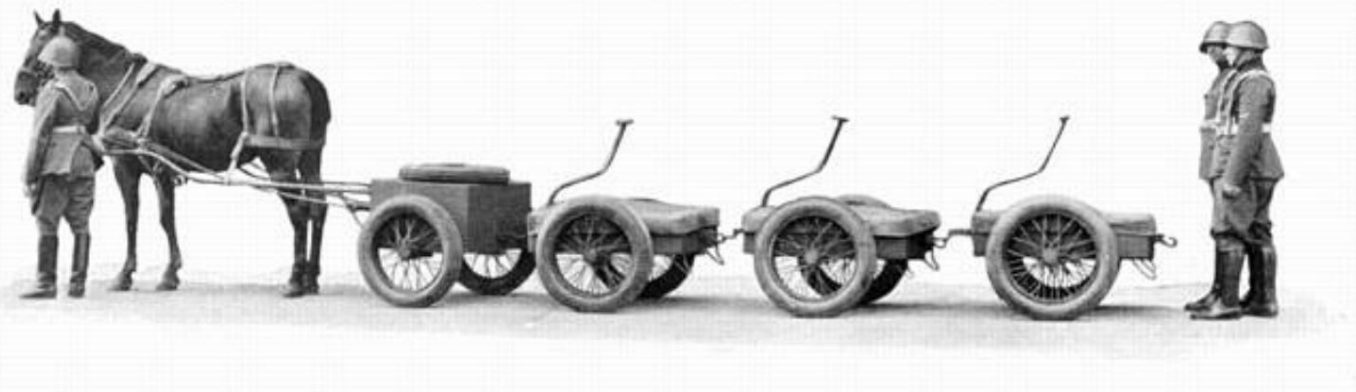
## **Cart material**

With regard to the capacity of the cartridge trays, Source 1 specifically mentions that each group's 3 cartridge trays have 150 20 mm cartridges, and that in total per group is 450 cartridges.



20 mm machine gun, with front sight and cartridge case. (Danish Industry Syndicate).  
From Source 3.

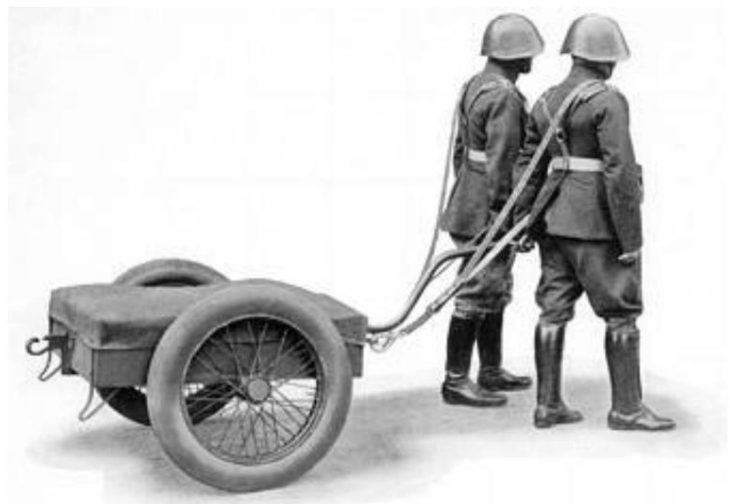
The Dansk Industri Syndikat's cartridge cart held 6 baskets of 2 magazines, i.e. a total of 180 cartridges per cart. It follows from this that the cartridge case material used by the Army must have been of a different construction, perhaps more in the style of the machine gun cartridge case (cartridge case M.1932 which is shown in Part 2). Whether the ammunition here has been packed in baskets or whether the individual drum magazines have been packed individually is not known.



Cartridge carriage train. (Danish Industry Syndicate).  
From Source 3.



Cartridge tray. (Danish Industry Syndicate).  
From Source 3.



Cartridge carriage, crew pull. (Danish Industry Syndicate).  
From Source 3.



*The cartridge case knows "Ready for battle!" (Danish Industry Syndicate).  
From Source 3.*

## Handgun

In the machine gun group, the platoon leader, cartman and horse-puller are equipped with infantry carbines M.1889, while others have rifles M.1889.

In the platoon, the second-in-command is equipped with an infantry carbine M.1889, while all others are equipped with a rifle M.1889. The platoon leader has pistol M.1910/21, incl. 25 cartridges.

## Ready for battle

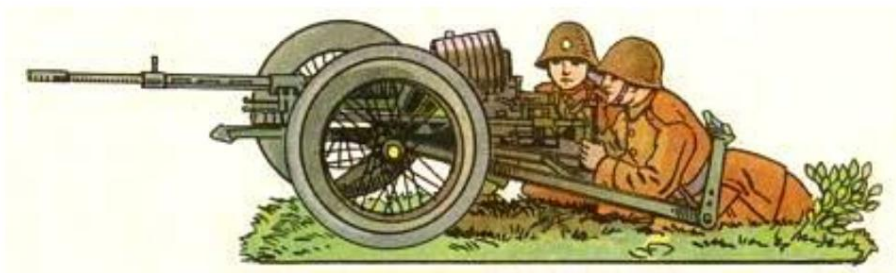
**The machine gun group includes...**  
**Following...**

The gunner  
Prop bag

**The platoon includes...**  
**Following...**

Remote stager  
Range finder with stand, but without guide

Source 1 does not mention what the other personnel in the machine gun group and the platoon were intended to include. It must necessarily have been ammunition for the machine gun, which e.g. shown on the cutting sheet Denmark's Army and Navy, approx. 1941 [2](#)).





20 mm machine gun, mounted for firing on the ground. From Source 4.

## Tactical use

The machine gun is primarily an anti-tank weapon. The main task of the cannon is within approx. 500 m and here it will be able to effectively fight armored vehicles and light tanks.

The machine gun can also be used to engage targets behind weaker cover (brickwork, earth, etc.).

## Sources

1. *Textbook for Infantry Corporal Schools - Equipment and Train*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1941.
2. *Textbook for Infantry Corporal Schools - Weapons*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1938.
3. *The automatic precision and unity weapon of the modern battlefield - Madsen Machine guns and infantry cannon system Madsen IX* af Colonel Halvor Jessen, Dansk Industri Syndikat, København 1938.
4. *The Defense Book* by Colonel T. Andersen, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1941.
5. *Shooting Regulations for Small Arms, Part 1*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1932.
6. *Soldiers on 9 April 1940* by Kay Søren Nielsen, Tøjhusmuseet, Copenhagen 1990, ISBN 87-7233-847-4.
7. *Textbook for Army Privates, I1. Part, Infantry - Field Service and Fencing*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1940.

Per Finsted

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### To note:

1) I am not aware of whether the combination of pre-positioning, cartridge carriage and machine gun as well as pre-positioning and 2 cartridge carriages, or pre-positioning and machine gun and pre-positioning and 3 cartridge carriages was used. Both combinations are possible, but the first sounds perhaps more likely, so that the gun team brought a contingency stock of ammunition.

2) Source 1 does not confirm, however, that the right of the supplies is shown with its cartridge pouch on the left side of the waist belt.