

About Danish infantry 1932-1941, The regiment's gun company

Introduction

The cannon companies of the infantry regiments were created as part of the 1937 scheme, and equipped with a - according to the conditions of the time - powerful anti-tank cannon, which was designated as the *infantry cannon*.

Cannon Company

The gun company has a combat strength of 168 men [1](#)) and consists of:

- Commander with command group and train (24)
- 3 gun platoons of 3 groups (48).

Command group and train

command group

- 1 company
- commander 1 deputy
- commander 1 command
- officer 1 command group
- leader 1 wagon driver 3 motor
- orderlies 1 motorcycle drivers
- 3 motor vehicle drivers 2
- horse guards 10 other
- corporals/privates
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Train (motorized)

- Kitchen trolley
- Baggage trolley I
- Baggage trolley II
- 3 solo motorcycles (motor orderlies) 1 sidecar
- motorcycle (for use by the staff) 2 riding horses (for
- commander and deputy commander)

The mutual distribution of functions in the command group and the number of motorcycles is currently the best bet.

The cannon division

Sharing strap

- 1 platoon leader
- 1 deputy commander 1
- tank driver

3 gun groups, each with

- 1 group leader and 12 privates:
- 1 gunner

- 1 spacer 1 spare
- horn blower 3 bicycle
- ordinances 1 caretaker
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- 3 helpers 4
- suppliers 2
- cartmen 2 horse
- pullers

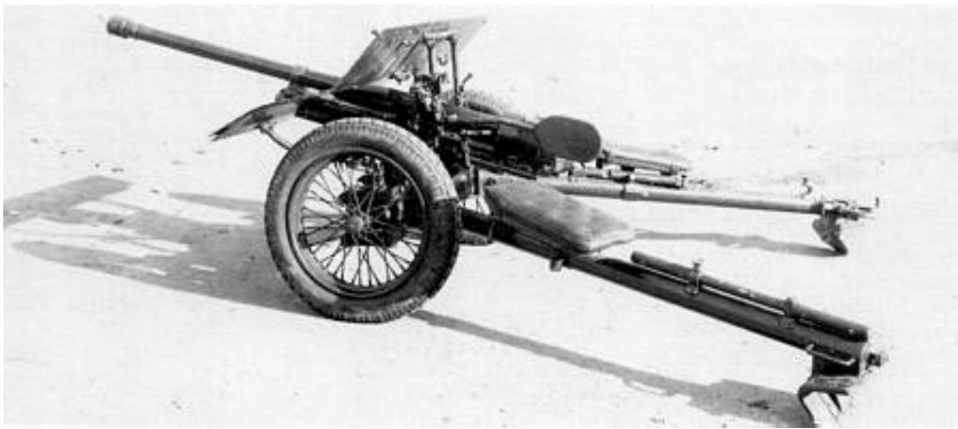
Each gun division has 48 men.

- 2 draft horses
- 2 representations
- 2 cartridge carts
- 1 37 mm infantry cannon M.1937, with accessories

Ammunition

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

Each group's display and cartridge cases contain 248 pcs. 37 mm grenades.



37 mm infantry cannon M.1937 2). [__](#)

37 mm infantry cannon M.1937

The cannon, which weighs approx. 380 kg., is of Swedish construction (Bofors), and is manufactured in Denmark.

Practical rate of fire: 15-20 rounds per minute.

The cannon will at distances up to approx. 1,000 m effectively combat armored vehicles and tanks.



37 mm infantry cannon M.1937.

From Source 4.

Its armor-piercing shell has such an explosive effect that a single hit will usually put the tank out of action.

The grenade is equipped with a tracking device so that you can follow the trajectory.

To protect the operating crew against enemy machine gun fire, the cannon is fitted with a shield.

Data about the cannon comes from Source 3.



37 mm infantry cannon, on the firing range.

From Source 5.

The image material shows three different types of cannon wheels:

1. Spoke wheel (à la motorcycle)
2. Wheels with open rims 3)
3. Wheels closed rims 4)

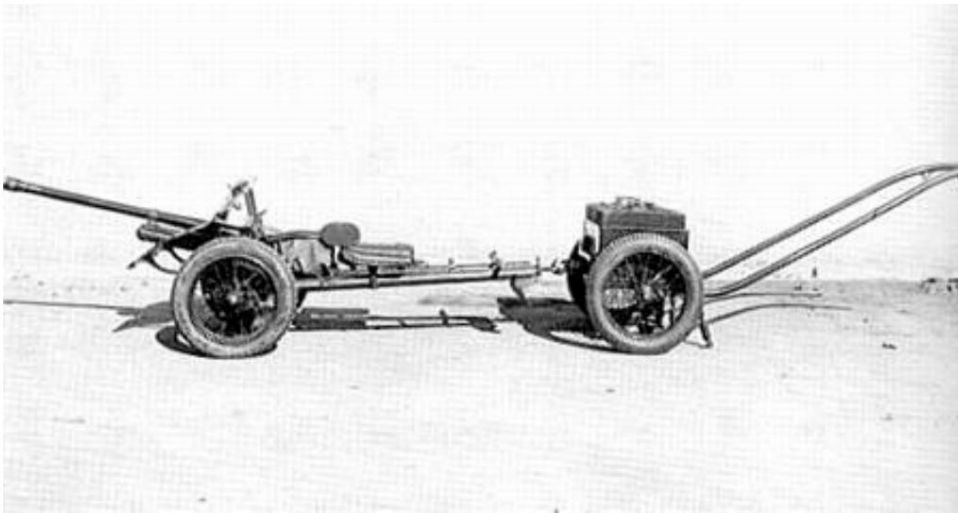
If the reason e.g. are different production series, is not known.



Distance measurement - with distance meter M.1915 [5](#)).

Distance meter

At "ready for battle", the platoon ranger collects his rangefinder, which until then is transported on the platoon's tank equipment.



37 mm infantry cannon, with front sight. From Source 4.

Cart material

The preposition appears to be of the *Forstilling M.1932* type, which was also used by the machine gun divisions of the guard companies.



Machine gun division, from 5. Battalion 6). [_](#)

It is currently not known whether the cartridge cases were of the type *Patronkarre M.1932* .

The cannon group's cartridge carriage train is assumed to consist of a staging and 2 cartridge carriages.



A cannon group during the passage of Susâen. From Source 4.

For pictures of tank equipment M.1932 and the associated horse equipment, see *About Danish infantry 1932-41, Skytskompagniet, Part 2.*

train

The gun company tree (*all wagons are light trucks*)

Kitchen trolley

The kitchen trolley carries:

- 6 cooking boxes with today's dinner
- Kitchen props
- Bread and dry food for the company for 1 day (168 portions)
- Oats for 1 day

Baggage wagon I (command group and a gun platoon)

Baggage Car II (two gun platoons)

On the baggage wagons are carried:

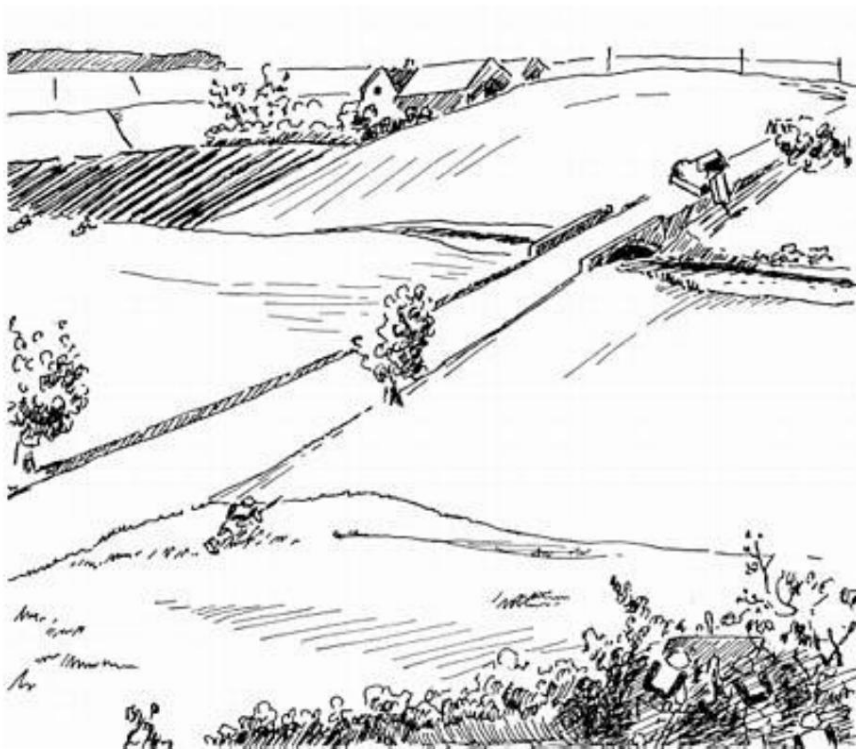
- The company's archive, map and quarter mark
- The crew's luggage racks (Carriage I: 62; Carriage II: 94)
- Commanders' Suitcases (Carriage I: 4; Carriage II: 2)
- Shoemaker's tool
- Tailor's tool
- Spare equipment for one person
- Polishing and cleaning agents

The regimental staff tree includes 3 ammunition trucks with 37 mm ammunition. On each wagon, e.g. 24 boxes of 25 pcs. 37 mm cartridges. In addition, i.a. feed for horses (2 riding horses and 18 draft horses).

From the distribution of the material, it appears that Car 1 was intended to support the command group and a gun platoon, while Car 2 and 3 respectively supported each of the other gun platoons.

Handgun

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. The cannon group is armed with M.1889 rifles, except for the group leader, cartman and horse-puller, who are equipped with infantry carbines M.1889.



Infantry cannon deployed to secure a bridge. From Source 5.

The staff has pistol M.1910/21, incl. 25 cartridges, while the command group, apart from the group leader, motor orderlies and motorcycle drivers, is equipped with the M.1889; the exceptions have infantry carbine M.1889.

Tactical use

The cannon always fires open fire at moving targets, and usually only opens fire at distances below 1,000 m.

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

A bridge is blocked to prevent attack by armored vehicles. The barrier is made of overturned wagons and a felled roadside tree. The barrage can be held under fire from the infantry cannon in the lower right of the picture and a machine gun on the hill to the left.

Sources

1. *Textbook for Infantry Corporal Schools - Equipment and Train*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1941.
2. *Field equipment for Individuals*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1936, with correction sheets up to august 1941.
3. *Textbook for Army Privates, I1. Part, Infantry - Field Service and Fencing*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1940.
4. *Gardehusarkasernen on 29 August 1943* by Anders D. Henriksen, Forlaget Devantier, Næstved 1993, ISBN 87-984530-0-9.
5. *The Defense Book* by Colonel T. Andersen, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1941.

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To note:

- 1) The number corresponds to the number of dry food portions that are carried on the kitchen trolley (Source 2).
- 2) *Soldiers on 9 April 1940* by Kay Søren Nielsen, Tøjhusmuseet, Copenhagen 1990, ISBN 87-7233-847-4.
- 3) The famous cannon from Haderslev, see e.g. *The Danish Army on April 9th, 1940, Part 2 and Supplement to Part 2*, had Type 2 wheels. Swedish members of *Figurina Danica*, with extensive knowledge of the Swedish Army, recently noted that they had never seen 37 mm anti-tank guns - with this type of wheel - in Swedish service. It may thus have been a Danish addition, perhaps with a view to later engine traction. Similar development is also known from e.g. German 37 mm anti-tank guns (PAK 36) and Russian 37 mm and 45 mm anti-tank guns.
- 4) The 37 mm guns which were used in the Swedish army - and later in the Danish Brigade - had wheels of type 3. See e.g. *The Danish Brigade - 5th (Heavy) Battalion, Part 1 and Part 2*. The image may originate from trials prior to the introduction.
- 5) From *Denmark's Army, Volumes I and II* under the editorship of Captain Hector Boeck, Captain SE Johnstad-Møller and Captain Lieutenant CV Hjalp, Society for the publication of cultural writings, Copenhagen 1934-1935.
- 6) From *Zealand Life Regiment 375 years* by HK Nielsen and others, Zealand Life Regiment Foundation, Slagelse 1989.