

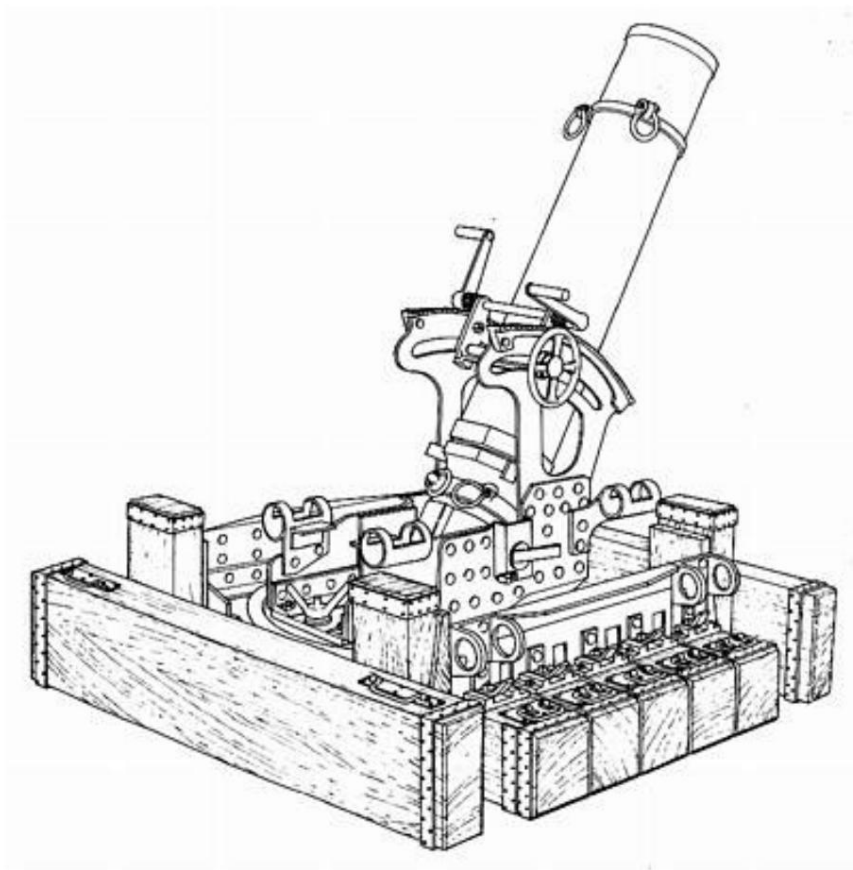
On the English 9.45-inch Trench Mortar

Introduction

In the article *On The Canadian Motor Machine Gun Brigade* it is mentioned that two motorized sections of 6-inch Newton trench mortars were included in Brutinel's Brigade in 1918, and the other day I came across a reference to a plan to generally motorize these mortars.

Appendix G in *Source 1 - Trench Mortar Organization in France 1914-1918* - mentions that in July 1918 plans were made to make the Newton mortars mobile. The planning was part of a restructuring of the entire organization around trench mortars. It was intended that the heavy trench mortar batteries, of which at this time there was one battery of 6 pamphlets per corps, had to be disbanded to free up personnel for the mobile mortar units. However, the war ended before these plans could be implemented.

The Newton trench mortar, introduced in 1917, was a smaller version of the heavy 9.45-inch trench mortar. As the 6-inch mortar made its way to the troops, the 9.45-inch mortar replaced the division-level one. After this, the 9.45-inch mortar alone was part of the corps artillery.



French 240 mm trench mortar. From Source 2.

The English 9.45-inch trench mortar

The heavy trench mortar was developed on the basis of trials with the corresponding French 240 mm trench mortar.

However, the French version was not found suitable for immediate use, but they borrowed the French drawings and developed their own model over the course of eight months.

Internet searches suggest that the French mortar existed in a short version (CT) and a long version (LT).

The 9.45-inch trench mortar had a range of about 2 km. The grenade weighed approx. 81 kg, while the mortar itself weighed a good 300 kg, without "support plate".

A heavy trench mortar battery consisted of 3 officers as well as 66 non-commissioned officers and privates.



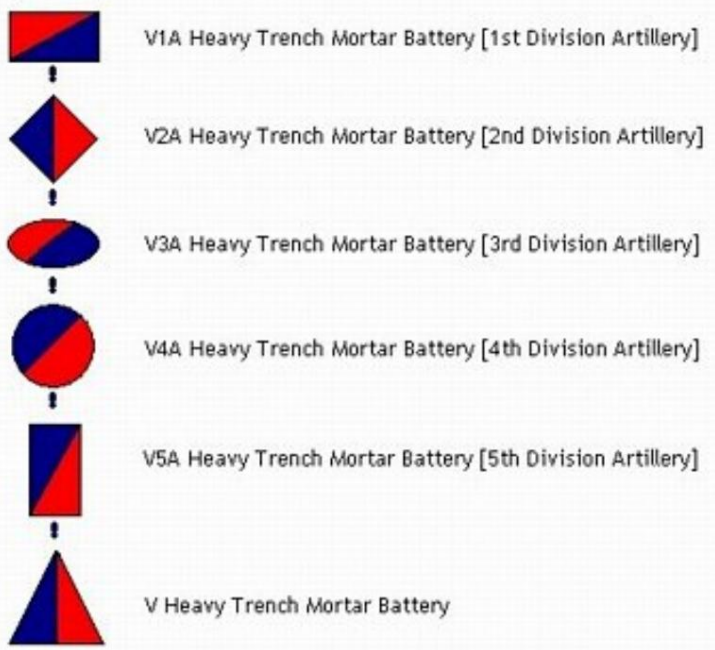
Loading a Trench Mortar, approx. 1916.

A postcard in the series Official War Photographs (Series 15, No. 115), published by the Daily Mail.

The text on the back of the card reads as follows:

"Tommy's" nickname for a trench mortar is a "flying pig" and this picture shows some of our men loading one of these useful weapons.

The pamphlet here is a 9.45-inch trench mortar, and as several of the soldiers' headdresses could suggest that they are Australian, the organizational development can be aptly summarized with an Australian starting point.



From Color patches of Artillery Units of World War 1.

In Australian service

A heavy trench mortar battery first consisted of 4, then 6 pcs. 9.45-inch (240 mm) mortars.

The Australian batteries were established as part of the Divisional Artillery (V1A - V5A), from April to August 1916, with one battery per division.

In February 1918, five batteries at division level were replaced by one battery (of 6 pamphlets) at corps level (V).

Sources

1. *History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery - Western Front 1914-18* by Sir Martin Farndale, Royal Artillery Institution, London 1986, ISBN 1-870114-00-0.
2. *Argonne - The AEF in France* by Barry Cooper, Battle Book No. 28, Ballentine's Illustrated History of the Violent Century, New York 1972.
3. British 9.45-Inch Heavy Trench Mortar, Mark III from the website Mortars in Miniature.

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