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OPENING SHOT

GETTING THE GOAT

The M561 Gama Goat might look like a 4x4 towing a trailer, but it's actually a single six-wheel vehicle with a four-wheel steering set-up. Roger Gamaunt came up with the clever articulated joint that joined the two sections, hence 'Gama'. The 'Goat' bit came from its off-road ability. It was an early sixties creation, manufactured by the Consolidated Diesel Electric Company (CONDEC) and featured a deafening two-stroke Detroit diesel engine. Some saw service in Vietnam and despite being classed as amphibious, it wasn't that strong a swimmer. It wasn't that easy to drive on land, either. Some 15,274 were built between 1969-73.



CLASSIC MILITARY VEHICLE



NEWS & REVIEW

★ *A round-up of military-vehicle related news and products.* ★
Send news items to ian.cushway@keypublishing.com

Despatches



We're always in deep admiration of anyone who's prepared to take a tracked vehicle to a show for other enthusiasts and the general public to enjoy. It's pricey to buy, a challenge financially to restore and expensive to transport these military leviathans and those benevolent folk who are willing to get involved in their preservation deserve a hearty pat on the back. A more practical option for enthusiasts on a budget wanting a taste of armoured vehicle ownership is to buy a Daimler Ferret – at least that's the opinion of the two dedicated Ferret owners we've featured on pages 16-23 of this issue. The Ferret's Rolls-Royce engine has a good reputation for reliability and driver visibility, although still limited, is probably the best of any armoured vehicle. Turretless versions will easily fit in your garage and the majority of spares are still available if you know where to find them. Best of all, it's fun to drive – and the fact that it will cruise at 40-50mph (64-80km/h) makes it a very usable 'tank'. One thing's for sure, you certainly see lots at shows which tends to support the argument that this is perhaps the most user friendly armoured military vehicle out there, and with prices only going one way from here on, they are likely to prove a good investment. What are you waiting for?

Ian Cushway



DEACT WEAPON WORRY



Classic military vehicle enthusiasts, re-enactors and militaria collectors have been alarmed by news of a hastily amended EU Directive which could effectively ban the display and ownership of deactivated firearms. The EU Directive 91/477/EEC was due for amendment but the changes appear to be much wider sweeping and more draconian than expected, largely in response to the terrorist atrocities in Paris last year.

While the precise details are still rather sketchy, proposals in the amendment include a ban on certain semi-automatic firearms which look like automatic weapons being kept by private individuals, even if deactivated, stricter conditions for the circulation of deactivated firearms and stricter conditions for collectors to limit the risk of sale to criminals. Reading between the lines that would mean that deactivated machine guns of any description would most likely be banned with only museums being able to keep them in their collections. There could also be restrictions affecting ammunitions collectors.

Needless to say opposition from the likes of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) and the Deactivated Weapons Association (DWA) is gathering strength with the advice for enthusiasts likely to be affected being to contact a local MEP to voice an opinion – and hopefully introduce exemptions for law abiding military enthusiasts. You can read the full European Commission press release at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6111_en.htm

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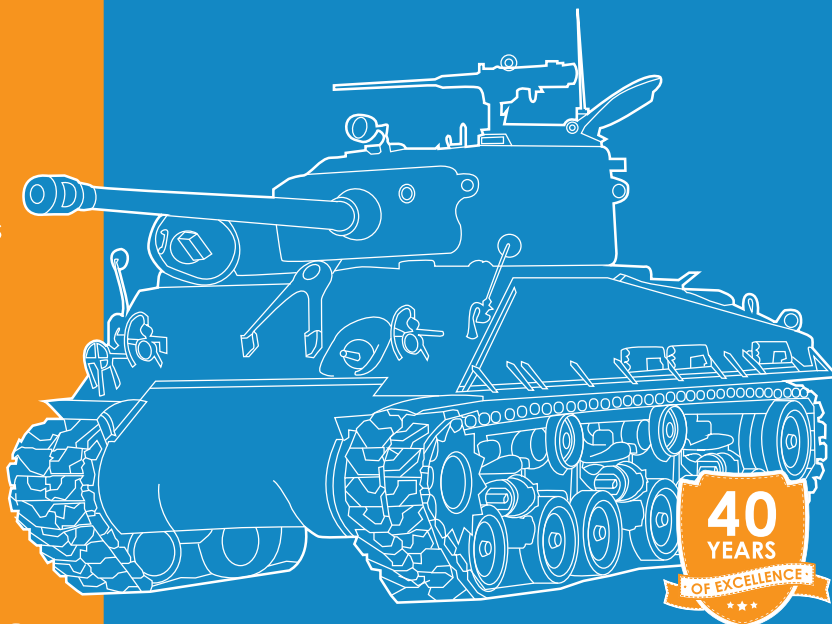
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MODEL BEHAVIOUR



On seeing your piece on the Centurion BARV in February's issue of *CMV* and the photos of your model of a BARV, I thought I would show you a photo of my fully working all metal 1/6 scale BARV I built using an Armortek Centurion gun tank kit. I have also included a photo of a fully working bridge layer I am in the process of building using another Centurion tank kit made by Armortek. David Skeldon, via email

OLD TANKS NEVER DIE

According to a report in *Jane's Defence Weekly*, a number of WW2-era tanks, including an M3 Stuart and an M4 Sherman, appear to be going back into service with the Paraguayan Army as operational trainers.

A total of 15 M3s were delivered in 1970 in three successive lots as donations from neighbouring Brazil. They first served with Cavalry Regiment No.3 whose HQ was at Campo Grande near Paraguay's capital, Asuncion. Apart from a brief role during the country's 1989 coup, they've remained largely unused – a threatened army coup in 1996 prompting the Paraguayans to keep hold of them. Three were spotted during a parade in 2013 – and since then it's understood that 10 of the original 15 have undergone a complete overhaul, which has included an engine overhaul, repaint and the fitment of M2 .50 calibre machine guns on a turret pintle in place of the original Browning.

READ ALL ABOUT IT...

PIONEERS OF AUSTRALIAN ARMOUR IN THE GREAT WAR

By David Finlayson and Michael Cecil, Big Sky Publishing, ISBN9781925275261.

This is an unusual book; the first half deals with armoured cars, indigenous Australian armoured cars, two of them which operated in the Western Desert alongside the British Machine Gun Corps (Motors), in particular 11th and 12th Light Armoured Car Batteries. It then goes on to describe their transition into the 1st (Australian) Light Car Patrol, equipped with Model T Fords and armed with Lewis guns and their move to Palestine and the part they played in the fighting out there. This is followed by a section that gives details of all the men who comprised the Australian Armoured Car Section along with those who joined them later as reinforcements when they formed the 1st (Australian) Light Car Patrol. Not only their lives as serving Australian soldiers but even afterwards, until they died.

The second part of the book concerns tanks and in particular the Mark IV female nicknamed *Grit* which spent some time visiting locations in Australia and is now in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Once again this is supplemented with biographical notes on the tank's crew. Including all those trained on a Mark IV at Bovington Camp in Dorset, who formed

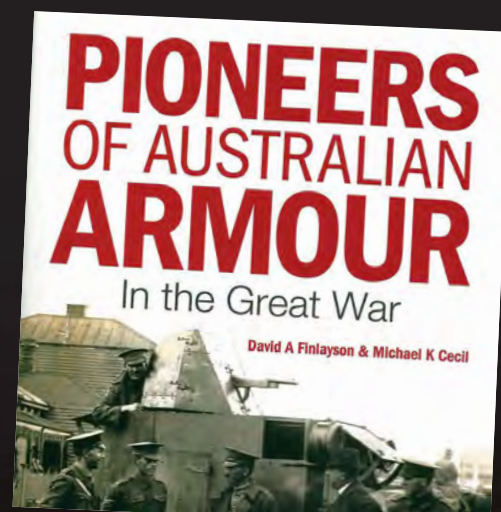
its first crew when it was in Australia plus the men of the Royal Australian Engineers Detachment who formed its second crew until the tank was retired to the Australian War Museum which in those days was in Melbourne.

Of the former part, most of the text is taken from contemporary newspaper reports, which are uniformly optimistic and very enthusiastic and from an unpublished manuscript written by Lieutenant Ernest James, the original unit commander. While one wishes it could tell us more about the original armoured cars and what they did in the desert it gives very thorough coverage to the Light Car Patrol and the part it played in the fighting around Gaza, far more active than one would expect from unarmoured vehicles. It is interesting to note that 1st (Australian) Light Car Patrol was involved, along with British Rolls-Royces in the pursuit and defeat of a convoy, including a big German armoured car on the Aleppo Road in October 1918.

Although the biographical notes will be of most interest to Australian readers they do prove that life for the average Australian was little different from that which affected people in the rest of the world. The amazing coincidence concerning Gaston Somny will be of interest to British readers. Somny was an Englishman, although living in Western Australia in 1914. Joining the Australian Army he went to Gallipoli. Later, after a spell in hospital he transferred to the 1st (Australian) Light Car Patrol. Later on, as a civilian, he returned to Britain but was killed

in the Tatsfield air crash of 10 December 1935 alongside Sir John Carden, Vickers-Armstrongs' chief tank designer, with whom he was travelling. From a personal viewpoint it is fascinating to learn that Ernest James, commander of the armoured cars, later founded the Model Dockyard in Swanston Street, Melbourne which, in my young days, while living and working in Melbourne, was the city's foremost model shop where I wasted a lot of my free time.

Grit is almost certainly the best preserved and most original Mark IV tank to survive anywhere and it is interesting to follow its career in Australia up to the time it went to Canberra. All in all a most interesting book, and very nicely presented, with some excellent photographs. *David Fletcher*



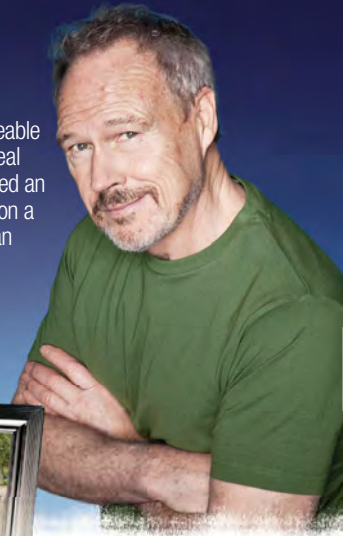
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WRITE TO REPLY!

FUN WITH FINS

Thanks for the Yorkshire Wartime Experience report in your December 2015 issue. My group even made it to the photos, bottom right-hand corner of page 60 – showing our Diamond T helping out with a Jeep repair. We rebuilt the Jeep's diff at that show so the owner could get home. I just thought I would point out that our group travelled from Finland to this event and will be doing so again this year. It will be a three-day trip with little sleep for us just to get the show. But I have to say, it's always worth it (this will be our third visit). Take a look at our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/2nd-Armored-Ordnance-Maintenance-Battalion-804361736259059) to see what else we get up to.

Joel Coupland, via email

FITTING TRIBUTE TO MV COLLECTING PIONEER

Nigel Hay's tribute to the late Peter Gray made interesting reading and for me brought back many memories of the early days when I became involved in the preservation world of military vehicles. In those days my main interest was to photograph as much as I could and get to know those involved with the many restorations that were appearing at the time. Peter, of course, as Nigel said was one of the early pioneers of the movement and along with Joe Lyndhurst was amongst the first people I spoke to. Peter was well known for his organised convoy runs and in 1977 he organised a run to Arnhem which involved an overnight stay at St Martins Plain camp Folkestone before moving on to the ferry at Dover the next day. This was a golden opportunity for me as at the time we saw very few restored MVs in our part of the world. I made the effort to be at the camp arrival and the next day at the convoy run to Dover to take as many photographs as possible. Shown here is just a small sample of the many I took on the two days.

Les Freathy, regular contributor



OFFICE BRIEFING



Being born in 1943, I was fortunate enough to find the family farm full of all types of ex-military vehicles to mess around with (Dodge, GMC, Chevy and a few tracked lovelies to boot!). That was years before a legal little red book! Sadly all this metal was run into the ground and eventually fed to the scrap furnaces of Sheffield. Anyway, I write in reply to your piece on the Chevrolet HUC in the January 2016 issue. There is a very good reason why many vehicles had the accelerator between the clutch and the brake – it is much easier to drive a vehicle fitted with a non-synchro box with this pedal arrangement. Changing down the box becomes a simple 'heel and toe' movement as the left toe depresses the clutch and the left heel blips the accelerator, while the gear lever is slid into a lower gear. No chance of losing momentum on boggy or slippery ground. It is far more likely that this pedal arrangement was a deliberate act by a designer who knew how these vehicles should perform 'cross country' and the correct driving style needed to achieve this. Anything else I personally consider myth and rubbish because having seen both No 11 and 12 cab types in scrap/very rusty state years ago, I am sure the present day arrangement could have fitted in the space.

Glenn Middleton, Leeds



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MALVERN MILITARIA

Tim Bolton visited the popular Wiltshire venue to scour the halls and exhibition stands for bargains...



1942 Willys Jeep project on offer at just £500.

Hoards of military enthusiasts made their usual pilgrimage to Malvern Militaria which took place in the Wye Halls at the Three Counties Showground in Worcestershire last November to explore the vast selection of all things military. Items on sale ranged from clothing and insignia, books, manuals, weaponry, bicycles, motorcycles and vehicle parts and as this is a military vehicle magazine, in this article I'll stick to that theme.

As a reminder of the vast stock Jeeparts UK takes to shows, its transport, a huge articulated trailer in the company livery, greeted visitors alongside the entrance. Only one full sized vehicle graced the show, the product display Jeep of Allied Forces Canvas, although there were a number of motorcycles and bicycles up for grabs.

One of the first items to get my attention was a US BC 312 radio complete with transport case. Described

as "extremely rare" the radio was on sale for £750. The first of the two-wheelers I came across were two bicycles displayed by Rob Miller, a Star Infantry Mk5 in good original condition on offer at £750 and a non-military Elswick, again in good original condition at only £75.

Ian Galliers from Shrewsbury works in construction as his day job but specialises in breaking later military vehicles and Jaguar engines in particular to fund the running of his own collection. On sale

were military Jaguar J60 distributors and coils at £45 and £20 respectively, CVRT idler wheels at £15 each and a number of troop carrier instrument panels at various prices.

Mark Askew from Doncaster used to publish *Jeep World* magazine before selling it, but still uses the *Jeep World* name and now sells books and manuals on military subjects. Latest on his stall was the two-volume US Dodge set, priced at £100.

Meanwhile, Ivan Jones was having a clear out and amongst the items he had on offer was a rather nice 1948 Royal Enfield 125cc motorcycle which just required finishing off and was up at £1450. Ivan was also selling the frame,



Above: A good selection of petrol and water Jerry cans on offer here. Above right: Mark Askew had a number of military books on offer.



forks and engine from another RE 125 and at £350 these items would make the start of an interesting project capable of being given a military look.

Another 'project' was on offer from tyre supplier John Grey, who was also having a bit of a garage tidy up. Over the years John had gathered up Jeep parts from a number of sources and now felt it was time to reduce some of the stock. As he rightly said: "After all, who needs three Jeep sumps?" Most interesting amongst his items was the tub and chassis of a 1942 Willys Jeep complete with VIN tag. It wasn't expensive at £500, although there would be plenty of work involved as the chassis had been cut in two and



Above: German helmets reclaimed from Danish soil. Below: There was plenty of clothing on offer for those looking for a bargain.





Above: Royal Enfield at £3750 and BSA bicycle at £985 were on offer from Stocks Collectibles. Left: Original and reproduction Harley parts always draw lots of attention.



the tub had lots of floor rot, covered in some places with layers of plastic filler. Nevertheless, it would be a good starting point for someone with the necessary skills and plenty of time of their hands.

Drawing plenty of attention was a Harley Davidson WLA on the stand of Michel Clements from the Netherlands. However, many were disappointed that it was not for sale, merely on its way to being serviced. Michel did have a similar machine for sale at €18,500 and had numerous photographs of this one on display. Completing his Harley military offerings were numerous genuine and reproduction parts, including saddles and pannier bags.

British military two-wheelers were represented by a Royal Enfield 350cc in good but not immaculate condition at £3750 and a BSA airborne bicycle at £985. Again, it was okay but obviously not top notch at this kind of money. Both were on the stand of Stocks Collectibles owned by Chris Bond.

Making an intriguing and almost surreal display on one stand were a number of WW2 German helmets in various states of decay. These had apparently been confiscated by the American Army from German soldiers in Denmark and then buried to prevent their reuse. They were recently discovered



Left: Star Infantry and Elswick bicycles were on the stand of Rob Miller.




Above: US BC 312 radio at £750 was said to be extremely rare. Right: Troop carrier instrument panels from breaker Ian Galliers.



and dug up and were on sale at prices ranging from £5 to £30. On the same stand were Jerry cans priced at between £30-£150.

The only models I could find at Malvern were well worth a look. Airsoft World of Fife had a number of radio controlled tank models in 1:16 scale that could not be sold as fully working due to unspecified faults. An enterprising and skilled member of its warehouse staff had given a number of models a weathered battlefield look making them desirable as static exhibits and the last four were available at just £75 each, a price that seems reasonable for something unique.

So summing up, it was a cracking day out at Malvern. I'm always amazed at what turns up at these shows – but I guess that's what keeps me returning for more every year. 



Above: Weathered tank makes a fine static model and it wasn't expensive at £75. Below: Sadly this desirable Harley wasn't for sale.



FERRRETIN

As a usable and affordable classic, this post-war stalwart of British for it as these two Ferret owners Paul Abbitt and Robert Davies are

By their very nature, scout cars make excellent candidates for the military vehicle collector, not least because they are available in relatively high numbers and are easy to own and inexpensive to buy and run compared to bigger/tracked green classics. The fact that you can keep one in your garage and drive it to the shops if you so wished is an added bonus.

Their appeal is something that isn't lost on military vehicle enthusiasts, which is why you are guaranteed to see plenty at shows. We hooked up with two such Ferret fanciers at last year's War & Peace Revival to find out what fuels their passion...

FUN IN A FERRET

Paul Abbitt, 35, from Maidstone owns the 1965 Mk2/3 here (below left). As a teenager Paul saved his pocket money to buy WW2 militaria and started attending military shows soon after – and this is what ignited

his desire to buy an old military vehicle.

“In the early 1990s I would spend my entire day at War and Peace dragging my parents around the trade stalls, watching the displays and looking around the military vehicles,” smiles Paul. “Nothing much has changed, although now it's my wife, Melanie, that I drag round – although fortunately she enjoys it as much as me.”

In 2010, at the ripe old age of 30, Paul's dream of becoming an MV owner finally



G AROUND

military reconnaissance has plenty going happy to testify...





Rob's Mark 2/3 served in Cyprus before heading off to the Rhine.

became a reality when he took the plunge and bought a Willys MV Jeep in need of restoration which, as it happens, indirectly led him to buy a Ferret a few years later. "Through other enthusiasts I was introduced to John Dews from the Yalding Daimler Ferret Group who undertook the restoration of my Jeep. Melanie and I joined up and that's where it all started," he explains.

After just two years of membership Paul admits he was bitten by the bug and that resulted in him buying the Ferret – a Mk2/3,

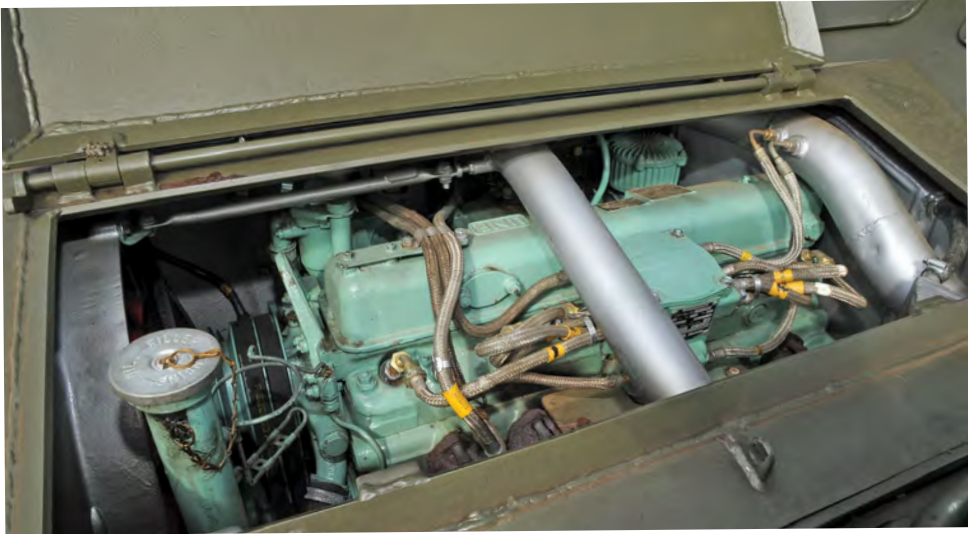
"I found myself liking the Mark 1 more and more."

which he purchased from John Dews and Brian Laker in 2012. "I bought the Daimler Ferret for the simple reason that it is

tremendous fun, and it's surprisingly easy to drive once you get the hang of the pre-select gearbox," explains Paul. "I was drawn to it initially because it's an affordable armoured car which is not too big for the roads which makes driving it a pleasurable experience.

What's more, it's easy to keep at home." Another major factor for Paul was the availability of spares and the fact that all the parts are so readily available from the likes of John which makes maintenance and repairs surprisingly straightforward.

FRESHLY RESTORED
Fortunately for Paul, John Dews had already carried out a full restoration of the 1965 Ferret, so it didn't need anything doing



130bhp six-cylinder Rolls-Royce B60 engine gives the Ferret a fair lick of speed. Access is via hatches either side.



There are six smoke grenade launchers, three mounted each side over the front wheels.

FERRET HISTORY

In the immediate post-war period the British Army was looking to upgrade its WW2 light armoured vehicle fleet, and out of this emerged the Daimler Ferret.

In many ways it was a natural progression from the wartime Dingo but with more space inside and the option of a small machine gun turret.

Features included a low profile and the use of runflat tyres, both of which were likely to prove useful in battle situations.

Turreted examples were commonly fitted with a .303 Bren, .30 Browning M1919 or 7.62mm GMPG. There were six smoke grenade launchers, three mounted each side over the front wheels and some were modified to carry Vickers Vigilant anti-tank missile launchers as well as Swingfire anti-tank missile launchers.

The relatively lightweight Ferret was equipped with a Rolls-Royce B60 in-line six-cylinder petrol engine driven through a five-speed gearbox as well as fully independent suspension. It performed well off-road and even better on it, where it could reach speeds of close to 60mph (96km/h).

Turreted Ferrets carried a crew of two, a driver and commander/gunner while turretless Ferrets had a driver, commander and a gunner.

Meant for reconnaissance duties, three Ferrets were attached to each tank squadron. There were many variants of the Mark 1 and 2 along with larger wheeled Mark 3s, 4s and 5s. You can find out more on the excellent site, www.ferret-fv701.co.uk.

A total of 4409 Ferrets were produced between 1952-71. They saw service in Aden during the 1950s and 60s, as well as Cyprus and Northern Ireland. They were also employed throughout the Commonwealth and roughly 40 other countries worldwide. The last major British use of Ferrets was in Operation Granby during the 1991 Iraq War although it is thought that some remained with the British Army until 1993.



Rob's Mark 1 served with the Life Guards (A Squadron) during the Gulf War.

when Paul took possession. "It looked like it had just rolled off the production line," confirms Paul. That said, he's had plenty of fun personalising it. "I have badged it to

my local regiment of the 1960s so it now represents A-Squadron of the Kent and County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) which was based in Maidstone, Kent,

between 1961-67 (Territorial Army). During that time it would have provided armoured reconnaissance to the 44th (Home Counties) Infantry Division." Paul's also fitted a fully

Below: Having rebuilt a Mark 1 with a mate, Rob decided to buy one for himself.





working Clansman radio system since it has been in his tenure.

From what he's managed to find out, in reality his Ferret spent most of its life in Northern Ireland, its service history starting on 28 May 1965. "Two years later it started service with 8th Field Squadron

RE in Northern Ireland, then joined 16/5 Lancers RAC in 1972. The following year, it went to the RTR in Northern Ireland before joining the 15/19 Hussars in 1974. In 1976 it served with the 9/12 Lancers before seeing out its active duty with the 3rd Field Squadron RR from 1978," explained Paul. "It

was only discharged on 28 May 2005 after precisely 40 years of loyal service."

WEIGHTY MATTER

Needless to say Paul is delighted with his post-war military gem and wouldn't hesitate recommending a Ferret to fellow enthusiasts. "The advice I'd give is to simply speak to an existing owner. To be honest, there's no major difficulties with the vehicle, although as I've said, the pre-selector gearbox takes a bit of practice. Also, people need to bear in mind that the Daimler Ferret performed many different roles, so there are several different Marks and some are heavier than



Above: Paul's badged his Ferret to his local regiment.



Above and right: Paul's Ferret looks as good as new inside and is meticulously detailed.

TWO IS BETTER THAN ONE

Forty-nine-year-old Robert Davies is the proud owner of the other two Ferrets you see here – as well as a Land Rover Lightweight and a Fordson WOT8. Like Paul, his interest in all things military started as a child and evolved from collecting British campaign medals to vehicles. "I first became interested in the military through



As a mechanic and garage proprietor by trade it was the Daimler Ferret's British engineering that appealed initially, as well

others. A legal point to consider here is your driving licence. If you passed your driving test in or after 1997, then you are restricted to driving a vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tons. As a general rule, Daimler Ferrets without turrets can be driven on a post-1997 licence, but not ones with turrets as they weigh 4 tons. Obviously if you passed your test prior to 1997, you can drive any Ferret."

"You should be able to bag a barn find Ferret for between £5000-£6000."

as the fact that it wasn't as popular as a Jeep.

watching war films in my childhood and through listening to my grandfather's stories from WW2," explains Robert.

His first Ferret was a green and black 1959 Mark 2/3 which he purchased with a friend, but Rob felt guilty about it being garaged at his house, so they bought

Below: A selector allows the Ferret to drive forward or reverse and start off in any gear, making it ideal for getting out of sticky situations in a hurry.





Paul Abbitt's 1965 Mark 2/3 spent much of its life in Northern Ireland.

a Mark 1 to restore. After a complete strip down, his pal kept the Mark 1 and Rob held on to their original Mark 2/3. However, rebuilding the Mark 1 had whetted his appetite to own one himself.

"I found myself liking the Mark 1 more and more and bought a 1966 example of my own," smiled Rob – and this is the sand coloured Ferret in the photos.

HELP FROM ABOVE

Both of Rob's Ferrets came via other Ferret enthusiasts and both were in fully rebuilt condition when he got them. That said, he's rebuilt the wheelstation on the Mark 2/3 and replaced the fluid flywheel seal, which involved removing the gearbox, as well as carried out regular servicing on both vehicles.

Like Paul, Robert's had fun buying accessories and making them his own. "I've basically kitted them out with some of the equipment the Army would have had at the time, including a .30 calibre machine gun for the Mark 2/3 and Sterling sub machine guns for both Ferrets. I've also marked them up with regiments which they had served with during their service in the Army.



Accessorising a Ferret is relatively easy and a whole lot of fun.



Rob purchased a .30 calibre machine gun for his Mark 2/3 as well as Sterling sub machine guns for this vehicle and his Mark 1.



Above and right: Paul's managed to trace two historic images of his Ferret while in service.

Having carried out a bit of research, Rob's discovered that his Mark 2/3 served with the Queens Royal Irish Hussars in Cyprus during the late sixties and early seventies and then spent the rest of its time with the British Army of the Rhine in Germany.

Less is known about the Mark 1, sadly, but Rob reckons it also served with the Army of the Rhine then spent time with the Life Guards (A Squadron) during the Gulf War prior to its discovery in an Essex scrapyard.

FLEXIBLE FRIEND

Again, Rob sees the Ferret's ease of ownership as a real plus point for classic military vehicle enthusiasts. "The Mark 1 can fit into a normal garage with a small amount of space either side, providing you can climb out of the top," he says. "In fact,

BUYING A FERRET

The golden rule is to do your homework, talk to existing owners and join a club where there are other Ferret owning members. While spares are relatively easily obtainable, some items can be pricey so it makes sense either buying from someone who can tell you what needs doing or taking along an expert when viewing examples for sale.

Regarding values, you should be able to bag a barn find Ferret for between £5000-£6000, while one that's on the road is likely to set you back the best part of £10,000-£12,000. A fully rebuilt example will be approximately £16,000. Which model you choose will be down to personal taste...

they're not dissimilar to a Range Rover in size so they are fairly easy to drive on the road with the assistance of a commander as visibility is a little limited in the cab."

So, in a nutshell – the Ferret's a vehicle that's steeped in post-war charm, easy and great fun to own and still relatively

affordable to buy. What's more, because most saw a long period of service, trying to trace a vehicle's military history shouldn't prove nearly as difficult as a WW2 machine. And that's something that can really make a difference if you're into old military vehicle nostalgia.



TREADING WATER

Hardly strong swimmers but with nautical intentions just the same, David Fletcher profiles the pre-WW2 British light amphibious tanks



*The Medium D** taking a dip in the River Stour at Christchurch alongside an Inglis Bridge. This picture was taken after it had been modified by Variable Speed Gears Ltd at Crayford to incorporate the Williams-Janney transmission.*

We're focussing here on British swimming tanks, not ordinary tanks with external floatation devices such as the DD tanks, or those fitted with Strausser buoyancy aids. In other words, amphibious tanks proper – tanks that can jump into water and swim, after a fashion, without any preparation. There is one other type of British amphibious tank from WW2 but that's for another time...

We'll start by looking at the Medium D tank of June 1919 and its derivatives the Medium D*, Medium D**, Medium DM and the Light Infantry tank. They were all amphibious, or at least intended to be. However, the first two were too narrow and therefore reckoned to be unstable in water while one of the Medium DM tanks rather

let the side down by sinking in the River Thames. But although it looks a lot more like an unfinished prototype than a real tank, just to get it out of the way we should at least mention the Medium D** since it swam in the River Stour at Christchurch. It is sometimes referred to as the D Modified so it might be the prototype DM.

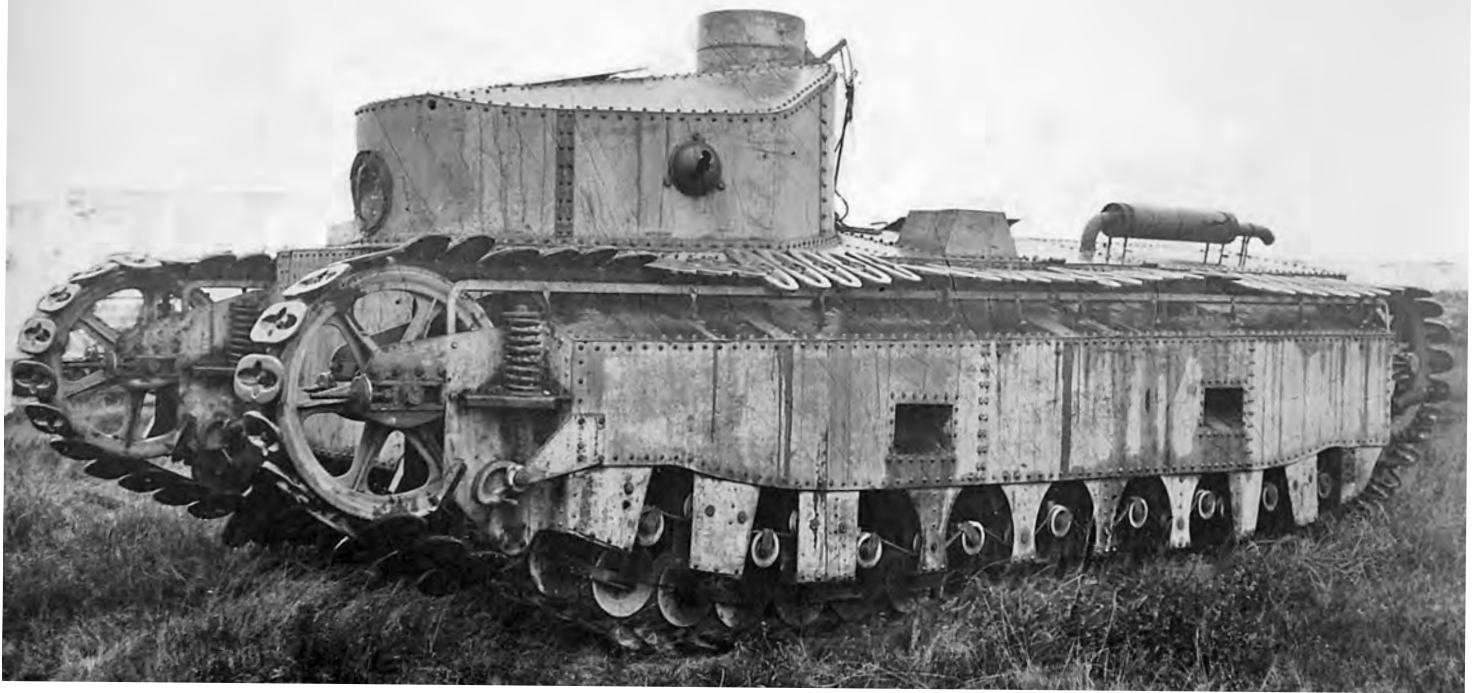
MEDIUM DM

The DM looks a bit more like a tank than earlier prototypes. There were two and although both were powered by the Rolls-Royce Eagle V12 engine rated at 260hp, both tanks had different transmission systems although nowhere does it explain what these were. However, we can make an educated guess. Bearing in mind what had gone before, and what was to come directly afterwards, it seems reasonable to suggest that one had a four-speed primary gearbox with Rackham steering clutches on the output shafts on either side, while the other, we think, had a Williams-Janney hydraulic steering system. The Williams-Janney system, which had already proved unreliable in an earlier tank, is said to have added four tons to the overall weight of the tank.

One of the Medium DM tanks weighed 18 tons. If it was the Williams-Janney tank then the other one should weigh in the region of 14 tons. If, on the other hand, the 18 ton tank is the one fitted with Rackham clutches then the other tank should weigh in the region of 22 tons. To confuse the issue further a Medium D tank weighed 13.5 tons, the slightly wider Medium D* weighed 14.5 tons while the Medium D** weighed 15 tons, presumably before it was fitted with the Williams-Janney



One of the two Medium DM tanks (or Medium D Modified) that were built at Woolwich.



The Light Infantry Tank when it finally came to rest in the original open air Tank Museum at Bovington.

transmission and Rolls-Royce V12 engine, when it should have weighed about 19 tons. That being so the weight of the two Medium DM tanks should be 14 tons and 18 tons respectively, the latter being the Williams-Janney tank.

PRACTICALITIES

The crew of the DM are clustered in a small compartment at the front of the tank, which has three mountings for Hotchkiss machine guns. On top of this compartment are two cupolas, one slightly ahead of the other, for the driver and the commander. They decided to place the driver up high so that when the tank went swimming he would be able to see where he was going. Yet, some complained that from that position he could not get a close enough view of the road ahead. The reason why the tank featured a second cupola for the commander was in deference to traditionalists who complained that there were no facilities for a tank commander, and all tanks should have a commander shouldn't they?

We would suggest a crew of four, for whom escape hatches had been installed in the track frames at either side. Hefty hatches since they needed to be watertight when the tank went swimming.

Behind the crew compartment was the engine and behind that the transmission, which linked through the track frames to the final drive. The track frames are probably the most important part of the tank and they are higher at the back than the front. This is partly because the tracks needed to be as low as possible at the front so that the driver could see where he was going on land. But because of this the tank's designer, Colonel Philip Johnson, also reckoned that if the tracks were higher at the back the tank would be able to take some obstacles in reverse. Not an ideal arrangement, particularly when in action, but good enough

for now. And it is important to keep in mind that in Johnson's view all of these tanks were just experimental test beds, not prototypes for real tanks. That said, senior

“One of the Medium DM tanks rather let the side down by sinking in the River Thames.”

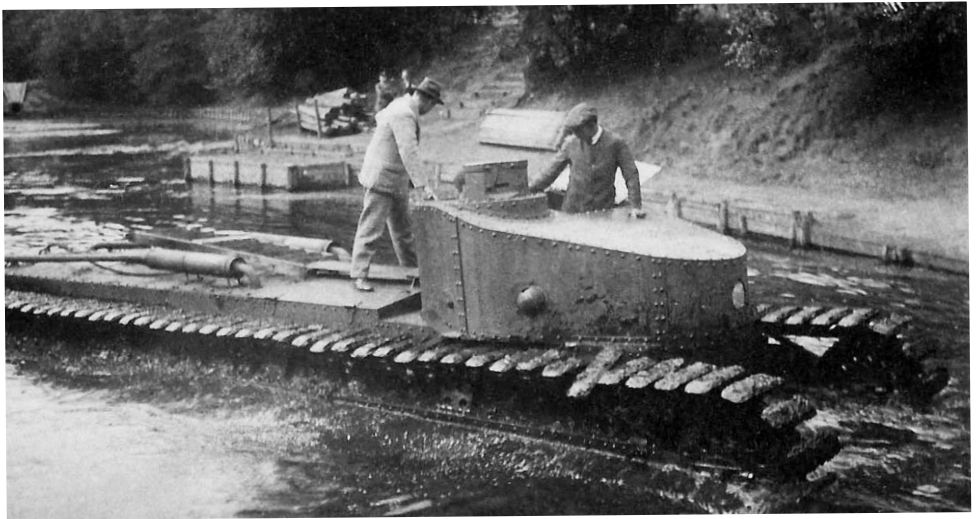
officers such as Hugh Elles seemed unable to grasp this fact which, given the ruling fiscal situation, was hardly surprising.

SUITABLY SPRUNG

The track frames covered what was perhaps the most striking part of the tank, its suspension. Johnson, of course, agreed

that his tanks needed to be sprung in order to achieve high speeds but he did not like the idea of having springs at every wheel station on account of their weight. So he came up with the idea of

using heavy-duty wire cable, stretched over and under a sequence of rollers attached to a big spring at the end. As the suspension



Above: One of the Medium DM tanks undergoing swimming trials. Since they relied on tracks to move them through the water, progress was not very fast. Below: The Light Infantry Tank going for a swim in the Fleet Pond in Hampshire. Obviously the photographer did not want to get his feet wet.





A Vickers-Armstrongs Light Amphibian afloat in the River Tyne in Newcastle. You will notice the lack of freeboard but the chap in the turret doesn't seem concerned.

encountered an obstacle it forced up one set of wheels after another to push against the wire rope, thus stretching the spring, which returned to its normal position once the obstruction was passed. It was an ingenious solution to the problem of tank suspension although it relied heavily on the tensile strength of the wire rope. The track also relied on wire rope, rather as a necklace does a cord, and the narrow track shoes were threaded onto the cable just like beads. This gave them the flexibility to conform to uneven ground and to bend when the tank was turning. The tracks also provided the means of propulsion in the water, propelling the tank like a paddle steamer. As long as the structure was watertight and the hull large enough to be buoyant then the tank should float, assuming it was not too heavy. It should also be possible simply to drive it into the water and keep going. How one of them came to sink in the Thames is unclear but it must have leaked somewhere, perhaps through one of the side hatches.

Incidentally, you can see a short film of the recovery of the tank from its watery grave on the British Pathé website.

LIGHT INFANTRY TANK

The Light Infantry Tank that appeared in 1921 was effectively Philip Johnson's last gasp where tanks are concerned. It was much smaller than the other Medium D series tanks and only weighed 8 tons, but it was clearly of the same family. It was powered by a Hall-Scott aero engine, rated at 100hp and had an entirely conventional transmission. It also had wire rope suspension but it was fitted with lubricated Snake Tracks, Johnson's latest development, and it was amphibious. It swam on the Fleet Pond in Hampshire just to prove it could, but never again, so far as we know.

TANK OR NOT?

There was now a gap up to 1931 before Britain produced another amphibious tank, and in this case it seems appropriate to



One of the first Vickers-Armstrongs amphibious light tanks photographed near Chertsey; note the large rudder.

question whether it was really a tank at all.

The design was initiated by Carden-Lloyd Ltd, now a subsidiary of Vickers-Armstrongs, and the result was a two-man vehicle with a small turret for a Vickers machine gun on top. The hull was low and flat although power was supplied by a Meadows engine, a six-cylinder unit that delivered more than enough grunt for such a lightweight tank. With a maximum 9mm armour thickness it only weighed between 2-3 tons which gave it a very lively performance on land. It relied on a simple Vickers leaf spring suspension without an idler and a front mounted drive sprocket typical of a Vickers light tank of the time. It was powered in the water by a single marine propeller driven off the engine. The only difference noted was that most of the early tanks seem to have had a prop and an independent rudder while on later examples the prop is enclosed in a cylindrical cowl which acts like a rudder. Only two of these tanks with cowled props were supplied to the British Army under the designations A4E11 and A4E12 while the majority were sold abroad in limited numbers to Holland, Finland and Siam and in bulk to China and Russia, where the Russians subsequently developed it into their T37 and T38 types.



Above: This is a rear view of A4E11, one of the two Light Amphibians tested by the British Army. Note the cowled propeller used for steering which is normally referred to as a Cort nozzle. **Left:** Almost certainly A4E11 viewed from the side. These little tanks weighed less than 3 tons so they went fast on land and floated but they were hardly bullet proof.



L1E3 when new, posed to show its two ducted propellers. The outer hull was really two pontoons, filled with kapok.

SINK OR SWIM

Publicity film shot by Vickers-Armstrongs shows the tank roaring across country, plunging into the River Thames and swimming across, but there was always an issue about whether or not it could get out unaided on the other side. However, the real problem was the perennial one where amphibious tanks are concerned. And it is this. Build the tank light enough to float and it will be so thinly armoured as to be vulnerable to almost any anti-tank weapon. Build it well armoured and it will be too heavy to float. You can't have it both ways unless you build very big tanks with inherent buoyancy. In reality the Vickers tank was just too small to be any use at all as an armoured vehicle which is why it hardly qualifies as a tank.

L1E3

L1E3 was another in the Light Tank category and one wonders why it was built at all. The only reason one can find is a letter dated 1935 from Sir Noel Birch, now a director of Vickers-Armstrongs, to Sir Hugh Elles, who had replaced him as Master General of the Ordnance. Birch wanted Elles to find out about Russian amphibious tanks. Birch told Elles that Vickers had a commercial interest in amphibious tanks although he knew that the British Army did not. Elles, who had commanded the Tank Corps in France in the Great War, considered himself a bit of a tank expert. He believed that there was no future for them, although he may well have been behind the order for the amphibious machine even though in reality his knowledge of tanks was minimal

and always had been. The last thing the British Army needed was another Light Amphibious Tank. But Vickers had a vested interest in amphibians due to its experience in warship design and was convinced that it was something the War Office would want, hence its commitment to L1E3.

As a result one was ordered in 1937

was surrounded by light alloy floats filled with kapok; the alloy was later replaced by steel, which was less prone to damage but you wouldn't know it from looking at it. A propshaft ran from the front drive sprocket on each side to a marine propeller at the back, so the tank had two props, each one housed in a cylindrical steering cowl.

Apparently, the tank performed very well in the water but as usual it had problems coming ashore unless a suitable spot was chosen free of reeds

"It had problems coming ashore unless a suitable spot was chosen free of reeds and deep mud."

and deep mud. The tank was being tested when WW2 began and everyone had more important things to do. However, it survived and was even subjected to more tests once the war was over although it was really useless and out of date by that time, which is probably why it was subsequently donated to the Tank Museum.

and deep mud. The tank was being tested when WW2 began and everyone had more important things to do. However, it survived and was even subjected to more tests once the war was over although it was really useless and out of date by that time, which is probably why it was subsequently donated to the Tank Museum.



Right: L1E3 photographed later and as it is now, with spoked wheels on the front bogie and just the one return roller each side. The anchor on the aft deck is a nice nautical touch, but would you really need it?

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ACCIDENTAL HERO

John Blackman recalls Trooper Joe Ekins who knocked out three Tigers, one of which is widely thought to be that commanded by Germany's most celebrated WW2 tank ace

Ask the average military-vehicle enthusiast for a list of WW2 tank aces – those most celebrated for the number of enemy tanks they destroyed – and, unless said enthusiast is a dyed-in-the-wool tank-warfare buff, it is likely that they would only be able to name a handful. And it is equally likely that SS-Hauptsturmführer Michael Wittmann would be somewhere near the top. As a matter of interest he wasn't actually Germany's top-scoring tank ace. That was Feldwebel Kurt Knispel, who was credited with destroying at least 168 enemy tanks during WW2, almost 30 more than Wittmann. However, clean cut, military careerist Wittmann fitted the requirements of the Nazi propaganda machine and it was he that became a national hero.

Some sections of the media have referred to Wittmann as the 'Black Baron' so drawing a parallel between him and WW1 air ace Manfred von Richthofen, the so-called 'Red Baron'. Admittedly there are similarities between the two, not least in that controversy surrounds the manner in which they met their deaths. Was von Richthofen shot down by Captain Arthur Roy



Right: Trooper Joe Ekins of the 1st Northamptonshire Yeomanry.



While no photos of Ekins's actual tank appear to exist, you can see the Firefly's main distinguishing feature from this image, the long barrel of its 17-pounder gun. The box-like extension to the turret rear accommodated radio equipment for which there was no longer any room in the turret proper.

Brown as claimed by the RAF, or was he fatally wounded by ground fire emanating from one or more of several candidates? Similarly, who fired the round that destroyed Wittmann's Tiger and all in it? And again there are several candidates.

We make no pretence of knowing the truth, but the most generally accepted explanation credits 21 year-old Trooper Ekins of the 1st Northamptonshire Yeomanry (1 NY) with the kill.

DOING HIS BIT

Joseph William Ekins was born on 15 July 1923 at Yelden in Northamptonshire, an area renowned at the time for shoe and boot-making. And that is the industry in which Ekins was employed, coincidentally making army boots, when war broke out in 1939. As the situation worsened and despite being in a reserved occupation, Ekins was determined to 'do his bit' and enlisted in 1940.

During interviews in later life Ekins commented that the he didn't think the training he received prior to going into action was sufficient, saying: "When you got over the other side you realised that not only did you not know what you were doing, the officers didn't know what they were doing and nobody else knew what they were doing."

Further, Ekins estimated that he'd only fired about 20 rounds during his two years of tank training, and when 1 NY received its Sherman Fireflies only four to six weeks before D-Day, there was only the opportunity to fire five 17-pounder rounds before heading for Normandy. Contrast that with the experienced and battle-hardened crews operating the Tigers of 2 Kompanie, SS-Panzer-Abteilung 101, a handful of which were to cross Ekins's line of sight on 8 August 1944 at St Aignan de Cramesnil. They were commanded by Wittmann whose career path could not have been more different to that of Ekins.

"Ekins was determined to 'do his bit' and enlisted in 1940."

WORTHY ADVERSARY

Born into a Bavarian farming community on 22 April 1914, Wittmann joined the Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst (Voluntary Labour Service), a state-sponsored employment organisation, in February 1934 prior to enlisting in the Germany Army in October of the same year. He went on to join the Allgemeine-SS and was subsequently accepted by 17 Kompanie of the élite Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler (LSSAH) in April 1937. Holding the rank of SS-Mann, Wittmann went through driver/crew training on Sd Kfz 222 and Sd Kfz 232 armoured cars and, following promotion



Michael Wittmann, tank ace and national hero, strikes a pose for the German propaganda machine in 1944.

to SS-Sturmmann in November 1937, was with the LSSAH when it entered Austria in March 1938 and then, some eight months later, into the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia.

Wittmann's first taste of active combat came during the campaign in Poland in September 1939 by which time he was an SS-Unterscharführer. Following a spell of training he was transferred to a newly-formed assault gun unit of the LSSAH equipped with the Sturmgeschütz III Ausf A and gained his first combat experience as the commander of a tracked armoured vehicle during Operation Marita, the battle for Greece launched on 6 April 1941. But it was on the Eastern Front where Wittmann's unit was posted to take part in Operation Barbarossa, launched on 22 June 1941, where he was to really make his mark. The tally of 'kills' attributed to Wittmann's StuG III rocketed and resulted in him being awarded the Iron Cross Second and First Class and continuing promotion.

It wasn't until April 1943 that Wittmann took command of the tank with which he is most associated, a

Panzerkampfwagen VI, Sd Kfz 181, Tiger 1. He went on to take part in the Battle of Kursk prior to his unit being utilised as the basis for a new panzer battalion, Schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 101, and being deployed to Ukraine. Wittmann's rise continued unabated – in the month of January 1944 his total 'kills' jumped from 56 to 117 – culminating in the award of the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords (the Oak Leaves being personally presented by Hitler), promotion to the rank of SS-Obersturmführer and being appointed commander of 2 Kompanie, Schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 101.



Relatively few Fireflies still exist in running condition. This example belongs to the Belgian Tank Museum and illustrates the disruptive pattern sometimes painted on the 17-pounder's barrel to disguise its length lest the extremely potent tank be singled out for attention by the enemy. (John Blackman)

NORMAN CONQUESTS

While it was the Eastern Front that enabled Wittmann to build his kill score, it was an action in Normandy that cemented his almost legendary status. As part of the response to the D-Day landings, Wittmann's unit moved west from its then base near Gournay-en-Bray towards Normandy. By the time it arrived in the Bayeux/Villers-Bocage area over the night of 12/13 June only five or six Tigers were still serviceable. On the morning of 13 June 1944 these were positioned just north-east of Villers-Bocage close to the main road to Caen, with Wittmann's command post a mere 150 yards from Hill 213 – a strategically important point on which a column of the 4th County of London Yeomanry (4 CLY), part of the 22nd Armoured Brigade of the 7th Armoured Division, had been instructed to advance.

When alerted to 4 CLY's approach

Wittmann immediately took command of one of his few serviceable Tigers, deciding to attack rather than wait for reinforcements. "I had no time to assemble my company," he said after the event. "Instead I had to act quickly as I had to assume that the enemy had already spotted me and would destroy me where I stood. I set off with one tank and passed the order to the others not to retreat a single step but to hold their ground.

"Driving up to the column I surprised the English as much as they had me. I first knocked out two tanks from the right of the column, then one from the left, then turned about to the left and attacked the armoured troop-carrier battalion in the middle of the armoured regiment. I drove towards the rear half of the column, knocking out every tank that came towards me as I went. The enemy was thrown into total confusion. I then drove straight into the

town of Villers, getting to approximately the centre before I was hit by an anti-tank gun and my tank disabled. Without further ado I fired at and destroyed everything around me that I could reach."

TAKING NO PRISONERS

Around two-dozen (sources differ) British armoured vehicles fell to Wittmann's Tiger on that occasion but his days were numbered. On 8 August 1944, Anglo-Canadian forces launched Operation Totalize with the aim of securing high ground over Falaise. Among the 12th SS Panzer Division



This photo taken by Serge Varin shows the remains of Tiger 007 as it appeared in 1945. Its turret lies upside down next to the hull.



Joe Ekins passed away on 1 February 2012.



Above: Wittmann's unit photographed while moving towards Normandy. (Bundesarchiv, 1011-299-1804-07)



One of a series of publicity photos taken of Untersturmführer Michael Wittmann (left) and his Tiger I Ausf E crew taken in January 1944. The rings on the Tiger's 88mm gun barrel coincidentally, or perhaps not, mark 88 kills.

units opposing the attack were a handful of Tigers from 2 Kompanie, SS-Panzer-Abteilung 101, including turret number 007 commanded by Wittmann.

As the Tigers positioned they were observed by the four Shermans of 3 Troop, A Squadron, 1 NY, which was deployed in an orchard at the westernmost end of 1 NY's defensive position. Three of the troop's M4s – number 9 commanded by the troop leader Lieutenant James, plus numbers 10 and 11 – were standard 75mm-armed types, while the fourth, number 12 commanded by Sergeant Gordon and with Trooper Ekins in the gunner's seat, was a Sherman VC Firefly. While the latter's armour protection was no better than that of any other Sherman, it at least had a 17-pounder gun capable of knocking out the German Tiger at a better than suicidal range.

When interviewed on behalf of the Tank Museum about the occasion, Ekins said that three Tigers were spotted moving in line some distance apart across 3 Troop's front at a range of about 1200 yards. "We waited until they were about 800 yards," he reported. "My tank commander pulled us out of the orchard – you had to move out to fire – and said target the rear one. I fired two shots at him and hit him, and he went on fire."

Sergeant Gordon quickly directed his Firefly back under cover and, as he did, Ekins could see the turret on the second Tiger start to traverse in their direction. "They fired at us, two or three shots. Then we pulled out again and I fired at the second tank and hit him with my first shot. He went up in an explosion, so obviously we'd hit the ammunition or something.

By this time, the first tank of the three had realised what was going on and was starting to mill around looking for cover. He turned a bit towards us but we pulled out and fired two shots at him and hit him as well. He went up and I thought, thank God, it's not going to be us today."

DO OR DIE

Ekins admits that he and the rest of the crew were shaking with relief. They'd been told it took five Shermans to destroy one Tiger and knew that the 75mm gun on the troop's other M4s was all but useless against the German tank at 800 yards. The single Firefly was effectively on its own. As Ekins later put it: "It was a case of get them before they get you. I think it was fairly automatic. You had to think, you had to aim off because they were moving – and that was largely guess work. And you had to think about traversing the turret and pressing the trigger with your foot. Considering that I'd been in (the Army) for three years, I hadn't fired very many rounds, so I think I must have had a bit of natural ability."

What Ekins didn't mention in his account and what must have increased stress levels somewhat is that return fire from the second Tiger caused the flap on the Firefly's commander's cupola to fall on Sergeant Gordon's head. Badly dazed, Gordon climbed out of the turret and was immediately wounded by shrapnel from German mortar and artillery fire. All that Ekins knew at that moment was that his Firefly had no commander yet faced two Tigers.

However, Troop Commander Lieutenant James immediately left his Sherman and ran across to the Firefly to take over, and it was he that directed the tank into position

and ordered Ekins to engage the second Tiger. As we've already mentioned, this particular Tiger was rent asunder by an enormous explosion which blew the turret off. To confuse the issue somewhat, it has been reported that there were actually four Tigers in the vicinity, not three. However, only one had its turret blown off and that was 007, commanded by the enemy's most celebrated tank ace, Michael Wittmann.

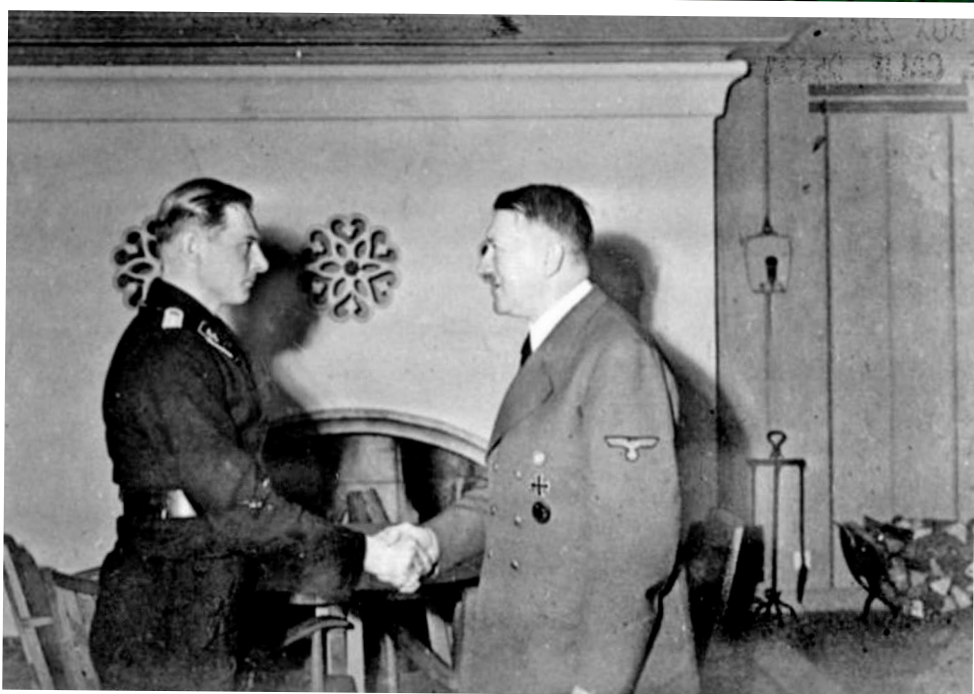
HIT PARADE

In the space of some 12 minutes, Ekins had despatched three Tigers with just five rounds. A little later on the same day, he destroyed what was thought to be a Panzer IV at a distance of about 1200 yards before his good fortune ran out and the Firefly was hit, forcing its crew to bail out. "We ran like hell," said an unapologetic Ekins.

You might think that having distinguished himself in no small way, Ekins would have been given the gunner's seat in another Firefly as soon as possible. But no; when reassigned to another tank he was assigned the job of radio operator and never fired another round. Ekins was invalided out of the Army with diphtheria in 1945 and returned to the shoe industry. He passed away on 1 February 2012.

So there we have a simple account of what was a confusing action in that other Allied units were close by which, it has since been suggested, might also have been responsible for

despatching Wittmann. In particular, A Squadron of The Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment, 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade, was positioned in the grounds of a chateau at Gaumesnil, not far from Joe Ekins. Its



Wittmann meeting Adolf Hitler. (Bundesarchiv, 146-1989-099-15)

Fireflys were also said to have engaged several Tigers. There is also the suggestion that Wittmann's Tiger may have been destroyed by a rocket fired from a Typhoon

almost certainly never know with absolute certainty what happened and, in a sense, it doesn't matter. Joe Ekins was by all accounts a self-effacing man

with little enthusiasm for the authoritarian military life. He left his comfortable home, family and job to fight for his country and did the very best

he could. In that regard he was no different to the thousands of others who likewise felt compelled to fight for their country's freedom. They were and will forever remain unremarkable heroes.

"It was a case of get them before they get you."

of the RAF Second Tactical Air Force.

Nevertheless, that Joe Ekins was responsible is the most widely accepted version of events, not that he sought (or received) any glory as a result. We will



Two Cromwells knocked out during the battle at Villers-Bocage. (Bundersarchiv)

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SIBERIA'S MILITARY GOLD MINE

James Kinnear and Aleksandr Koshavtsev visit one of Russia's impressive yet mostly undiscovered military collections

In recent years, as the Russian Federation has grown in financial strength and major companies and indeed individuals have become increasingly wealthy with serious money to spend on military interests, there has arisen around the country a not insignificant number of new military museums.

The new collections, which have sprung up in the last ten years or so, are significant for two reasons. Firstly, on display are a large number of military vehicles and other exhibits in settings, which are second to none in terms of buildings, lighting and display content. Secondly, and quite fascinating from a technical point of view, some of the vehicles and exhibits on display are entirely unique, having been rescued from institutes and strategic reserve storage, or rebuilt from parts recovered deep in the forests of European Russia on which territory WW2 was fought.



M-72 motorcycle variants, solo, combination and mortar carrier.



Above: The LuAZ-967M (TPK) amphibious battlefield evacuation vehicle.
Above right: The museum has examples of the original Ford GPA amphibian and the Soviet MAV later developed from the American original, as seen here.



Above: A D-8 (Dyrenkov-8) armoured car.



Above: A GAZ-AAA, in the livery of the original Moscow-Karakum-Moscow desert proving trials conducted in the very early 1930s.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

One such museum, containing one of the largest military vehicle collections in the country, is in Verkhnyaya Pyshma, Siberia, today a northern suburb of Ekaterinburg, some 1800km east of Moscow and thereby far from the regular trail trodden by most Western tourists. Despite (actually because of – as will become clear) the slightly obscure location, the collection has been put together with meticulous detail and shedloads of investment and many of the descriptions on the immaculately restored vehicles are in English as well as Russian for the benefit of

the occasional Western tourist for whom travel in Siberia is a consideration (there are even Irish pubs there now, so no excuses).

The attraction started off as a row of tanks displayed alongside Ulitsa Lenina (Lenin Street), but has gradually been expanded into a major museum collection with a purpose built multi-level main building and a huge external display area. Many of the tanks and military vehicles on display are standard Soviet military fare. Many, however, are extremely rare, and one can only wonder where they have been stored in all the intervening years. In some cases where no

original has survived, tanks have been rebuilt from scratch using heavy gauge steel plate to effectively replicate the original. The facility for this happens to be located close to the museum complex. Considering the high level of accuracy with which some of the tanks and armoured vehicles have been rebuilt, or built from scratch, one can also assume that access to original production drawings has not been a concern for the restorers.

NO COINCIDENCE

The location of the Technical Museum in a small village in Siberia is not, as the Russians



Above: A BA-27 armoured car, or a very good reproduction. The BA-27 was the Soviet Union's first series production armoured car, based on the AMO F-15 truck. Left: One of the curiosities of seeing Soviet light and medium armoured cars parked up together is that the latter are not as large compared to the former as expected from looking at wartime photographs.



The FAI armoured car was based on the GAZ-A chassis. The colour scheme is from military manoeuvres conducted in the mid-1930s.




Above: The BA-64B armoured car was built at the Gorky Avtomobil Zavod. Early BA-64s were based on the GAZ-64 chassis, later BA-64B vehicles on the GAZ-67 chassis.

say, 'sluchaina' (not just by accident). In 1938 a foundry and metallurgical plant was established in the city of Sverdlovsk (today Ekaterinburg), just over the Ural Mountains that separate European Russia from Siberia. As war clouds gathered, the plant moved over to military production, and during the war produced T-34 hull and turret sets for local assembly, and complete self propelled guns based on the T-34 chassis, including the SU-122, the SU-85 and the SU-100. The plant is best known as Uralmash – The Ural Machinery Plant, using a typical Russian euphemism to describe the plant as a general manufacturing plant rather than an

armoured vehicle production facility. In the post-war era the plant continued to develop self-propelled guns, but post-war production concentrated primarily on the building of

a purpose built three-storey concrete structure, houses the more vulnerable and rarer softskin exhibits together with a collection of real and reproduction aircraft suspended on strops from the roof.

For many years the number of tanks and military vehicles located in military museums in the Russian Federation to which public access

was allowed was strictly limited. However, in the last decade the number of such specialist military museums has increased exponentially with collections and restoration budgets that can only be dreamed of in most Western countries. 

“Where no original has survived, tanks have been rebuilt from scratch using heavy gauge steel plate to effectively replicate the original.”

oilfield equipment such as drilling rigs.

The Uralmash plant remains very much active and the museum is very much related to the massive industrial complex located nearby, where some of the exhibits were originally built. The main museum building,



Above: A perfectly restored Dodge 3/4-ton truck. Right: A reproduction of the very rare T-34-57, a handful of which served in the defence of Moscow in the autumn of 1941.



Above: A T-34 M-1941 with additional 'ekrani' armour plating on the hull and turret. Left: The museum has several T-34s in its collection, including this welded turret T-34 M-1941 complete with battle scars.



Above: An early welded turret KV-1 heavy tank. The tracks have suffered considerable small calibre shell damage. **Right:** A 2S7 203mm self-propelled gun flanked by MiG-25 and MiG-21 aircraft.



Above: Many of the museum's exhibits have battle and or firing range scars. **Left:** An S-65 artillery tractor and 152mm M-1937 (ML-20) combination.

Below: This KV has been rebuilt as a KV-2, with steel plate of a gauge that only a museum with a former armour plant nearby could consider replicating.



Above: Self propelled rocket artillery includes this 9P117, better known in the West as the Scud. **Left:** The 2P24 launch vehicle for the Krug SAM system.

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DIAMOND IN

Tim Gosling profiles Cadillac's contribution to the Great War effort



Formed in 1902, Cadillac is the second oldest surviving American car marque (after Buick) and was spawned out of the remains of the Henry Ford Motor Company which, after just five months of operation, closed down following a dispute between Ford and his financial backers. Ford started up a new company (the Ford Motor Company) and the previous financial backers called in Henry Leland to value the plant and equipment at the old enterprise prior to its sale. Leland managed to persuade the backers to reopen the factory under the name of Cadillac Automobile Manufacturer (named after the French founder of Detroit, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac) and the firm started producing cars in 1902.

Cadillac went from strength to strength and soon developed a reputation for high quality, well made vehicles – a reputation which it has maintained to this day. What is less well known is Cadillac's involvement in the Great War.

The first time that the US military experimented with a Cadillac was in 1915 when a Colonel Davidson built an armoured machine gun car on a Cadillac chassis, making it the first US Army armoured car. This machine, along with seven other specialised military vehicles also built on Cadillac chassis, was driven from Chicago to the Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. The journey took 34 days and was undertaken with the objective of showing the benefits of military motorisation.

TYPE 57 CADILLAC

The most notable thing about the Type 51 introduced in 1914 was its engine. This 90 degree L head V8 (which had been designed by the Glasgow born engineer D McCall-White) generated 31hp, the first time such an engine had been fitted to a mass produced car. In August 1916 Cadillac introduced the Type 55 which was now offered with a range of body styles including an ambulance, police car and hearse. Apart from having a slightly different radiator, bonnet and cowl the Type 57 which came the following year was virtually indistinguishable from the Type 55. The engine



The 31hp engine would allow the car to travel at up to 80mph (128km/h), it seems surprising that most photos show them with the windscreen open which must have been rather breezy.

THE ROUGH



Above: Manufactured for the Guatemala police is this Type 55 Cadillac. Fitted to the scuttle of the car is an M1895 Colt-Browning machine gun and a searchlight. (Photo: US Library of Congress). **Left:** The two stars in the window signify that this Cadillac limousine is the property of a general. The passenger is fully enclosed against the weather but the driver has not been forgotten as he does have half side screens made from canvas.



The officers of this medical detachment have been assigned a Type 57 Cadillac. It looks like the driver of the Dodge standing to the left is demonstrating his preference by leaning against the Cadillac (Photo: US National Archives).

was still a V8 with four cast iron blocks on an aluminium crankcase, but it now had detachable heads and ultra-lightweight pistons. The transmission, however, was of a completely different design and could not be interchanged with earlier models. In 1918 the design changed slightly when the number of louvres on the bonnet increased from nine to 25, to assist with cooling.

POSH PEOPLE CARRIER

On 6 April 1917 the US declared war on Germany and a massive programme of armament commenced. One of the many objectives within this programme was to select a seven seat staff car. A trial was arranged in the Texas town of Marfa and a Cadillac along with several other vehicles were put through a 2000-mile test in

exceptionally hot and inhospitable conditions. The Cadillac then undertook a second test run, this time totalling 5000 miles, the driver being accompanied by a Captain FL Case while a character named George Gaston represented the Cadillac Company. The Cadillac performed exceptionally well achieving an average of 12mpg and requiring only a replacement fan spring. The Army was duly impressed and placed an immediate order for the car without any modifications. By November 1918 contracts for the purchase of 1043 limousines and 2970 convertible touring cars had been placed. The limousine was fitted with a folding desk, leather seats (instead of velvet) and canvas curtains instead of silk. Apart from these minor alterations and being painted an olive drab colour it was indistinguishable from those available on the home market. Just

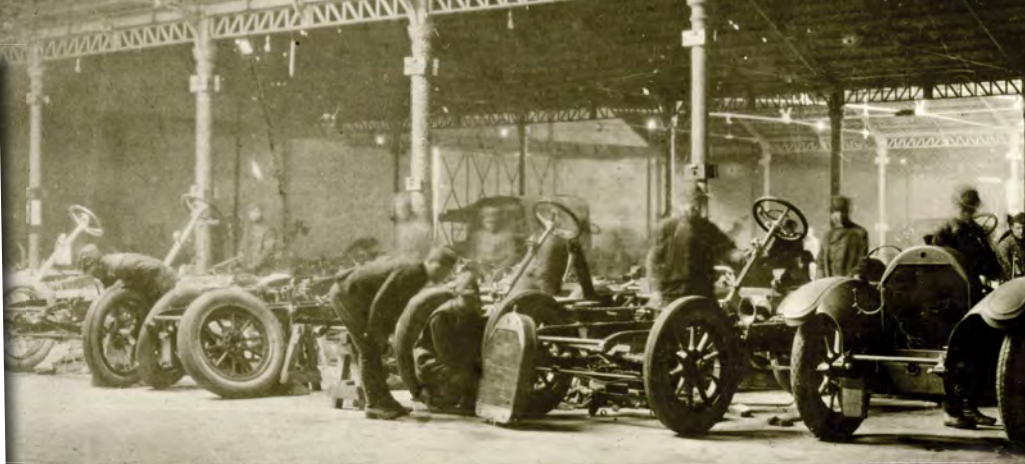
222 limousines and 1734 convertibles were delivered to the US Army by November 1918 of which a total of 1503 arrived in France by the end of the war. The balance of the order remained on US soil where they undertook work at various military posts.

In 1919 Cadillac published a small booklet entitled *Cadillac Participation in the World War* which listed the company's activities. Towards the end of the booklet it republished letters that had been sent to Cadillac by its uniformed users during the war. As you would expect the letters are very patriotic and full of high praise for the Cadillac, stating that they never broke down, were very reliable and started first time even when full of shrapnel holes. Such claims can't be proved but between 1918 and 1919 Cadillac manufactured 45,146 cars, a significant increase from the 13,002 sold

Below: The officers of Motor Park 21 at Rimaucourt in France have a variety of motor vehicles to play with. Although they are covered in mud the two Cadillacs have a supreme elegance that the Dodge (left) seems to lack. (Photo: US National Archives).



Above: The Canadian Army purchased 30 Cadillacs. This one under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Johnson was said to be the first Allied vehicle to cross the Rhine into Germany (although Vauxhall claimed that one of its D Type cars also performed the same deed).



Above left: The Cadillac performed sterling service at home as well as overseas. Here a Type 57 awaits a driver at a military post in Washington DC. The bolts visible on the rim of the front wheels allow the tyre which is fixed to a demountable rim to be quickly changed. (Photo: US National Archives). **Above right:** At a motor repair shop in France a line of Cadillacs are receiving a complete ground up rebuild. (Photo: US National Archives).

between 1914 and 1915 before America had joined the war. Whatever the truth is about its reliability it seems that many a returning Doughboy came back with the firm intention of buying themselves a Cadillac when they got home.

SHINING A LIGHT

Prior to 1914 the only searchlights used by the US Army were in fixed locations at coastal defence batteries. With the need to combat the destructive power of aeroplanes becoming more vital the US Army experimented with mobile searchlights and in April 1917 ordered 20 searchlights which had a 60in diameter. Five months later an additional order was made for over 1000 searchlights. The 60in searchlight was designed to be towed on a small trailer but experiments were undertaken as to whether they could be motorised. Cadillac came to the rescue with an adapted 145in car chassis converted into a light truck, with a generator mounted between the chassis rails and in front of the back axle. The searchlight remained upon its trailer but the trailer was now wheeled up ramps into the back of the Cadillac, the engine of which would provide the power to illuminate it.

2.5 TON TRACTOR


The US Army Ordnance Corps has always been very forward thinking in developing new equipment – and motor vehicles were no exception. Having already established

a programme of motorisation in order to replace horses for the hauling of guns and ammunition, the Ordnance Corps took the next step and experimented with six types of caterpillar tracked self-propelled guns. The guns varied in size from 8in down to 3in with the tractors being built by familiar companies such as Holt and Federal or being built in-house by the Rock Island Arsenal. The early development of the US self-propelled gun (or Gun Motor Carriage to give it its proper name) is a fascinating subject, but Cadillac was only involved in supplying the power train (the V8 70hp engine, transmission and clutch) which were fitted into the 2.5 ton tractor, some of which were then fitted with a 75mm or 3in gun. The engine had been a standard design but was modified by the oil pan now having two sumps so as to ensure that lack of lubrication did not become a problem on some of the steeper slopes. Due to the threat of the constant vibration damaging the magneto this was replaced with a generator and battery ignition.

This machine had been designed in late 1918, almost too late to arrive before the war's end. Of the 5586 that were ordered just 10 were delivered before the end of hostilities, only two of which actually arrived in Europe. The gun added a further two tons to the tractor's weight and being just over 7ft tall and under 5ft wide it does give the impression that it was unstable. Production continued after the war until a total of 3786 had been

built but they were phased out by 1922 with poor reliability giving a total of just four years in service.

OTHER WAR WORK.

Cadillac's involvement in the Great War wasn't limited to vehicles. The firm was also contracted to build the 27-litre V12 aero Liberty engine designed by Packard. However, William Durant, the owner of General Motors, was a pacifist and did not want Cadillac to be associated with the building of war material. Henry Leland promptly resigned from Cadillac setting up the Lincoln Motor Company to build the engine, but Durant then back tracked and agreed that Cadillac could also build the engine. By the end of the war, both companies along with Buick, Ford, Packard and Marmon had built 13,574 of these engines. Durant's pacifism seems to have been overcome with the demand for the supply of military equipment. Cadillac went on to build testing equipment, 350,000 mortar shell cases, aeroplane parts for the US Army, and balloon winches for the British War Department. Finally, 2693 employees of Cadillac (both in the factory and within the sales and distribution network) left their jobs to fight in the services of which 33 were known to have lost their lives. The name of Cadillac was now associated with its involvement in supporting the war effort, a reputation for quality that would be enhanced even further during WW2 by its aircraft engines and the M24 Chafee tank. 



The 'For Official Use Only' markings (as well as the shiny paint) demonstrate that this Cadillac was photographed after 1918. The body style is quite unusual in as much as the driving position is fully enclosed. (Photo: US National Archives).



With the side screens folded up you can see how the searchlight fitted into the back of the Cadillac. The glass mirror would easily have been susceptible to damage and great effort has been taken to secure the searchlight into place. (Photo: US National Archives).



Above: Photographed in June 1919 at Bourg in France are at least 95 surplus Cadillacs awaiting disposal. The Cadillac closest to the camera has the later style bonnet with 25 louvres while the ones behind have only nine. (Photo: US National Archives). Above right: Photographed during the American dash to recapture the town of Chateau Thierry it appears that the driver has hastily packed the back of the Cadillac with all of his worldly possessions. (Photo: US National Archives). Below right: A report produced by the Ordnance Corps said that the driver and passenger can "ride in comfort without the aid of straps to hold them in place." The V8 engine, transmission and clutch are the same as used in the car, but with a different oiling system, carburettor and ignition to cope with the steep slopes it was designed to climb. (Photo: US National Archives).



Above: The searchlight was powered by the engine of the Cadillac and the long power cable located on the drum by the rear wheel shows how far away from the Cadillac the searchlight could be located in case it came under fire. (Photo: US National Archives).



Below: The stabilisers on the back of the tractor have been deployed to prevent the tractor flipping over when fired. It does appear that the man standing to the rear has had a very near miss with the recoil. (Photo: US National Archives).



Above: During testing one of the 2.5 ton tractors was made to climb such a steep slope that it tumbled over backwards. I don't know if this photo is of that incident just before it happened, but the tractor certainly does not look very stable. (Photo: US National Archives).

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MUD, SWEAT AND GEARS

Alain Henry de Frahan, who led two expeditions with a WW2 Jeep on the Stilwell Road, recounts what the American 1880th Engineer Aviation Battalion achieved



Caterpillar D8 of Company C at work on the Ledo Road near Loglai, in the Patkai range (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

Due to the extreme difficulties faced by the engineers tasked to build a road through the jungles, rivers, swamps and mountains of India, Burma and China, the story and illustration of their exploits is of a particular interest for collectors of military vehicles.

In spite of its name, the unit spent the majority of its time building the Stilwell Road rather than working on USAAF airfields. As a

reminder the Stilwell Road is formed by the Ledo Road, built in 1943-45 by the US Engineers from Ledo (Assam, NE India) to Mu

Se (Burma-China border), and the Chinese part of the Old Burma Road, built in 1937 by the British and the Chinese between Lashio (end of the Rangoon-Lashio railway) and Kunming (Yunnan, S-W China) to supply Chiang Kai-shek's army. >>>



Coolies recruited from tea gardens fill a million sandbags at the Harvey pit for the airport and the Makum Junction Road (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



AVIATION ENGINEERS

Illustration from the book published by the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above: Gravel laid down by a GMC CCKW 353 dump truck (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).
Top: Shooting the Ledo airstrip with asphalt was a sordid task under the boiling rays of the sun (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).
Top right: One of the advertisements published by Caterpillar during the war to pay homage to the Ledo Road builders, referring to its HQ in Peoria, Illinois (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

Above: Heavy convoy with M1 Heavy Wrecker, White 666 prime movers, Dodges and Jeeps on the Ledo Road while under construction (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

FROM USA TO BURMA

The 1880th Engineer Aviation Battalion was created on 1 March 1943 at Geiger Field, Spokane, Washington State. The unit started modestly: 37 enlisted men and three officers, but quickly grew to reach the battalion level of 762 trained specialists. On 26 March 1944 the Battalion left Geiger Field by the East Coast and crossed the Atlantic, entered the Mediterranean where it stopped at Oran (Algeria, then under control of the Free French Forces), Naples (Italy), Port Said (Egypt), passed through the Suez Canal, and stopped in Aden (Yemen). Their journey ended

at Bombay on the western coast of India on 12 May 1944. However, it was far from the assigned destination and the battalion started a long, slow and difficult journey by railway to Calcutta, on the eastern coast of India, and

and C) was sent to the Margherita-Ledo area, while the other was sent to Myitkyina, in Northern Burma, an area inhabited by the Kachins, an ethnic group that supplied thousands of men to Detachment 101 of the OSS, the precursor of the CIA.

The first job of the Ledo-based group was to maintain

“All available men, including administrative personnel, were rushed to the road, day and night, to keep it open.”

finally to the Assam province, in the far north east of India.

WORK BEGINS IN BURMA

The Battalion received its orders from the Base Headquarters in Calcutta on 29 May 1944. A part of the unit (companies A, B

a 40-mile section of the Ledo Road, carry out the enlargement and maintenance of the Ledo airfield as well as of numerous access roads, and undertake about 20 construction projects of various types. Due to the monsoon season, most culverts had been washed out. All available men, including



Above: Caterpillar D7 bogged down at mile point 46. Two bulldozers will be necessary to get it out of the deep mud (US NARA). **Left:** A Caterpillar D4 is unloaded from a GMC CCKW 353 (US NARA).



Above: Three Caterpillar D7s at work at mile point 284 (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion). Right: International TD towing a GMC on the Ledo Road (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above: A Caterpillar D7 of Co A, 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion, is coming to the rescue of a Jeep bogged down between Makum Junction and Digboi (US NARA).



Above: International TD 18 pulling a scraper at work between Makum Junction and Digboi, Assam (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

administrative personnel, were rushed to the road, day and night, to keep it open and the three companies were sometimes relocated to react in emergency to various needs. Native local labourers were hired from the Indian Tea Association and handpicked tons of gravel that were freighted to the worst spots. Logs, sandbags, bamboo and the like were used to keep the road from sinking out of sight.

By mid-July 1944, the road was reopened to traffic and in September that year, thanks to C Company, more of the Ledo Road had been completed.

During the same period, mud swamped the Ledo airfield, challenging the engineers' ingenuity. So, A and B companies were moved to help solve the nightmare but also enlarge and improve the entire airfield. By November Ledo had become a very busy place with transport, liaison and fighter aircraft buzzing all around.

With the Myitkyina sector needing various engineering works, a survey party of the battalion left in September 1944 to determine where to construct an exceptionally long floating bridge across the wide Irrawaddy River.

In late October 1944, the rest of the 1880th Battalion moved into Burma.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN...

On October 28, B Company drove to the village of Warazup (mile point 189) near a landing strip used mainly by the American 1st Air Commando Group commanded by Colonel Philip Cochran. The other companies drove further with each tasked to build, repair, and enlarge road sections, including innumerable

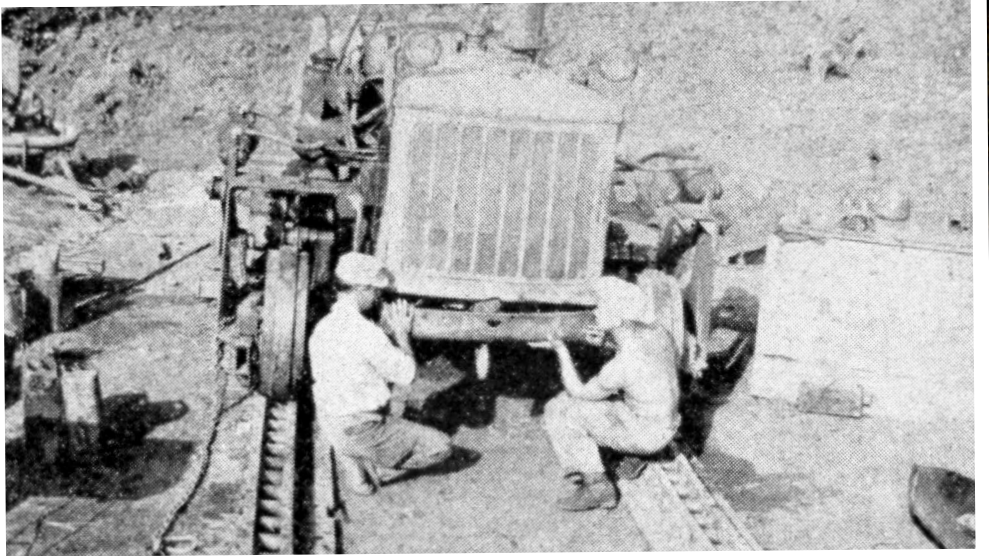
culverts, as well as build some causeways and bridges. Driving heavy equipment on such muddy soil was an exhausting challenge: Ward LaFrance and Kenworth wreckers, White 666 and Corbitt 50SD6 prime movers towing trailers loaded with graders, Caterpillar D4 or D7 bulldozers were not toys for green horns!



Right: GMC CCKW 353 bogged down on the Ledo Road turned into a quagmire (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above: Caterpillar D8 sunk in the mud (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion). Right: Mechanics work continuously to repair equipment; here an International TD 18 (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



The burning sun and a thin dust of the dry season started to replace the rain and mud of the wet season. Everywhere along the road the local people marveled at the modern American equipment and labour saving devices that enabled them to build the road with such speed.

The engineers hacked their way through marshes and jungle, re-aligned the snaky pre-existing trail if any, moved thousands of

cubic yards of dirt, built timber trestles and Bailey bridges, and laid thousands of feet of steel culvert.

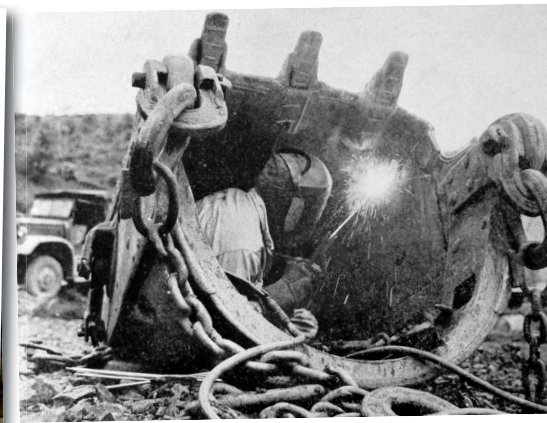
EN ROUTE TO CHINA

In June 1945, the Battalion started to leave Burma for China. A 600-vehicle convoy wound its way along the Ledo Road and then the 'old' Burma Road. This was a very impressive sight. The journey took several

weeks to reach the Yunnan and Kweichow provinces, their newly assigned operational areas. With the exception of a few mechanics, cooks and night guards, virtually every man of the Battalion, including medics and clerks, became a driver or heavy equipment operator. The heavy equipment convoy needed a month to cover the distance lighter vehicles did in two weeks. The various hairpin bends in the mountainous Bhamo-Namkham stretch



Right: Caterpillar D4 of the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion at work near Myitkyina (US NARA). Below: Caterpillar D4 of Co A clearing mud near Myitkyina (US NARA).



Above: Repair work included welding on shovels (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion). Left: A Caterpillar D7 of 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion, flown in pieces to Myitkyina by Curtiss C-46 Commandos is being reassembled (US NARA).





Above: A Diamond T 972 tipper and a GMC CCKW 353 combine their power to manoeuvre a trailer loaded with a grader near Bhamo, an often exhausting skill imposed on the drivers (US NARA).



Above: A Diamond T 972 that slid off the road is being recovered by a Ward LaFrance or Kenworth M1 and a Diamond T 969 wrecker (US NARA).



Above: Convoy of the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion en-route to China. Notice the twin-wheels on the Ben-Hur 1-ton trailers (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above: A Dodge WC-53 Carryall is crossing the splendid suspension bridge over the Salween River, followed by a Jeep and a GMC (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

proved a nightmare to negotiate. Some trailers loaded with bulldozers slipped off the side of the road, imposing considerable work with other bulldozers and heavy trucks tasked to recover them. Consequently, a Caterpillar D7 was instructed to drive in front of the convoy to widen the track and enable the following vehicles to pass.

After Namkham, the flat countryside made it easier for the convoy to progress. The more hilly Mu Se-Mong Yu area (Burma-China border) marked the junction between the Ledo Road and the old Burma Road at MP (mile point) 740, before the Chinese village of Wanting.

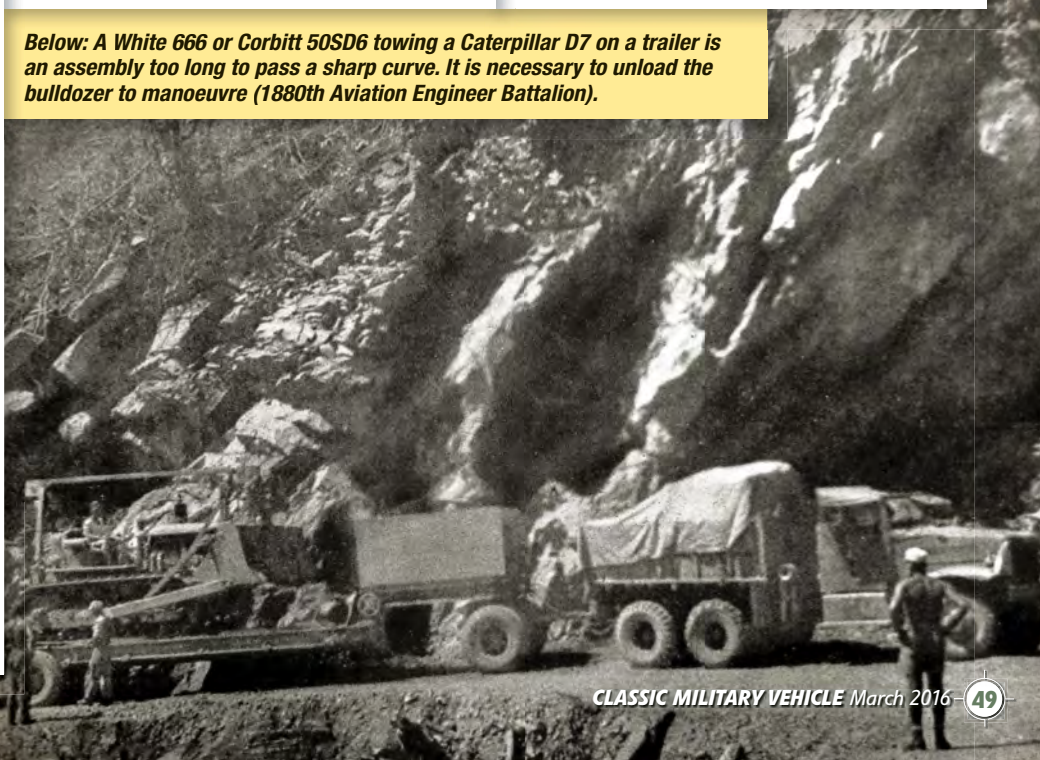
After their arrival, a section of the group was flown back to Burma to bring another 100 GMCs to China.

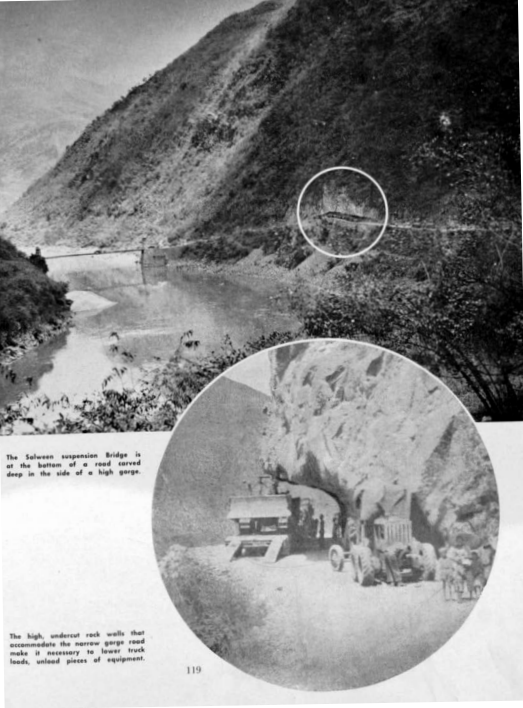
The Salween River gorge, however impressive, did not put the drivers in serious trouble. But the splendid suspension bridge recently rebuilt by the engineers was cause for concern: its theoretical 10-ton capacity was questioned by the drivers of the heavy convoy. As a precaution, the bulldozers and graders were unloaded and drove across first. Even the heavy trailers were pulled empty by GMCs instead of their usual Corbitt or White 6x6 prime movers. The power

shovels were taken across in two parts: the crawler assembly on one trailer, the cab and engine assembly on another, both being reassembled and reloaded on the other end of the bridge.

Another serious difficulty was caused by the necessity of passing underneath a low-ceiling section bored through the rock. That day the heavy convoy completed only five miles. >>>

Below: A White 666 or Corbitt 50SD6 towing a Caterpillar D7 on a trailer is an assembly too long to pass a sharp curve. It is necessary to unload the bulldozer to manoeuvre (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).





The Salween suspension bridge is at the bottom of a road carved deep in the side of a high gorge.

The high, undercut rock walls that accommodate the narrow gauge road make it necessary to lower truck loads, instead pieces of equipment.

119



Above and left: Passing underneath a low-ceiling passage bored through the rock demanded the unloading of each equipment from their trailers (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).

Several incidents and accidents, sometimes spectacular, occurred but thankfully none of them caused any fatalities.

All the convoys stopped in Paoshan, before the Mekong River and when they arrived the ancient walled city was congested with Chinese refugees and American troops.

On 10 June 1945, the advance party and the four company units reached Kunming, the end of the Stilwell Road (and of the old Burma Road).

A fundamental reorganisation of the chain of command of the Service of Supply (SOS) forces in China was implemented and the theatre of operation was divided into several sections, with a base section (BS) commander in charge of all activities in each section.

The 1880th Engineer Aviation Battalion was assigned to BS 2 covering an area east of Kunming, near Nanning where they had 100 miles of road to maintain, widen and improve, a colossal task for which Chinese coolies were hired in assistance, and two Chinese engineer regiments assigned as reinforcement.

BEWARE HITCH-HIKERS!

On the narrow, sharply winding and dusty roads, the American drivers feared the Chinese drivers who were convinced that their half of the road was the middle half and did not hesitate to back up their conviction with a sub machine gun. That was when they were not causing spectacular accidents in which Chinese drivers rolled off the road and completely demolished their trucks.

squads. On top of that, the rainy season started, making the work even more difficult and sometimes dangerous.

Following a revision of the base section boundaries in mid-July 1945, the battalion was reassigned to BS 3 and lost the assistance of the two Chinese engineer regiments. From the unit's diary, it appears that, since the battalion left Burma and until V-J-Day (15 August 1945), it would have

spent three quarters of its time in movements and camp setting, and only one quarter in actual work on the road.

After the Japanese surrender (15 August 1945, signed on 2 September aboard USS Missouri), discussions with the Chinese government started about the transfer of the road maintenance to the Chinese engineers. Hence, by 26 September the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion was declared surplus to the China theatre of operation (CBI had been previously split into China and Burma-India).

“Some trailers loaded with bulldozers slipped off the side of the road...”

Many Chinese soldiers found it easy to hitchhike on the US trucks. Undisciplined and trigger-happy ones waved guns instead of thumbs and did not hesitate to fire when American drivers refused to stop. Luckily, no engineers were hit, and the Chinese gained a reputation as being poor shots.

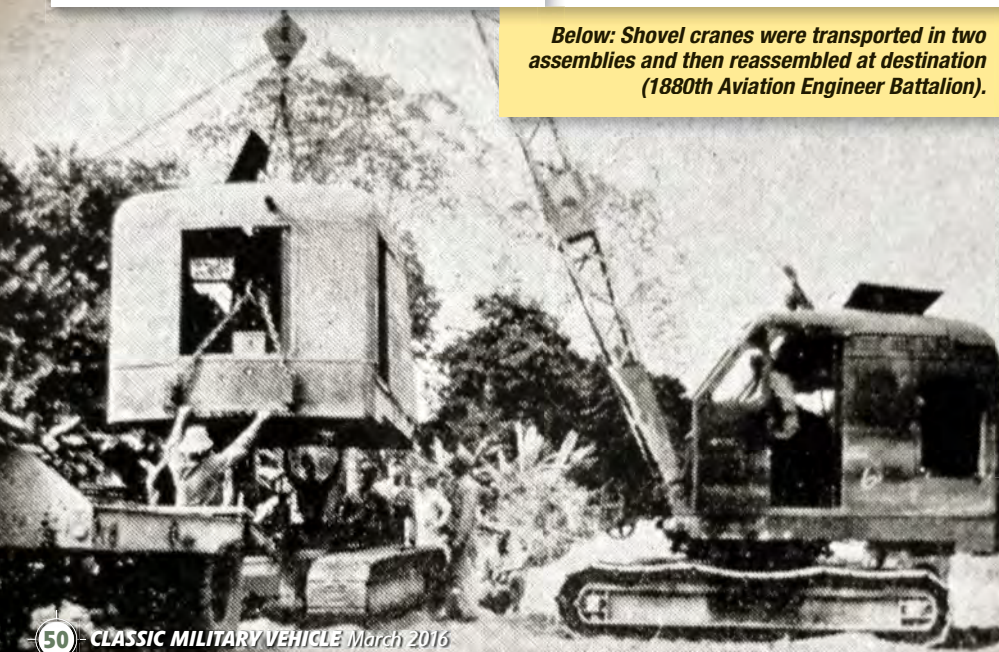
LAST OPERATIONS

The workload on the 100-mile stretch was such that the battalion's force was stretched to the limit. Companies were broken down into platoons and platoons into small working

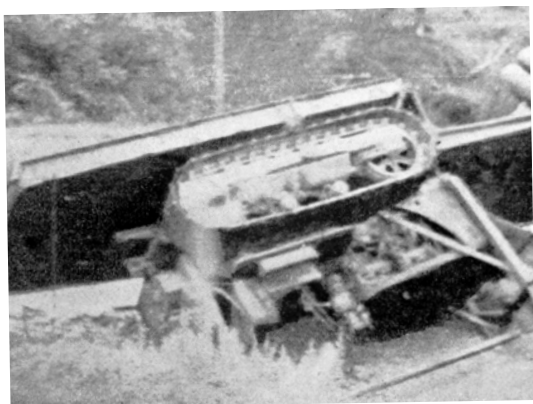
BACK TO AMERICA

On 30 September 1945 the battalion started to move toward Chanyi, 100 miles east of

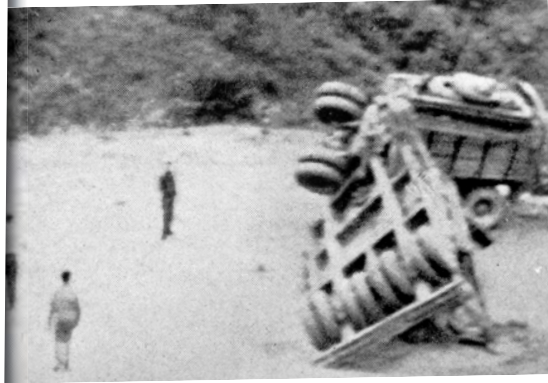
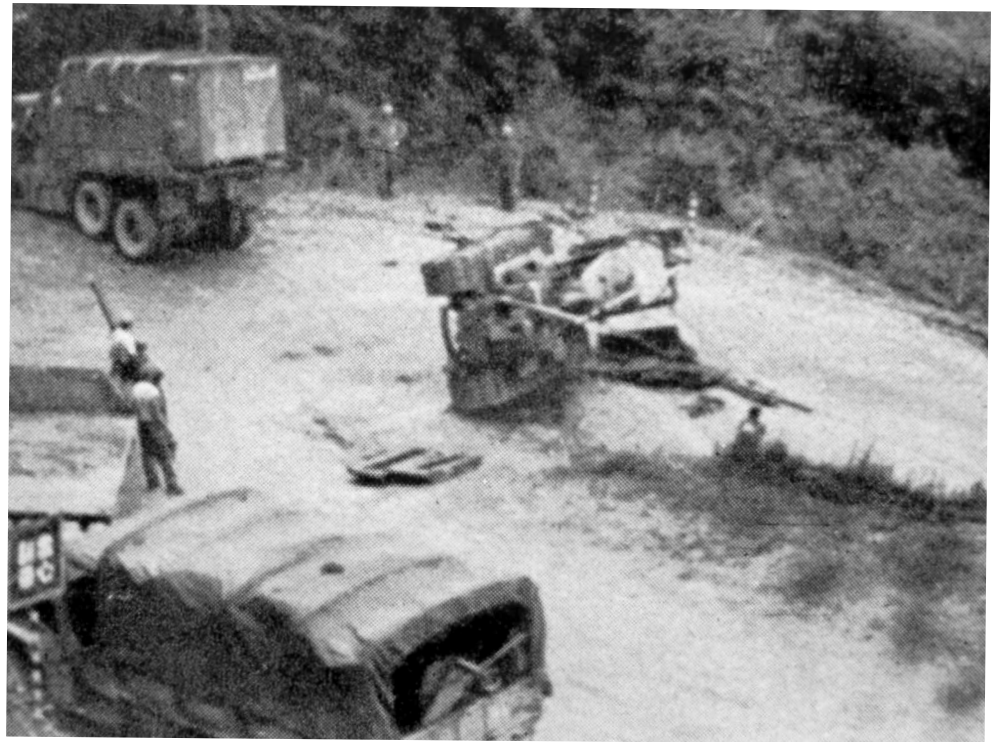
Below: Shovel cranes were transported in two assemblies and then reassembled at destination (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above and right: A GMC demolished by its Chinese driver is being recovered by the Americans using the winches of their Studebaker US6-U3 and GMC CCKW 353 (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



Above, right, below and below right: Example of an accident that occurred sometimes, here near Yang-Pi, China. A Caterpillar D4 has been tipped off on a sharp curve (1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion).



delays, it was trucked to the port of Calcutta and boarded USS Marine Panther which accommodated 2513 troops under the care of the Army Transport Service.

The boat reached Ceylon on 21 November, sailed on to the Red Sea and Suez Canal, Gibraltar and the Atlantic, finally docking at New York on 19 December 1945. This put an end to the 33-month existence of the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion.

Source: Situation CBI, The Story of the 1880th Aviation Engineer Battalion in World War II, March 1943-December 1945. Produced by the Battalion (no date). Pictures from the official Battalion book and US NARA, collection of Alain Henry de Frahan.

Kunming. After numerous inspections of personnel records and US Army property accountability, it then moved to Luliang air base, 60 miles south of Changyi. On 12 October the first planeload of the battalion

boarded Douglas C-54 Skymasters. Two days later the entire outfit had been ferried over the 1000 miles to Barrackpore air base, near Calcutta. On 16 November, after new inspections and other administrative

Right: Calcutta, 26 September 1945. Buyers examine Caterpillar D4s in the yard of the 3100th Quartermasters Salvage and Repair Company. Surplus equipment at military installations is prepared for sale by the Army-Navy Liquidation Commission (US NARA).



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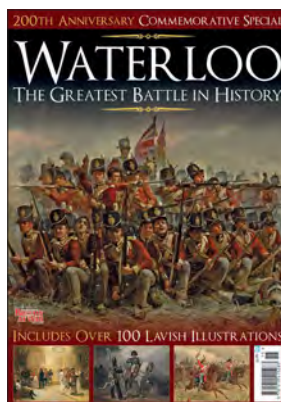


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RUN FOR THE SUN

John Norris reports from last summer's spectacular Cobbaton road run

No gathering of military vehicles would be complete without a traditional road-run, and the event organised by Tim Isaac of the Cobbaton Combat Collection in Devon on 6 June to commemorate the 71st anniversary of D-Day to the day was no exception. *Classic Military Vehicle* magazine was kindly invited along to watch the action which was attended by around 40 vehicles of all types, but mainly comprising American-built designs which was very appropriate.

The area of Devon was used as one of the build-up points for American troops in readiness for D-Day and a number of estates were requisitioned for the purposes of HQs and camps. These included Lupton House near Brixham and Saltram Park near Plymouth. Down on the coast at Woolcombe Bay and Saunton the expanses of sandy beaches were used to practise amphibious landings and the nearby sand dunes in the area of Braunton Burrows



Above: The convoys grows. Top: Preparing to move off from Cobbaton.



Above: Brief pause for the convoy to come together. Above right: Moving down narrow Devon country lanes was tight.



One of our motorcycle escorts.



Dodge WC52 weapons carrier is always popular.

were turned into one vast training ground stretching over 16 square miles for live firing exercises using weapons from rifles to bazookas and flamethrowers.

Tim Isaac was ably supported in organising the event by a team of assistants which included members of the local branch of the MVT and Friends of the Assault Training Center at Woolacombe.

The point of departure was from the Cobbaton Combat Collection at Umberleigh

and once all the vehicles were assembled we set off at 8pm. As a passenger I was allocated to a jeep driven by Chris Bowden, who is a long-standing member of the MVT and has taken part in many such road-runs. His vehicle was actually a 1970s Spanish-built version of the Jeep produced by the company of Vehiculos Industriales Y Agrícolas, Sociedad Anonima (known as VIASA) at its plant in Zaragosa, but to the uninitiated it looked the part and fitted in with the other vehicles in the convoy.

FALLING IN LINE

At the appointed time the column left the grounds of the collection to weave its way along narrow Devon country lanes heading towards Braunton Burrows. Jeeps, and GMC Jimmys, were joined by a few Austin Tillys, Dodge WC52 weapons carriers, a Morris Commercial C8 15cwt and an escort of several wartime motorcycles. As we wound

convoy. The first leg of our journey was about 18 miles (29km) and with an average speed of 25mph (40km/h) and allowing for traffic conditions this stage was completed in about an hour. Just before we reached our destination the column pulled off the road to allow for stragglers to catch up so that we could continue together. Once we were all assembled back in column we

“An escorting motorcyclist would peel off and wait by the junction which was all very reminiscent of wartime convoys.”

again moved off to drive on to the training grounds used by the American troops.

our way along the lanes it struck many of us that we were looking at the same views the American troops saw all those years ago.

Moving from the country lanes out on the main road it was inevitable that a few modern cars should slip into our convoy and, on the whole, motorists gave us consideration on account of the age of the vehicles. On approaching a roundabout an escorting motorcyclist would peel off and wait by the junction which was all very reminiscent of wartime

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Today Braunton Burrows is a haven for flora and fauna and popular with tourists who walk the paths that criss-cross the site which during the war was out of bounds to civilians. Over 70 years ago explosions and gun fire would have echoed around the sand dunes as the troops practised for the invasion of France. Special practice areas for mortars were established, bazooka firing range, flamethrowers and demolition techniques were all learned here. Even



Above: Ward LaFrance M1A1 wrecker was a heavyweight but made it all the way down country lanes to the beach and back.



Above: This 'illy in the markings of the Tune Tees 50th Northumbrian Division looked very smart. Left: Mike Braund and Dave Smale from Bude with their Jimmy truck.

mock-up bunkers and pillboxes were constructed for complete realism. We entered the area and followed the route which thousands of troops would have driven or marched along. Here and there, poking out from the sand, were reminders from those days such as sections of concrete walls to simulate bunkers and concrete obstacles.

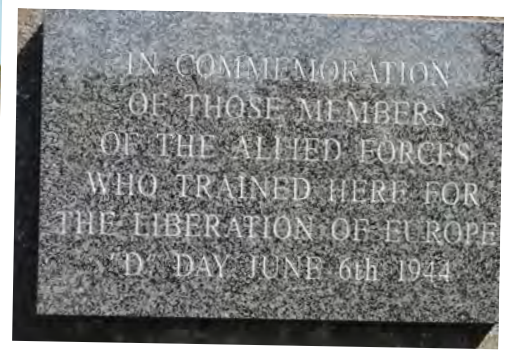
Snaking our way through the dunes we passed the bazooka training site and arrived at the location where the remains of Landing Craft Tanks (LCTs) were built out of concrete.

These were constructed to the same shape and size as the actual LCTs so that drivers could practise getting their vehicles off the vessel and onto the beach. Some of our column drove onto the concrete base of these structures and it was incredible how many vehicles could be loaded onto the LCTs. The exit ramp is just wide enough for a tank to leave but for smaller vehicles there is more room. These remains are important and today they are preserved by Friends of the Assault Training Center.

A commemorative plaque has been erected inside one of the concrete LCTs and each year a service is held in memory of those who trained here. This year was no different and all of us took part in the short memorial service and wreaths were laid by ex-servicemen. It was a fitting tribute and the significance was not lost on any of the vehicle owners. We all realised that if it was not for this training ground the number of casualties on Omaha and Utah beaches would have been much greater. A flypast

Below: The convoy moves across Braunton Burrows training grounds.





Above: Commemorative plaque on Branton Burrows. Left: Weapons Carrier and Jimmy truck on concrete LCT.

by several Auster spotter aircraft in various colours flew overhead in tribute, also.

EXPERT EXIT

Loaded as we were into the LCTs provided an opportunity to recreate the exiting techniques by driving off the ramp. Chris drove his Jeep off the ramp perfectly, as though it was something he did every day, followed by other vehicles. We continued our circuit of the training grounds and reformed our convoy in readiness to move on to Saunton Sands. This provided an opportunity to meet some of the other vehicles owners such as Mike Braund and Dave Smale who

had driven their Jimmy down from Bude. They share the vehicle which they have had for about six years and they are both long-standing members of the MVT. Another owner was Sue Virgin from Cullompton in Devon, who was driving her 1944 Ford Jeep which she has had for about five years. Sue explained that it was a wedding present from her husband, who is also a vehicle owner, and she has already driven it to Normandy.

With everybody back in the column once again we set off on the last leg of our journey towards Saunton with its firm sandy beach. Amphibious assault training with

vehicles and troops from landing craft were practised here until just a few weeks before D-Day, with Branton Burrows continuing to be used as a training ground until late 1944. There were accidents during these exercises, the worst of which happened when 98 men were drowned when their landing craft overturned and sank. Looking at the area today it is easy to understand why the location was chosen because of its resemblance to Omaha beach in Normandy.

TIME FOR A SWIM

As we made our way down the slipway onto the beach we met up with Tim Isaac from Cobbaton who had arrived earlier in the day to unload the Sexton SPG from the collection. He was joined by another



Above: Leaving the LCTs. Right: Ex-servicemen and woman laying wreaths at the service. Below: The Cobbaton Convoy on the beach at Saunton Sands.





Above: More vehicles from the convoy on another concrete LCT. Top right: The Burma Jeep proving a real workhorse. Above right: Sue Virgin with her Ford Jeep.



Morris Commercial C8 15cwt in 49th Division markings.



Jeep called '50 Cal Gal' towing a replica M3 37mm anti-tank gun.

heavyweight in the form of a Landing Vehicle Tracked MkIV Buffalo. The owners had brought this magnificent vehicle over 140 miles to take part in the event. It was explained to *CMV* that this particular LVT dates from 1945 and is not believed to have been deployed in combat. This was a truly head-turning event, made all the more incredible by the announcement it was going into the sea.

The Buffalo was built for use in water and is ideally suited for work on sand. They were used during the Pacific War and some were used in the later stages of the war in Europe to cross the large rivers such as the Rhine. Here was an example being put through its paces in a way which no other location can offer. The condition of the sea was choppy

but the owners decided it was possible and drove into the water. What we were now witnessing has almost certainly never been seen in the UK before. The Buffalo weighs 16 tons and measures around 26ft long, 10ft 8in wide and about 8ft tall. Yet, for all this bulk it was being tossed about in the waves. The owners bravely displayed the vehicle but finally realised it was best to return to the sand. Exiting the water showed it most impressively and was undoubtedly the highlight of the day.

The events of the day were not over

as owners decided to take a high-speed run along the beach. In no specific order, each owner drove the length of the sand, including motorcycles and the Buffalo. Despite the advancing age of some of the vehicles they could still reach good speeds. One surprising participant was a Ford GTB (G-6222) sometimes known as the 'Burma Jeep' which was produced from 1942 onwards. It had been in the convoy from Cobbaton and is often seen at MVT events, but to see it at speed in such conditions was to see it in a different light.



Above: The Burma Jeep at speed on the sand run. Right: The Sexton SPG from the Cobbaton Collection.





Above: The Buffalo coming ashore fully armed. Left: Buffalo running in shallow water.



Above: With pumps running to drain the water the Buffalo drives out of the sea. Right: Buffalo at speed running in shallow water.



HEADING FOR HOME

The wide expanse of beach allowed the larger vehicles such as the Sexton and a Ward LaFrance M1A1 Wrecker recovery vehicle, as well as the Buffalo, to manoeuvre freely. Without doubt, the whole event was enjoyed by everybody. However, all good things must come to an end, and so it was that the convoy had to depart. We left a few vehicles at a time and Chris Bowden drove me back to Cobbaton being followed by the Wrecker.

The whole day had been a great experience and judging by the turnout it was successful.

On behalf of *CMVI* I would like to extend sincere thanks to Tim Isaac and all owners of the MVT, especially my driver for the day Chris Bowden, who took part in the event for their support and making my visit memorable. A fascinating book called *Spirits of the Sand Field Edition* written by Richard T Bass is available which details the history of the training grounds of

Braunton Burrows and Saunton Sands. The book contains a list of the units that trained on the site, along with maps and details of the area which is worth exploring. It is available through the website: www.rtbassbooks

I also have a digital PDF copy of a map of Braunton Burrows which shows the location of sites on the training grounds. If any reader is interested in a copy free of charge, please contact me at: john.norris3@btinternet.com





Above: Emerging from the water the Buffalo looks good.



Above and right: The Buffalo in deep water. Below: Buffalo coming out of the water.



COMING IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE...



Watch out for the following features in the April issue of CMV, on sale 17 March 2016

AUCTION BUYING SPECIAL

Become an auction expert with our guide on what to buy, how to bid and where to go to bag the best military vehicle bargains.

THE CAR THAT CHANGED HISTORY

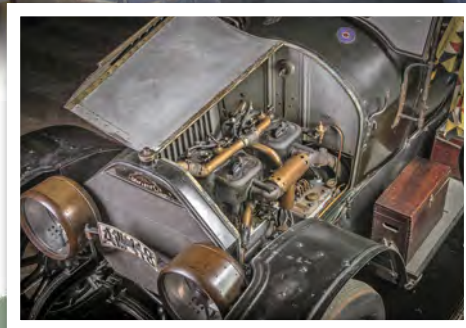
The story of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's Gräf & Stift.

ON THE LOOK OUT

David Fletcher explains the role of command, control, rear link and observation post tanks.

REKINDLED KARRIER

Scott Smith meets the owner who restored a rare Commer Karrier K6.



REGULAR FEATURES

And don't miss our regular features, including product reviews, forthcoming events, pages and pages of classifieds, the very best in military-vehicle photography... and, as regular readers will be only too well aware, far more than we can list here!

These are just some of the features planned for the next issue, but circumstances outside our control may force last-minute changes. If this happens we will substitute items of equal or greater interest.



CVRT Scimitar Armoured Reconnaissance Vehicle, Fitted Cummins BTA 5.9lt Turbo diesel, Automatic Gearbox with Neutral turn capability, Maximum road speed 72 km/h, Range 750 km, etc, 820 miles, Excellent condition, **Guide price £39,995 (1 Available)**



Alvis Stormer Tracked Armoured Recon Vehicle, Fitted Perkins 6-litre, 6-cylinder, Crew: Driver, Commander plus 2 pax, year 1992, low mileage, Excellent condition, **Guide price from £12,500 (6 Available)**



Spartan CVRT Dieselised APC, Fitted Cummins BTA 5.9lt Turbo diesel engine, Maximum road speed 72 km/h, Range 750 km, The vehicle can carry up to 7 personnel, including 3 crew members, Mileage 1296, Hours 502, Excellent Condition, **Guide price £19,995 (1 Available)**



Land Rover Wolf 90 300Tdi Hard Top RHD, Fitted 300Tdi engine, 5 speed R380 gearbox, Hi/Low transfer box with centre diff lock, full FFR installation kit, 24-volt electrics, PAS, front and rear disc brakes etc, Mileage from 45110km, **Guide price from £10,995 (6 Available)**



Wolf 130 Battlefield Ambulance RHD, Fitted 300Tdi engine, 5 speed R380 gearbox, Hi/Low transfer box with centre diff lock, PAS, front and rear disc brakes, heavy duty chassis and axles, Goodyear G90 tyres, spare wheel, low mileage, Year from 1997, runs and drives well, Very good condition, **Guide price from £15,750 (5 Available)**



The DAF 4x4 Truck, Cargo capacity of 5000kg, Fitted Cummins 5.9 ltr Turbo Diesel, permanent 4x4, Hi Lo Ratio with Diff Lock, PAS, Air brakes, Nato style rear hitch, Engine power 145hp, Maximum road speed 89 km/h, Range 500 km, Year from 1994. **Guide price from £4,500 (40 Available)**

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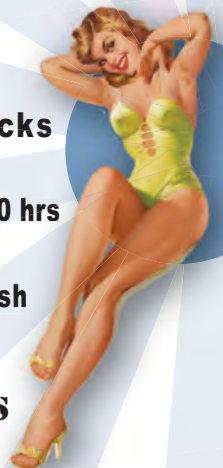
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TANK TIMES

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TANK CENTENARY



ONE HUNDRED YEARS ON FROM THE BLOODIEST BATTLE IN BRITISH MILITARY HISTORY, THE TANK MUSEUM IS MARKING THE CENTENARY YEAR OF THE FIRST TANK ATTACK WITH A NEW EXHIBITION AND A RANGE OF COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITY.

Highlights for 2016 will include the opening of the new *Tank Men - The Story of The First Crews* exhibition in March, complete with upgrades to the existing *Trench Experience*, and a special event in September to mark 100 years since the first tank attack.

Exhibitions Officer Sarah Lambert said; "The new exhibition tells the stories of eight First World War British tank soldiers who were among the pioneers of armoured warfare. These individuals were carefully chosen following extensive research in the Museum's archives, allowing us to draw upon previously unseen materials - documents, images and supporting collections - to assemble their service histories."

But the Museum team went further, tracking down the surviving relatives of the men. Sarah said; "The families were able to provide an extra dimension. We could get a feel of who these men really were from people who actually knew them. We learned about their personalities, their interests, their pre-war lives and how their participation in the war shaped their career and family life. It is the personal depth that gives this exhibition the ability to bring our tank men to life for visitors."

The British launched the first tank attack in history during the closing stages of the Battle of the Somme on 15 September 1916. The attack was a limited success, but changed the nature

of warfare forever. On Saturday 17 September this centenary will be marked by *TANK 100*, a commemorative event at The Tank Museum.

Museum Director Richard Smith said; "The link between the tragedy of the Somme and the introduction of the tank is often overlooked. The tank demonstrates the desire of British commanders to find high-tech and innovative solutions to prevent the catastrophic losses seen early in the battle - and to win the war. This is at odds with the widely accepted but ultimately incorrect view that the Generals uncaringly squandered the lives of men with unimaginative tactics and outdated thinking."

The event, which is being held in conjunction with The Royal Tank Regiment, will feature living history, live displays and talks. **II**

THE TANK MUSEUM is launching a website to mark the Centenary of the Tank. The site will feature a range of content based on the Museum's collections and feature a range of material that, owing to space, could not be included in the new 'Tank Men' exhibition. You can find the website at www.tank100.org



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- HOTBLACK - AN INSPIRATION TO ALL RANKS
- TIGER DAY
- TANK CHATS
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FROM THE DIRECTOR



As I enter my tenth year as The Tank Museum's Director, I'm extremely proud to announce that 2015 has been the best year in its history.

"Best" means we hosted, entertained and educated more visitors than ever before. The final admission count was 208,470, which is 10% more than our previous best figure achieved in our 'relaunch' year of 2009.

This is good news because it means we are reaching more people than ever with the story of tanks and the people who served in them. As a result we are generating more revenue, which will be reinvested to improve the care of our collections for the future.

If you enjoy reading Tank Times, you may also like to take a look at what we do online. The Tank Museum is the world's most popular military museum on Facebook and we update it daily with previously unpublished photographs and interesting short articles. Similarly our YouTube channel is a great resource if you want to find out more about our collections. I very much recommend David Fletcher's "Tank Chats" as a highlight for those who want to hear the man himself talking about some of his favourite vehicles.

TANKFEST remains our most important fundraising event. Whilst

Continued on page 2...



THE TANK MUSEUM - THE WORLD'S BEST COLLECTION OF TANKS
An Independent Museum and Registered Charity No 1102661



FROM THE DIRECTOR

CONTINUED...

we were delighted to have 'sold out' for the first time ever in 2015, sadly this meant that a number of people had to miss out, sometimes after long journeys. However it is a positive sign for the future that so many people want to come and see our running vehicles in action. For 2016 we have worked to increase our capacity by over 1,000. Therefore, there will be more tickets available this year – but we are expecting to sell out once again and therefore I would strongly encourage the advanced purchase of tickets to avoid disappointment. To encourage this, tickets remain available for a limited time at 2015 prices.

In 2015 we also launched our Season Ticket. This great value ticket, valid for twelve months from the date of purchase, includes access to The Tank Museum every day we are open. This includes all events including TANKFEST weekend, Tiger Day and this year's TANK 100 centenary event. Season tickets are available on our website, with an adult ticket costing £45. If you are a regular visitor, this represents a great saving.

One of the benefits of being a season ticket holder is that you will continue to receive our quarterly Tank Times newsletter by post for free. The increasing cost of postage has meant that we have had to make the decision to stop posting every edition of our newsletter – and instead ask you to visit our website and sign up instead for our email version. You'll get the same great content and it will save The Tank Museum funds, which we can use instead for our ongoing conservation programmes.

This is therefore the last free edition of Tank Times you will receive this year – unless you become a Season Ticket holder or sign up on our website now for our digital edition. I wish you all a successful 2016 – and hope to see you at The Tank Museum soon. **T**



Richard Smith
Director

TANKFEST

25 & 26 JUNE

The Tank Museum has published the programme of events and list of participating vehicles for TANKFEST 2016 on its website.

Tickets are already selling fast for this year's show and, for a limited time, are still available at 2015 prices. TANKFEST 2015 was the first to sell out in the 15 year history of the event, and organisers are keen to stress that admission tickets should be booked in advance to avoid disappointment.



The British Army's current Main Battle Tank, Challenger 2 took to the arena at Tankfest 2015.

Arena displays will include old favourites such as the Rolls Royce armoured car before a convoy of Leopards kick the show off with a blast. New arena displays feature heavy duty recovery tanks, rapid reconnaissance vehicles and a nod to the 100th Anniversary of the tank.



The modern British Army will again play a significant role with an extensive static and moving display of their current armour. The finale will see a recreation of a Second World War battle, loosely based on the capture of Tiger 131, set in Tunisia in 1943.

As well as tanks, there will be a variety of entertainment on offer, from swing bands to jive dancers. Finally, take a walk through the past with the Living History encampments, portraying soldiers from different eras and nationalities.

For more information and to buy tickets, visit tankmuseum.org **T**



Tankfest goers visit an encampment of WW2 American soldiers.

DAVID FLETCHER'S TANK CHATS



Museum Historian David Fletcher MBE, is hosting a series of short videos specially shot for The Tank Museum's YouTube Channel.

In this series of four minute videos titled Tank Chats, David explains everything you need to know about a particular tank from the Museum collection. Tanks featured so far include Valentine, TOG II*, Whippet and the A13 Cruiser. If you would like to see a particular tank featured in the 'Tank Chat' series, email tanktimes@tankmuseum.org. **T**

WIN A RIDE IN TIGER 131



If you have ever dreamt of riding in the world's only operational Tiger I, make sure you take part in the forthcoming Tiger Day raffle.

One lucky winner will take a ride in Tiger 131 at this year's Tiger Day, (30 April 2016), with 2nd prize a ride in the Leopard and 3rd prize, a ride in the Centurion. There will also be an e-bay auction for another seat in Tiger 131, details of which will be announced on The Tank Museum Facebook page.



The raffle runs from 1 – 29 February, tickets are £5 each and are available, with terms and conditions, from tankmuseum.org **T**



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HOTBLACK

An Inspiration To All Ranks

We introduce Major F.E Hotblack - a pioneer of armoured warfare and one of the eight men whose story is told in The Tank Museum's forthcoming First World War Centenary Exhibition.



When the *Tank Men - The Story of The First Crews* exhibition opens in March 2016, one of the eight men visitors will encounter is Frederick Elliot Hotblack.

Hotblack was born in Norfolk in 1887 and, as well as being trained in the family business of brewing, he was also highly educated and a fluent European linguist. Hotblack volunteered for service in 1914 and was commissioned into the Royal Norfolk Regiment. His expertise and education meant that he was considered to be an ideal candidate to become one of the first members of the Intelligence Corps, at the Headquarters of the

British Expeditionary Force. In 1916, he transferred from the Norfolk Regiment to the Heavy Branch of the Machine Gun Corps (which later became the Tank Corps) and became a Tank Corps Intelligence Officer.

In this role, he pioneered the art of tank reconnaissance and intelligence. By examining early aerial photographs, captured documents and the interrogation of prisoners, Hotblack



gained intelligence on enemy positions, tactics, morale and weapons. Not one to shy away from front line duties, he personally taped the routes for tanks going in to battle as a visual aid for drivers to follow in the dark; map reading inside tanks being too difficult. For his 'hands-on' approach he earned the nickname 'Boots'- because his feet were always on the ground.

Tank Men - The Story of the First Crews will recreate the moment Hotblack won the Distinguished Service Order for gallantry, when he walked out in front of a tank in the heat of battle to guide it to its objective.

His citation read: 'He has shown throughout persistent gallantry and contempt of danger in the pursuance of his duty as a reconnaissance and battle liaison officer which has been an inspiration to all ranks.'

Hotblack's heroism and active participation in battle meant that he was much-loved by his soldiers. A grieving mother whose son served under Hotblack wrote:

'My Dear Captain Hotblack

I can never tell you of all my gratitude to you. I know that you risked your life again and again in going down to the stretcher bearers and getting Tommy carried to the field dressing station - and then while you were so shaken and suffering, you collected his little things, which will be my dearest treasures all my life.'

Hotblack's courage would later earn him a bar to his DSO, a Military Cross with bar, the Legion of Honour, the Russian Order of St Anne, and he was mentioned in despatches five times.

More from Major Hotblack's remarkable story and a selection of his personal items will be on display in the new exhibition, opening at the end of March. **T**

THE HENRIQUES RING



One object to be displayed in the new exhibition offers a fascinating and very personal link to the first tank attack in history.

At the Battle of Flers on 15 September 1916, 26 year old Lt. Basil Henriques was in command of a Mark I tank. As the tank progressed towards enemy positions, it came under heavy artillery fire. One accurate blast smashed the thick glass vision prism that Henriques was looking through to direct his vehicle, embedding shards and splinters in his face.

He later recalled;

"A smash against my flap in front caused splinters to come in and the blood to pour down my face. Then our prism glass broke to pieces, then another smash, I think it must have been a bomb right in my face."

His wife received the troubling news of his injury in a telegram which read; *'Regret to inform you that 2Lt. Henriques, Machine Gun Corps admitted to Red Cross hospital, Rouen Sept 17th with gunshot wound face slight. Further news send when received. Secretary War Office.'*

Henriques was fortunate to escape more serious injury and the glass splinters were removed from his face by medics. One piece was large enough to be mounted as a 'stone' in a gold ring, which he gave to his wife as a memento of his brush with danger. His wife donated it to The Tank Museum in the 1960's.



Mr. and Mrs. Henriques on their wedding day, shortly before deployment.

Lt. Basil Henriques is another of the eight men whose story will be featured in the *Tank Men - The Story of The First Tank Crews*. **T**



A 1917 illustration depicting Hotblack guiding a tank under heavy fire.



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FROM THE EDITOR



Nik Wyness

Welcome to the first edition of Tank Times in what is an important anniversary year at The Tank Museum.

100 years ago, the British Army were 18 months into what had proved to be a frustrating and costly conflict, but it had lost none of its desire to win. As a result, it was turning to technological solutions in order to bolster its offensive capability and overcome the stubborn German defences.

In February 1916 the prototype Mark I tank was demonstrated before British commanders. Seven months later, on 15 September 1916, some 30 Mark I tanks made the first tank attack in history.

The speed at which the tank was conceived and put into action is pretty staggering. Machines had to be built, men trained and tactics devised on the hoof. This makes the achievements, courage and sacrifice of those first tank men an inspiration, and in 2016 we will have plenty of opportunity to commemorate and remember these pioneers. Our new exhibition is dedicated to them, and in September we will be holding *TANK 100*, a special event to mark the centenary of that first tank action.

The traditional view of the First World War is one of unimaginative generals carelessly wasting the lives of soldiers in a series of poorly planned and executed attacks. The adoption of the tank, and the way it was hurried into action, should remind us that the reality is far less straight forward.

The Battle of the Somme, which commenced on 1 July 1916, became a disaster because German machine guns made crossing No-Man's-Land almost impossible. It was precisely this problem that the tank was intended to solve.

Nik Wyness

Nik Wyness
Editor



Tiger Day returns to The Tank Museum on Saturday 30 April, providing another opportunity to see our most famous exhibit in action.

The Museum will open at 10.00am, with talks and tours going on throughout the day focusing on the Tiger tank, how it was captured, whilst others will look at its bigger brother- the Tiger II. The Vehicle Conservation Centre will be open and fully accessible all day, allowing visitors to examine the vehicles up close.

The highlight of the day will undoubtedly be the display, at 1.30pm, when Tiger 131 will return to the arena, alongside its Allied and Axis contemporaries. Visitors will be treated to a display including Matilda I, Panzer III, T-34, Sherman



and Kettenkrad, where our experts will contrast and compare these Second World War machines and examine the impact that Tiger had on future tank designs in the shape of the Centurion and Leopard.



Tiger 131 will only make two appearances in our arena this year, at Tiger Day and TANKFEST (25 - 26 June), so you can't afford to miss it! Premium tickets have already sold out, but normal admission tickets are available online now or on the door. See tankmuseum.org for more information.

Please Note: Tiger Day is a special event day, so annual passes will not be valid for entry.

DESERT WARFARE

This February Half-Term, discover Desert Warfare at The Tank Museum.

Activities and interactive talks will be taking place across the Museum all week, including remote control tank tactics!

Learn how British and German forces fought and survived in the deserts of

North Africa, discover how the modern British Army adapted to living in the desert during deployment in Afghanistan and listen to the stories from First World War soldiers who fought at Gallipoli. The Vehicle Conservation Centre will also be open every day from 12.30pm - 3.30pm. *Normal admission charges apply and Annual Passes are valid.*

SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE!

The Tank Museum | Bovington | Dorset | BH20 6JG
t: 01929 462 529 | e: tanktimes@tankmuseum.org
The office is open Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm.



WHAT'S ON



13 - 21 February 2016

February Half-Term

Discover Desert Warfare this February Half Term at The Tank Museum - find out more with a series of themed activities, talks and tours.



25 March - 10 April 2016

Easter Holidays

Visitors will have the chance to learn more about the first tank crews in the First World War, with talks, tours, trails and activities.



30 April 2016

Tiger Day 2016

The Tiger tank is back in action - so if you're a fan of our most famous exhibit, this is the event for you!



25 - 26 June 2016

TANKFEST 2016

The world's best display of moving armour returns for 2016! Tickets available to book online now.

IT'S SHOWTIME!

The major military-vehicle and militaria events in the UK and around the world...

There are many military-vehicle rallies held in the UK and elsewhere; only the larger events are listed here but more appear in the major club magazines – or look at www.milweb.net, www.mvpa.org, or www.mvt.org. It is always wise to ensure an event is still on before setting out on a long journey. CMV can

accept no liability for errors or omissions in this list.

Show organisers, please send details of your event to ian.cushway@keypublishing.com or to the editorial address at least eight weeks in advance. Unfortunately we have space only for shows with significant military-vehicle content.



MILITARY-VEHICLE EVENTS 2016

March 75TH ANNIVERSARY RANSOME & MARLES FACTORY AIR ATTACK

Date: Sun 6 March 2016
Location: various Newark-on-Trent
Contact: www.newarkairmuseum.org, events@newarkairmuseum.org

MILITARY & VINTAGE REVIVAL
Date: Sat/Sun 26-27 March 2016
Location: Old Buckenham Airfield, Norfolk
Contact: www.oldbuck.com

April
AMBERLEY VINTAGE CAR SHOW
Date: Sun 3 April 2016
Location: Amberley Museum, Amberley, West Sussex
Contact: 01798 831370, office@amberleymuseum.co.uk, www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

WINGS & WHEELS
Date: Sun 17 April 2016
Location: Old Buckingham Airfield, Bucks
Contact: www.oldbuck.com

WARTIME IN THE COTSWOLDS
Date: Sat/Sun 23-24 April 2016
Location: Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway
Contact: Sue Harbron wartime@gwsr.com, www.gwsr.com

TIGER DAY
Date: Sat 30 April 2016
Location: The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset BH20 6JG
Contact: www.tankmuseum.org

FOUR ASHES IN THE FORTIES WEEKEND

Date: Sat/Sun 30 April-1 May 2016
Location: Willenhal RUFC, Bognop Road, Essington, Staffs WV11 2BA
Contact: Sarah, 07813823533, sarah.brady@ngbailey.co.uk

May
TANK EXPERIENCE DAY
Date: Fri/Sat 13-14 May 2016
Location: The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset BH20 6JG
Contact: www.tankmuseum.org

TEMPLE AT WAR
Date: Sat/Sun 14-15 May 2016
Location: Crossing Temple Barns, Braintree, Essex
Contact: Nicola info@templeatwar.co.uk, www.templeatwar.co.uk

1940S WEEKEND – SUFFOLK
Date: Sat/Sun 14-15 May 2016
Location: Bridge Farm Barns, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk IP7 7AY
Contact: Norman Newbould n.newbould1234@outlook.com

MERRIST WOOD SHOW
Date: Sun 15 May 2016
Location: Merrist Wood College, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE
Contact: Annette Smith asmith@guildfor.ac.uk

CHIPPING STEAM FAIR
Date: Sat/Mon 28-30 May 2016
Location: Green Lane Showground, Chipping, Preston, Lancs PR3 2TQ
Contact: 01995 61866, www.chippingsteamfair.co.uk

OVERLORD MILITARY SPECTACULAR
Date: Sat/Mon 28-30 May 2016
Location: The Lawns, Forest Road, Denmead, Hants PO7 6HS
Contact: www.solentoverlord.co.uk

DEBACH AIRFIELD MUSEUM ROAD RUN

Date: Sun 29 May 2016
Location: Grove Farm, Clopton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 6QS
Contact: Richard 07850 078432, www.493bgdebach.co.uk

PENDLE POWERFEST
Date: Sun 29 May 2016
Location: Nelson & Colne College, Nelson, Lancs BB9 7YT
Contact: Chris Walker pendlepowerfest@gmail.com

June
DIG FOR VICTORY SHOW
Date: Sat/Sun 11-12 June 2016
Location: North Somerset Showground, Bathing Pond Fields, Wraxhall BS48 1NE
Contact: James Shopland, 07968 274480, <http://digforvictoryshow.com>

THE GREAT NORTH FLY IN 2016
Date: Sat/Sun 18-19 June 2016
Location: Eshott Airfield, Felton, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 9QJ
Contact: www.greatnorthflyin.uk

WOODVALE RALLY
Date: Sat/Sun 18-19 June 2016
Location: Woodvale Park, Southport, Merseyside
Contact: mg1966uk@hotmail.com, www.woodvalerally.com

WARTIME IN THE VALE
Date: Sat/Sun 18-19 June 2016
Location: Ashdown Farm, Badsey, nr Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 7EL
Contact: 0779 159 1528, www.ashdowncamp.com



KEIGHLEY ARMED FORCES DAY

Date: Sun 19 June 2016
Location: Victoria Park, Keighley
Contact: Andrew Spence chair.kafa@gmail.com

ARMED FORCES DAY – CONSETT

Date: Sat 25 June 2016
Location: Laburnham Avenue, Consett DH8 5T
Contact: George MKay consett.chairman@bl.community

BLACKPOOL ARMED FORCES WEEK

Date: Mon/Sun 20-26 June 2016
Location: various Blackpool
Contact: Ian Carr ian.carr@blackpool.gov.uk

TANKFEST

Date: Sat/Sun 25-26 June 2016
Location: The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset BH20 6JG
Contact: www.tankmuseum.org

**July
BUCKFASTLEIGH STEAM RAILWAY MILITARY WEEKEND
40s FESTIVAL**

Date: Sat/Sun 2-3 July 2016
Location: Buckfastleigh Steam Railway, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0DZ
Contact: www.devonmvt.co.uk

FLYWHEEL FESTIVAL

Date: Sat/Sun 2-3 July 2016
Location: Bicester Heritage, Buckingham Road, Bicester, Oxon OX27 8AL
Contact: www.flywheelfestival.com

1940s EXPERIENCE

Date: Sat/Sun 2-3 July 2016
Location: Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Havenstreet
Contact: Allan Norman liz.tagart@iwsteamrailway.co.uk, www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk

HOLLOWELL STEAM & HEAVY HORSE SHOW

Date: Sat/Sun 2-3 July 2016
Location: Hollowell, Northants NN6 8RN
Contact: www.hollowellsteam.com

CAPEL MILITARY VEHICLE SHOW

Date: Sat/Sun 2-3 July 2016
Location: Aldhurst Farm, Temple Lane, Capel, Surrey RH5 5HJ
Contact: Phil 01293 871 727, http://capel-military-vehicle-show.com

YORKSHIRE WARTIME EXPERIENCE

Date: Fri/Sun 8-10 July 2016
Location: Cockleshaw Beck Farm, Hunsworth Lane, Hunsworth, Bradford BD4 6RN
Contact: Stuart Wright, stuart.wright@hotmail.co.uk, website www.ywe-event.info

THORPE CAMP 'WE'LL MEET AGAIN' EVENT

Date: Sat/Sun 9-10 July 2016
Location: Thorpe Camp Visitor Centre, Tattershall Thorpe, Lincs LN4 4PL
Contact: 01673 849393, www.1940weekend.co.uk

OWESTRY CLASSIC & VINTAGE TRANSPORT RALLY

Date: Sat 16 July 2016
Location: Whitehall, Aston, Owestry, Shropshire SY11 4JH
Contact: 01691 610952, www.britishshironworkcentre.co.uk

ACKWORTH STEAM RALLY

Date: Sat/Sun 16-17 July 2016
Location: Ackworth Water Tower, A628 Ackworth Road, West Yorks WF7 7ET
Contact: 07816 018291, 01977 617327

WOODHALL SPA '40s FESTIVAL

Date: Sat/Sun 16-17 July 2016
Location: Jubilee Park, Stixwold Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincs LN10 6QH
Contact: www.woodhall-spa-40s-festival.com

OLD FORD RALLY

Date: Sun 17 July
Location: Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warks
Contact: www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk, Tony King jeepers1945@hotmail.com

WAR AND PEACE REVIVAL

Date: Tue/Sat 19-23 July 2016
Location: Folkestone Racecourse
Contact: www.thewarandpeacerevival.co.uk

WELLAND STEAM FAIR

Date: Fri/Sun 29-31 July 2016
Location: Woodside Farm, nr Malvern, Worcs WR13 6LN
Contact: www.wellandsteamrally.co.uk

August

BASTON IN THE BLITZ

Date: Sat/Sun 6-7 Aug 2016
Location: Brudenell Playing Fields, Baston, Lincs PE6 9PB
Contact: www.bastonblitz.org

MILITARY & FLYING MACHINES SHOW

Date: Sat/Sun 6-7 Aug 2016
Location: Damyns Hall Aerodrome, Avely Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2TN
Contact: www.militaryandflyingmachines.org.uk

YANKS ARE BACK IN SADDLEWORTH

Date: Sat/Sun 6-7 Aug 2016
Location: Saddleworth School, Uppermill O13 6BU
Contact: Paul Smith 07480 117685, www.wv2events.co.uk

COBBATON VJ WEEKEND

Date: Sat/Sun 13-14 Aug 2016
Location: Cobbaton Collection, Umberleigh, Devon EX37 9RZ
Contact: 01769540740

COMBINED OPS – IMPMS MILITARY & AIR SHOW

Date: Sat/Sun 13-14 Aug 2016
Location: Headcorn Aerodrome, nr Maidstone, Kent
Contact: www.combinedops.co.uk

DRIFFIELD STEAM RALLY

Date: Sat/Sun 13-14 Aug 2016
Location: The Showground, Driffield, East Yorks YO25 9DN
Contact: www.driffievintagerally.co.uk

NORFOLK TANK MUSEUM MV WEEKEND

Date: Sat 20 Aug 2016
Location: Norfolk Tank Museum, Station Road, Forncett St Peter, Norwich, Norfolk NR16 1HZ
Contact: http://norfolktankmuseum.co.uk

MOUNT EDCUMBE AT WAR

Date: Fri/Mon 26-29 Aug 2016
Location: Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, Cremyll, Cornwall
Contact: Gwen Jenkins 07807 497819

TANKS IN TOWN

Date: Fri/Sun 26-28 Aug 2016
Location: Mons, Belgium
Contact: www.tanksintown.be

WINGS & WHEELS

Date: Sat/Sun 27-28 Aug 2016
Location: Dunsfold Park, Surrey GU6 8HY
Contact: 01483 542226, www.wingsandwheels.net

MILITARY ODYSSEY

Date: Sat/Mon 27-29 Aug 2016
Location: Kent Show Ground, Detting, Maidstone, Kent
Contact: 07595 511981, www.military-odyssey.com

TANKS, TRUCKS & FIREPOWER SHOW

Date: Sat/Mon 27-29 Aug 2016
Location: A426, 5 miles from Rugby CV22 6NR
Contact: www.tankstrucksandfirepower.co.uk

September

THE VICTORY SHOW

Date: Fri/Sun 2-4 Sept 2016
Location: Foxlands Farm, Cosby, Leics LE9 1SG
Contact: www.thevictoryshow.co.uk

TANK EXPERIENCE DAY

Date: Fri 30 Sept 2016
Location: The Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset BH20 6JG
Contact: www.tankmuseum.org

November

BROOKLANDS MILITARY VEHICLE DAY

Date: Sun 20 Nov 2016
Location: Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge KT13 0QN
Contact: 01932 857381, www.brooklandsmuseum.com

MILITARIA EVENTS, AUCTIONS, ETC

**Government surplus sales
Witham Specialist Vehicles**
Regular auctions of military vehicles and equipment are held by Witham Specialist Vehicles throughout the year at its Colsterworth, Lincolnshire site. Visit www.mod-sales.com, or call 01476 861361 for more details.

Ramco UK

Ramco UK is one of the largest outlets for the sale of miscellaneous and government surplus. The company holds tender sales each month from its premises in Croft and Burgh – both in Lincolnshire. Visit www.ramco.co.uk, or call 01754 880880 for more details.

**FORTHCOMING MILITARIA
EVENTS 2016**

March

STRATFORD UPON AVON MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIR

Date: Sun 13 March 2016
Location: Stratford Leisure and Visitor Centre, Bridgefoot, Stratford Upon Avon, Warks CV37 6YU
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

CHESHIRE & NORTH WALES MILITARIA & AVIATION FAIR

Date: Sun 13 March 2016
Location: Hooton Park, Airfield Way, Ellesmere Port, Wirral CH65 1BQ
Contact: 0151 327 4701, griffin@griffintrust.org.uk

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 13 March 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

MALVERN MILITARIA FAIR

Date: Sun 20 Mar 2016
Location: Three Counties Showground, Wye Hall, Malvern
Contact: 01743 762266, www.militaryconvention.com

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 27 March 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

April

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 10 April 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

CHELMSFORD MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 17 April 2016
Location: Marconi Social Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, Essex
Contact: James Aslett 07595 511981, www.chelmsfordmilitaria.com

NORTHERN MILITARY EXPO

Date: Sun 24 April 2016
Location: Newark County Showground NG24 2NY
Contact: Mark Askew 01302 739000, www.northernmilitaryexpo.co.uk

ALDERSHOT MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIR

Date: Sun 24 April 2016
Location: Princes Hall, Princes Way, Aldershot, Hants GU11 1NX
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

May

COBBATON CLEAROUT

Date: Sun 1 May 2016
Location: Combat Collection, Umberleigh, Devon EX37 9RZ
Contact: info@cobbatoncombat.co.uk

MARK CARTER MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIRS

Date: Sun 1 May 2016
Location: Woking Leisure Centre, Woking Park, Kingfield Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 9BA
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 8 May 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 15 May 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

NORFOLK MILITARIA FAIRS – THETFORD

Date: Sun 22 May 2016
Location: Thetford Leisure Centre and Waterworld, Croxton Road, Thetford IP24 1JD
Contact: 07596 436260, www.norfolkfairs.com

June

STRATFORD UPON AVON MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIR

Date: Sun 12 June 2016
Location: Stratford Leisure and Visitor Centre, Bridgefoot, Stratford Upon Avon, Warks CV37 6YY
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 12 June 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

July

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 10 July 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 17 July 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

August

MARK CARTER MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIRS

Date: Sun 7 Aug 2016
Location: Woking Leisure Centre, Woking Park, Kingfield Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 9BA
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 14 Aug 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 14 Aug 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

September

MARK CARTER MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIRS

Date: Sun 4 Sept 2016
Location: Woking Leisure Centre, Woking Park, Kingfield Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 9BA
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 11 Sept 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 11 Sept 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

CHELMSFORD MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 25 Sept 2016
Location: Marconi Social Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, Essex
Contact: James Aslett 07595 511981, www.chelmsfordmilitaria.com

NORFOLK MILITARIA FAIRS – THETFORD

Date: Sun 25 Sept 2016
Location: Thetford Leisure Centre and Waterworld, Croxton Road, Thetford IP24 1JD
Contact: 07596 436260, www.norfolkfairs.com

October

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 2 Oct 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com

HACK GREEN HANGAR SALE

Date: Sun 9 Oct 2016
Location: Hack Green Secret Nuclear Bunker, near Nantwich, Cheshire
Contact: Lucy Siebert lucy@hackgreen.co.uk

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 9 Oct 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

STRATFORD UPON AVON MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIR

Date: Sun 30 Oct 2016
Location: Stratford Leisure and Visitor Centre, Bridgefoot, Stratford Upon Avon, Warks CV37 6YY
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

CHELMSFORD MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 30 Oct 2016
Location: Marconi Social Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, Essex
Contact: James Aslett 07595 511981, www.chelmsfordmilitaria.com

November

NORTHERN MILITARY EXPO

Date: Sun 6 Nov 2016
Location: Newark County Showground NG24 2NY
Contact: Mark Askew 01302 739000, www.northernmilitaryexpo.co.uk

ALDERSHOT MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIR

Date: Sun 6 Nov 2016
Location: Princes Hall, Princes Way, Aldershot, Hants GU11 1NX
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 13 Nov 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

MALVERN MILITARIA FAIR

Date: Sun 20 Nov 2016
Location: Three Counties Showground, Wye Hall, Malvern
Contact: 01743 762266, www.militaryconvention.com

MARK CARTER MILITARIA & MEDAL FAIRS

Date: Sun 27 Nov 2016
Location: Woking Leisure Centre, Woking Park, Kingfield Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 9BA
Contact: Mark Carter 01753 534777

December

CHELMSFORD MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 4 Dec 2016
Location: Marconi Social Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, Essex
Contact: James Aslett 07595 511981, www.chelmsfordmilitaria.com

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND MILITARIA ARMS & ARMOUR FAIRS

Date: Sun 11 Dec 2016
Location: Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
Contact: James 07595 511981, www.chathammilitariafairs.co.uk

GHQ MILITARIA FAIRS

Date: Sun 18 Dec 2016
Location: The Maltings, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR
Contact: 07919 455799, www.ghq.uk.com



The much hyped and long awaited Army Cars Collection auction in Holland had just finished as I write. There were some surprises

regarding prices and the item that naturally made the highest money failed to make anywhere near what the rumour machine had spewed out

in the week or so before. The late M4 Sherman, arguably one of the less popular with its GM diesels and HVSS suspension, made €270,000 – though there was a package option to bid for the Sherman with spares and track which bumped it up to €333,000. Just one bid was submitted, despite those claiming to be ‘in the know’ stating that Brad Pitt had already bought it at €350,000. Yes it did appear for a nanosecond in a minor background scene in *Fury* but that obviously didn’t enhance its perceived value. That said, once the 16% bidder’s fee and VAT had been added it had become an expensive Sherman.



Above and below: Sherman M4 with GM power made €270,000 at January’s Troostwijk auction.



HEFTY PRICED HALF-TRACK

Shock of the day was the record price for a nice International half-track at €105,000, making it the most expensive half-track we have seen in Europe since records began.

Whilst most prices were about what you would expect to pay, until you add in the fees and VAT, the Carryall at €55,000 was pretty dear, as was the Dodge Command Car at €43,000 and the ‘replica’ made from a standard WC52 at €17,000. But perhaps the bargain of the sale was the final lot, the 40ft container filled with military clothing and uniforms.

A GMC 6x6 with a Swiss Army rear workshop body didn’t stir much enthusiasm and struggled up to €2800. For the purist it isn’t an investment, but for the buyer who just wants a GMC to take to shows and lock himself in at night it was probably a good buy.

The sale isn’t going to have a noticeable effect on the market but of course it has released 75 collector’s vehicles back into the hobby from their long term storage in the De Groot Collection. Perhaps more interesting were the spares which seemed to reach slightly lower prices than expected. There were several half-track engines that raised between €1500 and €2200, which is very affordable as



Lovely International half-track – reached the highest price ever paid in Europe at over €105,000.



Kubel project for a motivated buyer.



Snatch this Land Rover up at £2995.

there are no longer regular sources of these White 160AX engines. The thirsty but oh so lovely crated Continental 22R petrol engines for the Ward La France heavy wrecker were making between €700 and €1700, thus giving owners an opportunity to change back from the commonly retrofitted diesels.

BARGAIN CLASSIFIEDS

Meanwhile, as well as auctions, Milweb has been busy with a surge of adverts. Lots of vehicles are being offered by European sellers, like a Kubelwagen project at €20,000 in Germany. A well equipped Land Rover Snatch at £2995 showed what can be done with these often BER (military speak for Beyond Economic Repair) vehicles and looks ready for display at War and Peace in one of the many living history dioramas. Usually



Above and right: If the EU gets its way, our Deac laws will change drastically.

at this time of year we get an influx of unfinished projects coming onto the market, but 2016 seems to have bucked that trend.

Recently featured in *CMV*, an

“Just one bid was submitted, despite those claiming to be ‘in the know’ stating that Brad Pitt had already bought it at €350,000.”

ex-Cypriot National Guard 1969 Series 2a Lightweight petrol Land Rover came up for sale though unpriced. Nothing unusual about that until you see that when it finished its army service it was passed




Radial engine for a Stuart tank went for €3400 at Dutch auction.

on to the Cypriot National Guard who converted it to take the 106mm m40a1 recoilless rifle. We have never had one of these up for sale and it is one of those vehicles that's likely to prompt a lot of interest at shows.

In the aftermath of the Paris attacks, the EU is seeking to clamp down on deactivated weapons, especially automatics, machine guns and assault rifles. The DWA (Deactivated Weapons Association) is working tirelessly to persuade our MEPs and MPs that this kneejerk reaction is absolute folly and

won't help in the war against terror. If you are a weapons collector or have artillery or vehicle mounted weapons you

should check out the latest news on the fight against this draconian new EU law which, if passed in its present form, will impact on us all. Visit the DWA website at: www.ukdwa.org. 



VEHICLE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	YEAR OF ORIGIN	ENGINE: CAPACITY; CYLINDERS; FUEL	APPROX PRODUCTION	ASKING PRICES:			TREND
					LOW	HIGH	AVERAGE	
SOFT-SKIN VEHICLES								
AM General HMMWV	USA	1984	6200cc; V8; diesel	(on-going)	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	▼
Austin Champ, FV1801	UK	1952	2838cc; 4; petrol	12,150	£3200	£6200	£4600	▲
Bedford MK/MJ, FV13800	UK	1970	5420cc; 6; diesel	50,000	£2250	£3250	£2783	▼
Bedford RL, FV13100	UK	1952	4927cc; 6; petrol	73,150	£4500	£4750	£4625	–
Dodge WC51, WC52	USA	1942	3770cc; 6; petrol	141,075	£4500	£12,145	£9263	▲
Dodge WC54 ambulance	USA	1942	3770cc; 6; petrol	26,000	£8000	£10,350	£8950	▼
Dodge WC55-WC58 command	USA	1942	3770cc; 6; petrol	37,000	£18,950	£36,000	£24,987	▼
Dodge WC62, WC63, WC64	USA	1942	3770cc; 6; petrol	43,000	£5950	£6925	£6437	▲
GMC CCKW	USA	1941	4416cc; 6; petrol	562,750	£3000	£10,250	£8473	▲
Jeep M151	USA	1960	2319cc; 4; petrol	175,500	£3000	£8500	£5375	▼
Hotchkiss Jeep M201	France	1957	2199cc; 4; petrol	14,500	£825	£16,075	£11,920	▲
Jeep M38, M38A1	USA	1952	2199cc; 4; petrol	100,000	£6500	£13,500	£10,823	▼
Jeep MB/GPW	USA	1941	2199cc; 4; petrol	627,000	£6250	£15,000	£8975	▼
Land Rover Defender 90/110	UK	1983	2506cc; 4; diesel; and others	–	£6000	£7950	£7112	▲
Land Rover 101 forward-control	UK	1971	3500cc; V8; petrol	2675	£6000	£9750	£8437	–
Land Rover Lightweight	UK	1966	2286cc; 4; petrol	14,000	£4250	£6995	£5199	▼
Land Rover Wolf (incl replicas)	UK	1996	2506cc; 4; diesel	–	£8000	£12,500	£11,670	▲
Land Rover Series II/IIA	UK	1958	2286cc; 4; petrol; and others	858,051**	£3500	£5499	£4373	▼
Land Rover Series III	UK	1971	2286cc; 4; petrol; and others	510,276**	£3000	£4995	£3302	▼
M35 (etc) 2½-ton 6x6, G742	USA	1951	5425cc; 6; diesel	15,000	£7950	£9000	£8191	▲
WHEELED ARMoured VEHICLES								
Daimler Ferret, FV700	UK	1952	4255cc; 6; petrol	4500	£10,000	£15,000	£11,487	▲
TRACKED ARMoured VEHICLES								
Alvis CVR(T) series, FV100	UK	1971	4200cc; 6; petrol*	3500	£8000	£17,500	£13,750	▼
GKN FV432 (Mk 2), FV434	UK	1962	6570cc; 6; diesel	3000	£12,750	£13,500	£13,085	▲
Vickers Abbott (Mk 2), FV433	UK	1966	6570cc; 6; diesel	500	£10,000	£26,000	£18,000	▲
MOTORCYCLES								
Harley-Davidson WLA, WLC	USA	1939	740cc; V2; petrol	78,000	£11,500	£16,500	£13,687	▲
TRAILERS								
¼-ton (for WW2 Jeep)	–	–	–	–	£150	£1650	£1083	▲
¾-ton British (for Land Rover)	–	–	–	–	£345	£500	£415	▲

* Engine capacity figure refers to vehicle as introduced; other engine capacities used during production run.

** Includes civilian production.

Note

This guide is not intended to be comprehensive – at present it covers only the most popular collectors' vehicles. Similarly, the figures given are not valuations and do not necessarily reflect condition – they have been derived from the asking prices for vehicles recently advertised in Classic Military Vehicle magazine and on MILWEB. But remember that the price at which a vehicle was advertised is no guarantee that it sold at this price... or that it sold at all.

The effect of VAT on prices has been excluded so if you are buying from a dealer you must ensure that you understand what you will pay in total.

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rg68@hotmail.co.uk Dorset

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WAR ILLUSTRATED - £125 Complete set War Illustrated from 16 September 1939 to December 1949. 34 copies January 1946 to April 1947 - 2 missing. Tel: **01544 230315**. Hereford.

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07734757477

MILITARY / MISC

GERMAN SIGNAL AND TORCH



as seen in above picture. All complete but without battery, working condition. I think this is the same model as WW2 (dated 1965). £65 plus postage & packing.
 Tel: **01255 812148** Essex

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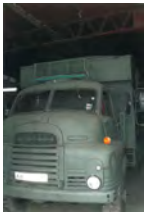
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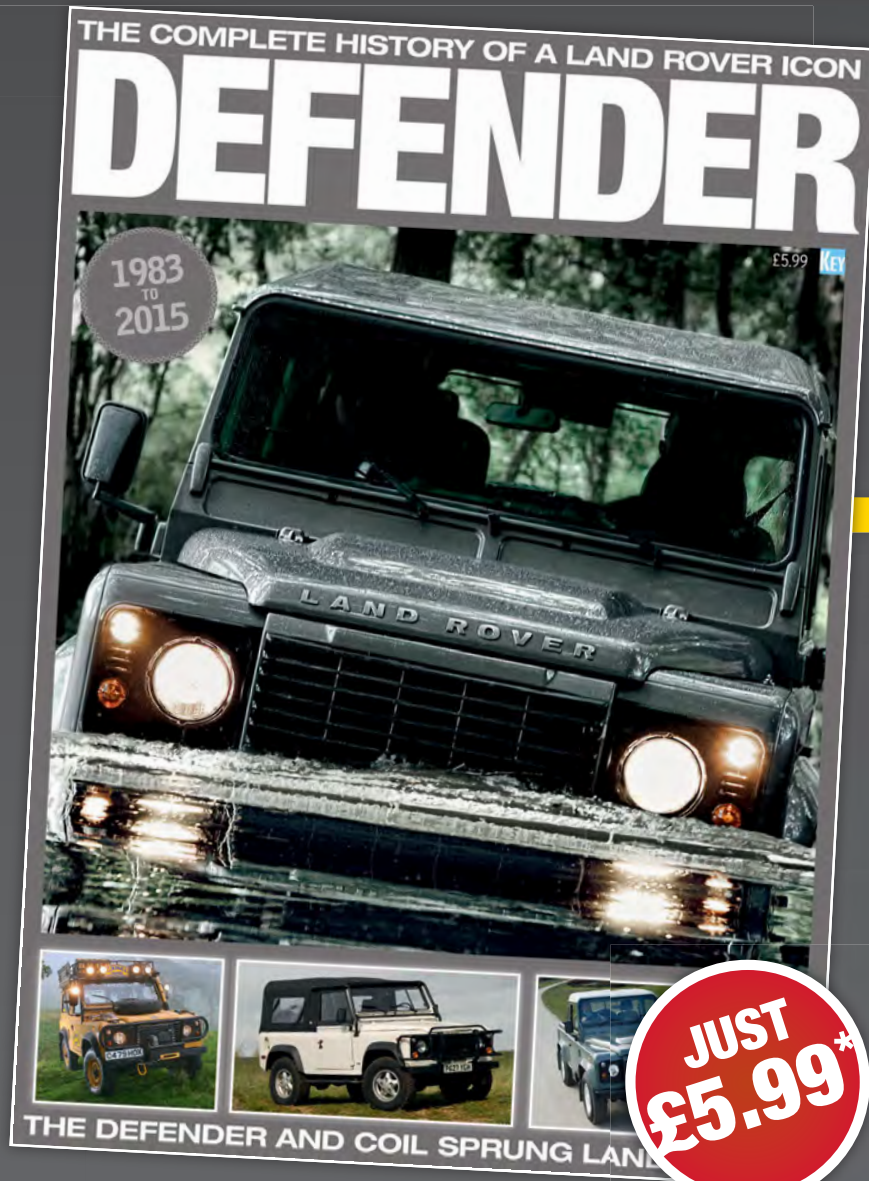
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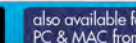
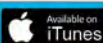
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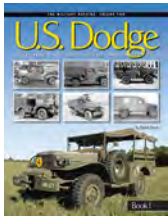
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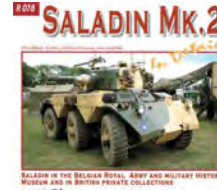
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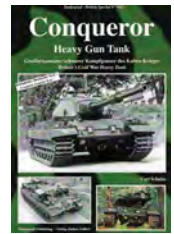
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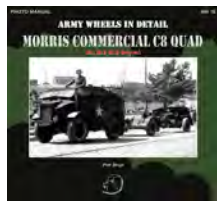
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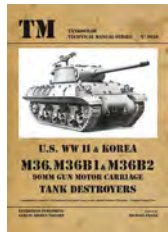
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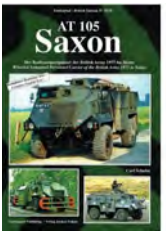
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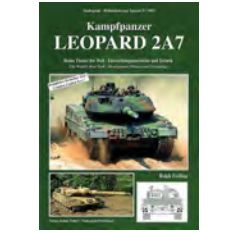
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