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Canadian Military Pattern truck

The **Canadian Military Pattern (CMP) truck** was a class of military truck made in large numbers in Canada during World War II to British Army specifications for use in the armies of the British Commonwealth allies. Standard designs were drawn up just before the beginning of the war.

Chevrolet C8 CMP truck with Type 11 cab

CMP trucks were also sent to the Soviet Union following the Nazi invasion of Russia, as part of Canada's lend-lease program to the Allies. During the War CMP trucks saw service around the world in the North African Campaign, the Allied invasion of Sicily, the Italian Campaign, the Russian Front, the Burma Campaign, the Battle of the Philippines (1941-42), the liberation of Northwest Europe, and the Western Allied invasion of Germany. CMP trucks also saw service in post-war conflicts in Indonesia, French Indochina, and the Portuguese colonies in Africa.

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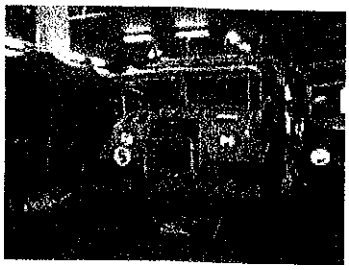
History

The rise to power in Germany of Hitler and the Nazi party in 1933 led to discussions in the mid-1930s between the British War Office and the Canadian Army concerning the possible production of military vehicles in Canada. During the First World War Canadian land forces had participated as a corps in the British Army. In any future conflict it was assumed that Canadian forces would again be tightly integrated with those of the Mother Country, and so it would be essential that Canadian-manufactured equipment be compatible with British standards and specifications.

Early in 1937, the Ford Motor Company of Canada and General Motors of Canada Ltd were each invited by the Canadian Department of National Defence to produce a Canadianized prototype of a 15-hundredweight light infantry truck that had then been recently adopted by the British War Office.[1] By 1938, Canadian military authorities had shifted their interest to heavier 4x4 and 6x4 designs. In that year, Ford and GM were invited to produce prototypes of a 6x4 medium artillery tractor derived from the British 6x4 Scammell Pioneer. By 1939, plans had been prepared for the mass production in Canada of a range of military vehicles based on fairly strict British specifications. These



Ford CMP chassis with opened windscreen pane on driver side

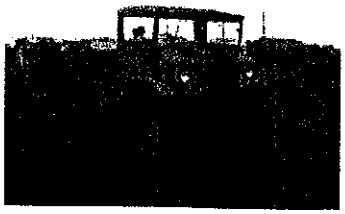
Canadian military truck production included both modified civilian designs as well as purely military designs based on the CMP specification, in roughly equal numbers. Truck production was focussed on a broad range of medium-capacity vehicles; Jeeps and trucks larger than 3 tons in capacity required by the Canadian Army were purchased from U.S. suppliers.[2] Most CMP trucks were manufactured by the Chevrolet division of General Motors of Canada Ltd and by the Ford Motor Company of Canada. The Canadian subsidiaries of the two largest American vehicle manufacturers were able to rapidly ramp up their production because of an unusual degree of inter-company collaboration, the use of interchangeable parts, and because of the large amount of idle production capacity that was a lingering result of the Great Depression. A smaller number of CMP trucks were assembled from Canadian-made chassis and parts in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa (2,600), India (9,500) and Egypt. In Germany, the facilities of GM subsidiary Opel and those of Ford-Werke AG were pressed into service to make military vehicles for the Nazi war effort. Following British convention, CMP trucks had right-hand drive even though most of them were built in Canada, which primarily used left-hand drive vehicles. The CMP specification proved versatile, and it formed the basis of a wide variety of different truck types and armoured vehicles. In Australian service (almost always with the No. 13 cab) these vehicles were known as the "Chev Blitz" or the "Ford Blitz".

Just over 400,000 CMP trucks were manufactured in Canada, accounting for roughly half of the 815,729[3] military vehicles made in Canada during World War II. The most prevalent type was the 4x4 3-ton truck (including models C60S, C60L, F60S and F60L), with just over 209,000 vehicles made. In addition, roughly 9,500 4x4 CMP chassis were made, mainly to be used to build armoured cars and other vehicles in Allied countries. CMP truck production in Canada exceeded the total military truck production of Nazi Germany. The British *History of the Second World War* (the official history of the war) argues that the production of soft-skinned trucks, including the CMP truck class, was Canada's most important contribution to the eventual Allied victory.[4]

Newly manufactured, or modified war surplus, CMP trucks were used after 1945 in several European armies (e.g., the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Spain) and around the world (e.g., South Africa, Argentina, Jordan, South Vietnam, Malaya). CMP trucks were adapted after the war for a variety of civilian roles including forestry, grain transport, fire-fighting trucks, and snowploughs. In Malaysia, after the Malayan Emergency, many CMP truck was converted to log tranporter or off road truck in construction site with upgraded brake system and powerful engines.

Major Canadian-built types

The Ford-built CMP trucks had a 239 cu in (3.9 L), 95 bhp (70.8 kW) V8 engine, while most of the Chevrolet-built CMP trucks had a 215 cu in (3.5 L), 85 bhp (63.4 kW) straight-6 overhead-valve engine. An American-made 270 cu in (4.4 L) GMC straight-6 engine powered the C60X 3-ton truck.



Chevrolet CMP chassis with No.13 cab

The Ford and Chevrolet trucks shared a standard cab design, which evolved over the years of production. The first (designed at Ford by Sid Swallow), second and third cab designs were called No. 11, 12 and 13, respectively. The first two type were similar, the main difference being a two-part radiator grille in No.12 cab (its upper part was opened with a bonnet, which was known as the "Alligator cab"). The final No. 13 cab, an entirely Canadian design made from late 1941 until the end of the war, had the two flat panes of the windscreen angled slightly downward to minimize the glare from the sun and to avoid causing strong reflections that would be observable from aircraft. All the CMP cab designs had a short, "cab forward" configuration that gave CMP trucks their distinctive pug-nosed profile. This design was required to meet the original British specifications for a compact truck design that would be more efficient to transport by ship. The specifications also demanded right-hand drive. Internally the cab had to accommodate the comparatively large North American engines and it was generally cramped.[5] The standard cabs were then matched up with a variety of standard chassis, drive trains and body designs. Chevrolet-built vehicles could be recognised by the radiator grille mesh being of a diamond pattern, whereas Ford-built ones had grilles

In the list below, a drive specification of NxM means that the vehicle has a total of N wheels and that M of those wheels are driven. The military specifications did not permit more than two wheels per axle.[7] The British standard load capacities of 8 cwt (hundredweight), 15 cwt, 30 cwt and 60 cwt correspond roughly to the American loads of 1/2 short ton, 3/4 ton, 1.5 ton and 3 ton, respectively. The 60-cwt CMP trucks were usually called 3-ton lorries or trucks.

Ford Australia CMP "Blitz" truck

- Ford F8 (4x2, 101 in (2.6 m) wheelbase, 8 cwt)
- Ford F15 (4x2, 101" wheelbase, 15 cwt)
- Ford F15A (4x4, 101" wheelbase, 15 cwt)
- Ford F30 (4x4 drive, 134.25" wheelbase, 30 cwt)
- Ford F60S - 4x4, "short" 115 inch wheelbase, 3 ton)
- Ford F60L - 4x4, "long" 158.25 in (4.020 m) wheelbase, 3 ton
- Ford F60T tractor unit (4x4, 115" wheelbase, 3 ton)
- Ford F60H - 6x4, rear axle undriven, 160.25"+52" wheelbase, 3 ton
- Ford FGT artillery tractor (4x4, 101.25" wheelbase)
- Ford Lynx Scout Car (4x4, 101" wheelbase) - based on Daimler Dingo
- Chevrolet C8 (4x2, 101" wheelbase, 8 cwt)
- Chevrolet C8A Heavy Utility Truck (4x4, 101" wheelbase, 8 cwt)
  Made in Wireless (HUW), Ambulance (HUA), Personnel (HUP), Machinery ZL (mobile radio repair shop) and Computer (accounting, payroll) configurations
- Chevrolet C15 (4x2, 101" wheelbase, 15 cwt)
- Chevrolet C15A (4x4, 101" wheelbase, 15 cwt)
- Chevrolet C15TA Armoured Truck (4x4, 101" wheelbase, 15 cwt)
- Chevrolet C30 (4x4, 134" wheelbase, 30 cwt)
- Chevrolet C60S (4x4, 134" wheelbase, 3 ton)
- Chevrolet C60L (4x4, 158" wheelbase, 3 ton)
- Chevrolet C60X - C60 chassis with 6x6 drive, 160"+52" wheelbase, 3 ton, 270 cu. in. GMC straight-6 engine)
- Chevrolet CGT Field Artillery tractor (4x4, 101" wheelbase)
- General Motors Fox armoured car (4x4, 101" wheelbase)
- General Motors Otter Light Reconnaissance Car (4x4, 101" wheelbase)

Dutch armoured personnel carrier (GM C15TA) used during the Indonesian Revolution, Tropenmuseum collection

Outside Canada

To meet the pressing demand for military vehicles during World War II, several Commonwealth countries designed light armoured vehicles based on CMP chassis made in Canada.

- Ruskin Motor Bodies Pty Ltd and Ford Motor Company of Australia Rover Light Armoured Car (4x4, 134.25" and 158.25" wheelbases) - built on Ford 3-ton CMP chassis
- General Motors Holden Ltd Rhino Heavy Armoured Car (4x4, 101" wheelbase) - prototype only
- General Motors Holden Ltd 6x6 Heavy Armoured Car (6x6, 158" wheelbase)

chassis

See also

- List of military equipment of the Canadian Army during the Second World War
- Morris C8 Field Artillery Tractor
- Military history of Canada during the Second World War

References

Notes

1. *Blueprint for Victory.*.
2. *Blueprint for Victory.*.
3. Granatstein, Jack, *Arming the Nation: Canada's Industrial War Effort 1939-1945*, Canadian Council of Chief Executives, May 27, 2005.
4. Hall, H. Duncan and Wrigley, C. C. *Studies of Overseas Supply*, a volume in the *War Production Series* directed by M. M. Postan, published as part of the *History of the Second World War*. United Kingdom Civil Series *edited by Sir Keith Hancock. Her Majesty's Stationery Office and Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1956, pp. 51-52.*
5. Fletcher, David *British Military Transport 1829-1956* London 1998 HMSO
6. *Blueprint for Victory.*.
7. This restriction could have several possible benefits. First, a standard axle length would simplify the use of standard loading ramps, partial bridge decks, and bridge decks in which the road bearing girders protrude above the road surface on the top side. Second, the load of trucks of a standard axle length is more directly and safely transmitted down to the longitudinal spans supporting the bridge under the bridge deck by positioning the spans apart to match the standard axle length. Third, allowing only one wheel at each end of an axle would ensure that all wheels would be fast to change. Finally, minimizing the tread width would very slightly reduce a vehicle's vulnerability in minefields while following other vehicles of the same standard axle length.

Bibliography

- Gregg, William, (ed.), *Blueprint for Victory: The story of military vehicle design and production in Canada from 1937-45*, The Canadian Military Historical Society, Rockwood, Ontario, 1981, ISBN 0-9690943-2-9.

External links

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