

Army Motor Corps Helped To Win the European War

Starting With One Truck in 1903 Motor Equipment Numbered 204,691 When the Armistice Was Signed With Germany in November Last Year.

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Every stream has a source, which axiom may possess no special interest save for the purpose of establishing a starting point. The fountain head of the motor transport corps was localized in 1903, when authorization for the procurement of one Oldsmobile was granted by the War Department. From that time until 1911 motor transportation for the army was under limited consideration, a few official reports being rendered covering the utility, practicability, etc., of power driven vehicles for military uses, but judged by procurement and standardization the results were negligible. True it is that a small stock of machines, widely diversified as to make and type, was procured and tested under service conditions, but the conclusion may be asserted that the methods of army transportation up to 1911 had no pronounced deviation from those obtaining from the early days of the republic—man, boat, rail, and, last, but by no means least, the cumbersome horse-drawn carriage.

When the VIII punitive expedition had its first roll call, the motor truck took its position and answered "Here." At that time the government possessed less than 100 machines—the exact figures are 89—and of this about 20 were on duty in our foreign territory. The demand for trucks became imperative, and emergency orders prevailed. To meet the situation, a train was hired and this, carrying only the chassis of trucks and a hastily secured civilian personnel for company organization, was driven at express speed and first right of way from a Great Lake city on the north to the Mexican border. Upon arrival, escort wagon bodies were fastened to the chassis—27 thus equipped constituting a unit—the appropriate civilian personnel was assigned, a competent officer placed in command and the convoy started south with its load under orders to make contact in shortest possible time with our American forces then far below the horizon in the sun-baked, cacti-studded terrain of Mexico.

Competent Officers.

In command of these companies were officers specially selected, clearheaded, fearless men; men of the tractor and not the pulley type, and every one made the delivery. These officers, with few exceptions, have retained their identity with the motor transport service to the present day. General Drake, now chief of the corps, was commanding officer of one of these companies; Colonel Furlow, now deputy chief, was also a company commander and the officer who brought the emergency train from Cleveland to the border; Colonel Seaman, now executive officer, was supply officer and particularly active in his services along the entire border. Colonel Orton, came to the service from civil life in 1917, his selection as chief of service division being based upon his technical experience as engineer, organizer, writer and instructor. For many years he was dean of the college of engineering, Ohio State university.

First Ships Take Trucks.

When, in April, 1917, the congress of the United States placed the lives, fortunes, and sacred honor of its charge—the American people—on the altar of liberty the bell of activity which attached to the motor transport service became of stupendous size. On June 14, 1917, the first convoy of five ships, under the protection of the navy, sailed with American forces, and its total motor equipment was 128 Packard one-and-a-half-ton new chassis, two Cadillac touring cars, three motorcycles, and four Nash quads. The Cadillacs, Nash quads, and two of the motorcycles belonged to the marines. One of the Packards became damaged and was used for its spare parts. Therefore, 127 Packard chassis and one motorcycle constituted the equipment of the motor transport service, but with limited spare parts, miscellaneous supplies, no oil or gasoline. The arrival of the second American convoy brought the quota of the Cadillac touring cars up to 30, but there were no spare parts, and the batteries had been packed based on operation, however, was effected. Rope makes a fair substitute for the standard tire, but such use is observed to be highly conducive to remarks carrying more force than elegance.

"For God's Sake, Hurry!"

It early became apparent that every cubic foot of ship space must be utilized for men and munitions, rather than bulky material; and even before the transatlantic call for assistance, "For God's sake, hurry up," had reached the White House trucks had been relegated to the second table, with mighty slight chance of the meal being served on time. Trucks were in demand "over there," and it naturally became incumbent upon the motor service, "A. E. France," to produce results in the procurement line. Europe was literally dragnetted from the North Cape to Gibraltar for everything in the motor line possessing sufficient vitality to move, gasp or stand an injection of gasoline. The resultant haul was astonishing in diversity of type, dissimilarity of species, general tendency to crass cussedness and a grinning disregard for the laws of nature or man.

American genius and initiative came in answer to the "S. O. S." of this situation. Shops of stupendous size and unprecedented capacity were provided, operated with a highly-trained and specialized personnel, and fully equipped with wonder-working appliances and machinery. The results were notable and prompt in arriving. The "invalids" were rebuilt, repaired or resuscitated in record-making periods. As to efficiency in repair work, let the following incident be typically illustrative: Place, an overhaul park to the south of Chateau-Thierry, time, July 8, 1918; employees, 1,500 motor truck corps men; conditions obtaining, the American forces had been ordered into the lines, due to the situation at the front being particularly bad, the French needing aid. Speedy action was es-

sential and trucks to transport the Americans were ordered from the overhaul park, and a surprisingly brief time limit set for readiness of the trucks. In this park there were about 600 trucks—a few convalescent, but the majority in varying stages of chronic dissolution or relapse. At the expiration of the time given 580 trucks were in condition for use and lined up ready to move. They did move the troops, 14,500 men, and on exact schedule.

Many Different Makes.

Another matter for some consideration: The spare parts required for the diversified types amounted to the respectable figure of 80,000 varieties, (approximately 4,000,000 parts being carried in stock at all times.) Each and every spare part has its particular place and function in the special machine, and the substitution was impossible.

The different makes of American and foreign passenger cars in actual use by the A. E. F. at the high point of collection number approximately 170—a very respectable showing.

While the shipment of motor vehicles from America was temporarily suspended, let it not be inferred that activity looking to the supplying of personnel and material had for one instant slackened. In fact, it must be recorded that the automobile industry of America had crystallized into one unit of unprecedented efficiency, to which must be credited to a major extent the termination of the war. Their co-operation and collaboration have been perfect, and have enabled the Motor Transport Corps to effectively meet the unprecedented demand for trained men, for motor vehicles, accessories, spare parts, and many other elements. This is as perfect a sample of American loyalty as the history of the war affords.

Establish Large Camps.

The Motor Transport Corps established large camps, each devoted to the purpose of meeting demands from the battle front.

The program as created and perfected met the demands of the emergency; it adapted automatically to the present armistice, or a complete peace; and yet perfectly adjustable to a resumption of hostilities, or to demands highly intensified over those which have heretofore been presented. As to material shipped to the A. E. F. from April 24, 1917, to December 31, 1918, by the Motor Transport Corps, the records show there were 110,911 vehicles and 15,468 tons of spare parts. About 1,200 vehicles repose on the ocean bed of the Atlantic.

The following table, compiled from official sources, shows the number of motor vehicles in use by the American Expeditionary Force, as of December 15, 1918:

Type	Total	Foreign	American
Motor trucks	22,500	22	40
Passenger cars	7,718	2	85
Motorcycles	13,900	5	3
Trailers	4,300	24	20
Bicycles	25,000
Total	51,878	53	148
Approximate value	\$175,000,000		

Total Number of Trucks.

Interest is attached to the following statement, which is believed to be thoroughly accurate, as showing the motor transport corps equipment, less cancellations, ordered to December 1, 1918:

Trucks	Total
Class A, 1 1/2-ton	22,500
Class B, 2 1/2-ton	10,200
Class C, 3 1/2-ton	41,621
Class T, F. W. D.	22,717
Total	97,038

According to the report of the secretary of war for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1918, the motor transport corps had 2,700 officers and 77,000 men. Automobile equipment carried over for the year 1918 amounted to \$33,000,000. The appropriations for motor transportation for the same period were \$885,000,000, of which the sum of \$350,000,000 had been expended or is applicable to contracts remaining in force. About \$2,000,000 is considered necessary for repair shop and equipment service program, and \$6,000,000 for demobilization and liquidation of vehicles left on hand. The equipment carried over into the fiscal year 1920 represents the sum of \$732,000,000. This report also states that up to the date of its rendition the following have been completed for the army: 82,500 standardized and commercial types of trucks; 16,000 motor cars; 27,000 motorcycles; 22,000 bicycles, and a large number of trailers. The motor transport corps had on hand at this time the respectable balance of \$501,698,824 from appropriations.

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Safety and Comfort of Owner Considered in New Westcott Six

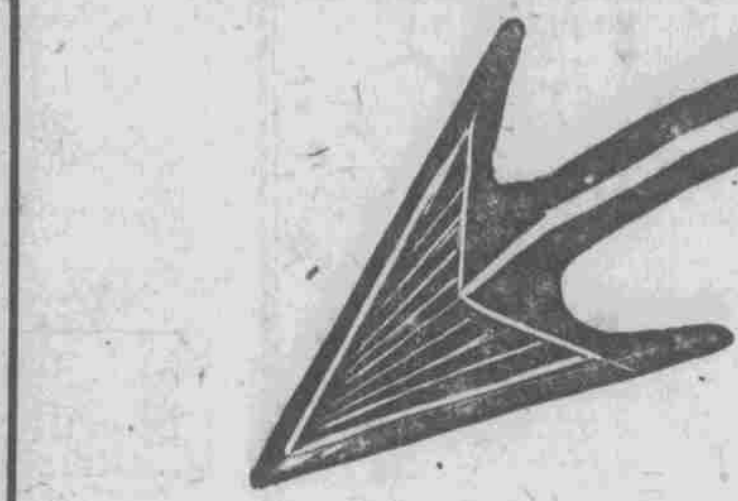
A car owner's safety, comfort and convenience are especially considered in the construction of the Westcott Six, according to Carl Changstrom, president of the Standard Motor Company, 2020 Farnam, western distributors of the Westcott car.

No further investment of expensive auto accessories in order to make the car 100 per cent perfect in beauty or comfort is necessary for the owner. In its class, the Westcott is noted to engender the completeness of appointment and perfection of equipment. Every detail from a tailored top with rear curtain of Gypsy type to outside ornamental door handles feature the completeness of the Westcott Six. As a high-class car, the Westcott has been an attraction in Omaha, Mr. Changstrom asserts.

Though practically a new car in the middle-west, the car has gained expensive popularity.

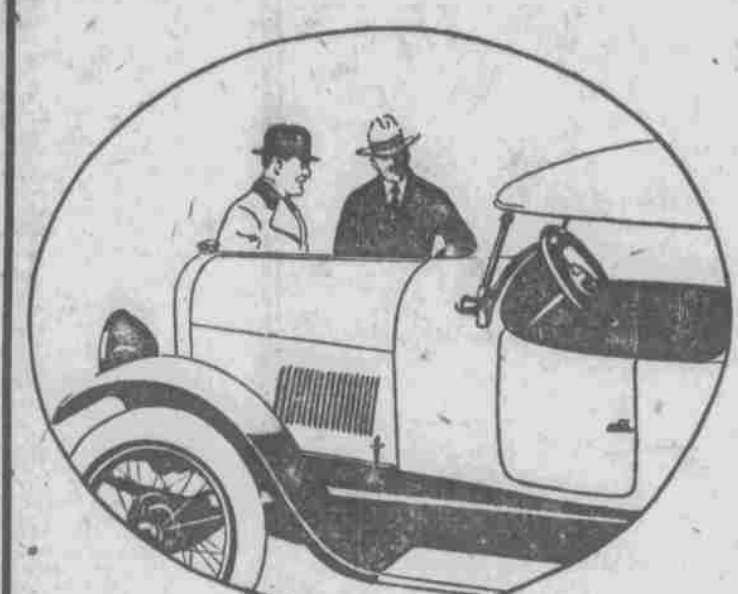
Rim Paint.

It used to be the fashion to recommend shellac as a satisfactory medium for painting rims. As a matter of fact shellac has the fatal characteristic of peeling off after brief service. Graphite paint or even ordinary paint is better for use on the rims than shellac.



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