

British Motor Battalion

War Establishment reference I/1931/8D/1

Notified 27th July 1938

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Composed of;

Battalion Headquarters	5 Officers, 20 men
Headquarter Company	5 Officers, 107 men
Company Headquarters	(1 Officer, 5 men)
Signal Platoon	(1 Officer, 23 men)
Administrative Platoon	(3 Officers, 79 men)
Four Motor Companies, each	4 Officers, 151 men
Company Headquarters	(2 Officers, 26 men)
Scout Platoon	(1 Officer, 36 men)
One Motor Platoon	(1 Officer, 29 men)
Two Motor Platoons, each	(30 men)
Total strength	757 all ranks (26 Officers and 731 men)

Summary Table, British Motor Battalion, July 1938

Detail	Battalion HQ	Headquarter Company			Total, HQ Company	Four Motor Companies, each				Total, Motor Company	Total, Battalion
		Company HQ	Signal Platoon	Administrative Platoon		Company HQ	Scout Platoon	One Motor Platoon	Two Motor Platoons (each)		
i). Personnel											
Officers	5	1	1	3	5	2	1	1	0	4	26
Warrant officers	1	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	3	15
Staff-serjeants	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5
Serjeants	4	0	1	4	5	0	2	1	1	5	29
Corporals	0	0	1	2	3	1	5	3	3	15	63
Privates	15	3	21	72	96	23	29	25	25	127	619
Total, all ranks (including attached)	25	6	24	82	112	28	37	30	30	155	757
ii). Transport											
Motorcycles	6	1	5	1	7	4	4	1	1	11	57
Cars (4-seater)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trucks, 8-cwt (6-seater)	2	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	1	9
Trucks, 8-cwt (wireless)	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	6
Trucks, 15-cwt	2	0	2	5	7	3	0	4	4	15	69
Truck, 15-cwt (water tank)	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lorries, 30-cwt	0	0	0	9	9	1	0	0	0	1	13
Carriers, scout	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	11	44
iii). Weapons											
Pistols	12	2	6	4	12	6	5	2	2	17	92
Rifles	13	4	18	78	100	22	32	28	28	138	665
Light machine guns	1	0	0	1	1	1	11	3	3	21	86
Anti-tank rifles, .55-inch	1	0	0	1	1	2	11	3	3	22	90
2-inch mortars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	12
Signal pistols	3	0	0	0	0	2	4	1	1	9	39

Notes

Attached personnel consist of 1 Officer, 1 Staff-serjeant *or* Serjeant and 8 rank & file (included in above).

Of the total Corporals (excluding attached) 13 may be Lance-serjeants.

Of the total Privates (excluding attached) 45 may be Lance-corporals.

Battalion Headquarters (5 Officers, 20 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Battalion commander	Lieutenant-colonel	1	Pistol	
Adjutant	Captain	1	Pistol	
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Car, 4-seater	1
Second-in-command	Major	1	Pistol	
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 8-cwt	1
Technical officer	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Fitter, MV (RAOC)	Staff-serjeant <u>or</u> Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 8-cwt	1
Regimental serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class I	1	Pistol	
Clerk	Serjeant <u>or</u> Corporal	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Orderly	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt (office) <i>office gear</i>	1
Liaison officer*	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Rifleman	Private	2	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS Light machine gun Anti-tank rifle	1 1 1
Intelligence serjeant*	Serjeant	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Orderly	Private	2	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	2
Provost-serjeant	Serjeant	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Regimental Police	Private	2	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	2
	Total, all ranks	25		

*see note 3

Headquarter Company (5 Officers, 107 men)

Company Headquarters (1 Officer, 5 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Company commander	Captain	1	Pistol	
Company serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Company quarter-master-serjeant	Staff-serjeant	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	1
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Total, all ranks		6		

Signal Platoon (1 Officer, 23 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Signal Subaltern	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Signaller	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-operator	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	1
			Wireless set, No.1 or No.11	1
Signal serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Signaller	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-operator	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	1
			Wireless set, No.1 or No.11	1
Orderly	Private	5	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	5
Driver-operator	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Signaller	Private	3	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt (cable laying)	1
			<i>signal stores and wire hand cable layer packs and greatcoats</i>	
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Driver-operator	Private	1	Rifle	1
Signaller	Private	3	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>signal stores and wire packs and greatcoats</i>	
	Total, all ranks	24		

Administrative & Transport Platoon (3 Officers, 79 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Transport officer	Subaltern	1	Pistol	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	
Quarter-master	<i>not stated</i>	1	Pistol	1
Regimental quarter-master-serjeant	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	
Transport	Serjeant	1	Pistol	1
			Motorcycle, solo	
Medical officer (RAMC)	<i>not stated</i>	1	Pistol	3
Medical officer's orderly	Lance-corporal	1	Rifle	
Serjeant in charge stretcher bearers	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Stretcher bearer	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Stretcher bearer	Private	13	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	3	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>medical equipment packs and greatcoats</i>	
Rifleman	Private	2	Rifle	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS*	
			Light machine gun	
			Anti-tank rifle	1
			<i>HQ Company blankets</i>	
Pioneer serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	1
Blacksmith	Private	1	Rifle	
Bricklayer	Private	1	Rifle	
Carpenter and joiner	Private	2	Rifle	
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Mason	Private	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	10	Rifle	
Butcher	Private	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Equipment repairer	Private	2	Rifle	
Motor mechanic	Private	2	Rifle	
Postman	Lance-corporal	1	Rifle	
Sanitary duties	Private	4	Rifle	
Storeman	Private	2	Rifle	
Technical storeman	Private	2	Rifle	
Serjeant cook	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Cook	Private	3	Rifle	
Officer's mess cook	Private	1	Rifle	
Officer's mess servant	Private	1	Rifle	
Armourer (RAOC)	<i>not stated</i>	2	Rifle	
Electrician (RAOC)	<i>not stated</i>	1	Rifle	
Fitter, MV (RAOC)	<i>not stated</i>	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS <i>petrol reserve, Company HQ</i>	1
Water dutyman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, water tank	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>MT stores and tools</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Corporal	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>QM stores and baggage</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>Pioneer stores</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS	1
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>Officers' mess eqpt & baggage</i>	1
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>cooking set</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>ammunition reserve</i>	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	2	Rifle Lorry, 30-cwt, GS <i>anti-gas capes</i> <i>reserve clothing & web eqpt</i>	2
Total, all ranks		82	*fitted with AA LMG mount	

Four Motor Companies (4 Officers, 151 men), each

Company Headquarters (2 Officers, 26 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
<i>Fighting</i>				
Company commander	Major or Captain	1	Pistol	
Company serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class II	1	Rifle	
Clerk	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Second-in-command	Captain	1	Pistol	
Signaller	Private	2	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 8-cwt	1
			Wireless set, No.1 or No.11	1
Orderly	Private	4	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	4
<i>Administrative</i>				
Motor mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
Technical storeman	Private	1	Rifle	
Fitter, MV (RAOC)	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			<i>Company petrol reserve</i>	
Company quarter-master-serjeant	Staff-serjeant	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	2	Rifle	
Storeman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			<i>QM stores & company reserve of small arms & mortar amm</i>	
Rifleman	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Rifleman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS*	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
			<i>packs, etc, of Company HQ</i>	
			<i>packs of Scout Platoon</i>	
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Cook	Private	3	Rifle	1
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Lorry, 30-cwt, GS cooking set water in tins	
Total, all ranks		28	*fitted with AA LMG mount	

Scout Platoon (1 Officer, 36 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Batman (gun number)	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Gun number	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Driver-operator	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
			Wireless set, No.1 or No.11	1
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Three Sections, each				
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Section commander	Serjeant*	1	Rifle	
Rifleman (gun number)	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle	
			Carrier	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
Rifleman	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Rifleman (gun number)	Private	1	Rifle	
Continued...				

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle Carrier Light machine gun Anti-tank rifle	1 1 1
Rifleman	Lance-corporal	1	Rifle	
Rifleman (gun number)	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver-mechanic	Private	1	Rifle Carrier Light machine gun Anti-tank rifle	1 1 1
*Lance-serjeant in one Section	Total, all ranks	37		

One Motor Platoon (1 Officer, 29 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon commander	Subaltern	1	Pistol	
Platoon serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Batman	Private	1	Rifle	
Rifleman	Private	1	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS 2-inch mortar <i>packs, blankets & greatcoats tools</i>	1 1
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol Motorcycle, solo	1
Three Sections, each				
Section commander	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Rifleman	Private	6	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle Truck, 15-cwt, GS Light machine gun Anti-tank rifle <i>packs, blankets & greatcoats tools</i>	1 1 1
	Total, all ranks	30		

Two Motor Platoons, each (30 men)

Detail	Rank	No.	Weapon/Vehicle/Other	No.
Headquarters				
Platoon serjeant-major	Warrant officer, class III	1	Pistol	
Platoon serjeant	Serjeant	1	Rifle	
Rifleman	Private	2	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			2-inch mortar	1
			<i>packs, blankets & greatcoats</i>	
			<i>tools</i>	
Orderly	Private	1	Pistol	
			Motorcycle, solo	1
Three Sections, each				
Section commander	Corporal	1	Rifle	
Rifleman	Private	6	Rifle	
Driver, I.C.	Private	1	Rifle	
			Truck, 15-cwt, GS	1
			Light machine gun	1
			Anti-tank rifle	1
			<i>packs, blankets & greatcoats</i>	
			<i>tools</i>	
Total, all ranks		30		

Notes

1. One Motor Company is commanded by a Captain.
2. At least one officer and 12 men in the Battalion will be trained in anti-gas duties and decontamination work.
3. The Liaison officer could ride the motorcycle listed for the Intelligence Serjeant, in which case the latter travelled in the 15-cwt truck.
4. 11 personnel are positively identified as Lance-corporals. With 45 allowed across the whole Battalion there would be sufficient for at least two per Motor Platoon but this is not stated.
5. No rank is stated for either the Battalion Quarter-master or the attached Medical Officer (RAMC).
6. A batman was provided for each Officer, the Regimental Serjeant-major and the Medical Officer.
7. Six 15-cwt trucks each fitted with a Motley AA mount (central) for light machine gun.

Comment

The original WE table indicates ten men in each Scout Platoon were without an individual weapon. I am assuming this is an error of sorts, with one rifle being counted as a vehicle weapon for each carrier in the Scout Platoon, except the Subaltern's. A similar situation is seen in the superseding table.