

# VEHICLES IN SOLDIERS

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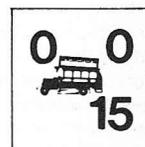
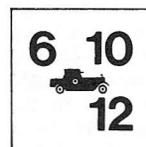
The age of the internal combustion engine was just beginning in 1914. As the automobile had only been recently invented, there was no widespread military use of it. In the fifteen or so years preceding the outbreak of the Great War, however, just about every nation experimented with arming and armoring automobiles. In most cases, these ideas were quickly forgotten and to most people, the armored car was an invention more at home in an H.G. Wells novel than a modern battlefield. Most nations attached touring cars to their headquarters to take officers on inspection tours. The Germans, however, took the precaution of making every motor-truck in the Reich liable to call-up, and in 1914 these were used for carrying artillery ammunition from railroad stations. German cavalry divisions also had a few unarmored civilian sports cars for scouting, each manned by a cavalry officer with a carbine and his chauffeur. These were fairly successful in the scout role in northern France, although they were dead when faced with any sort of resistance. The Belgians armored many civilian automobiles and used these for reconnaissance, although they were not much better than the German types. The Belgians also produced a genuine armored car, the Minerva, which was not widely used in the 1914 campaign and most built were sent to Russia. The only real users of motor vehicles in 1914 were the British.

Earlier armored car ideas in Britain met the same resistance as they did elsewhere. Britain was, however, more "motorized" than any other European nation. Most important, the British had Winston Churchill, Lord of the Admiralty. Churchill was often looked upon in 1914 and afterwards, as an advocate of impractical ideas such as machine guns, heavy artillery, armed airplanes, and armored vehicles. While the Army brushed these things off, Churchill was awake to the possibilities of these new inventions. Hence, by 1914, Churchill had assembled an interesting force: eight armored cars, Rolls-Royce, Lanchester, and Peerless types under Lieutenant-Commander Samson. To get them into action, Churchill attached them to the Royal Naval Air Service, under the premise that they were to be used for rescuing downed pilots, which they were in fact used for on at least one occasion. The real purpose, however, was for Churchill to get his "toys" into action as soon as possible. The "toys" as they were derisively known at the time, each carried a .30 calibre British Army machine gun, some carrying a second gun in reserve. Weighing about four tons, they could still make between 45 and 60 miles an hour on a road. At its thickest, their armor was nine millimeters thick, only slightly

thinner than that of the first tanks which were not to appear for another two years. Their wheels were bullet-proof, as was the whole car, by virtue of its armor plate. The Rolls-Royce model was used, with but minor modifications, by the British Army until 1941.

The armored cars landed, along with a Marine brigade, at Dunkirk on 26-27 September 1914. They moved inland to the Lens sector. In this movement, the Marines were aided because they had been issued, before leaving England, with a number of London buses. These red, double-deck type "B" buses had been borrowed from the London Transport companies, and the drivers and conductors enlisted into the Marines. Churchill sent these buses, still in their red paint, down to join the rest of the Marine brigade. This proved to be an excellent idea. Once the Marines were established, they became responsible for providing information on German troops in the "race to the sea," troops trying to get around the allied flank. The armored cars and the buses proved their worth in the scouting around Lens, and on 30 September, the armored cars and some troops carried in buses, along with French troops, repulsed a strong German cavalry probe on the road between Motbeque and Cassell. Later, as the front solidified, the armored cars were sent into the Ypres salient. They were just about the only type of unit that could survive reconnaissance missions in the area. They were also, on at least one occasion, used to spearhead an attack. By this time, the army had also become convinced of the value of motor transport, and they grabbed all the buses and drivers the Marines had left. The buses were used throughout the war, gaining the nickname "Old Bill" after the Bairnsfeather cartoon character, a bedraggled old soldier. The armored cars became less useful as the front entrenched. Their great weakness was that a three-foot ditch could stop them, and the trenches proved an insurmountable obstacle. The increased artillery fire also made life difficult for the armored cars, so they were, in 1915, shipped off to Gallipoli, where the hilly terrain made them ineffective. Armored cars were, however, kept in France until the end of the war. Although they were not to see any real action until the British breakthrough of 8 August 1918, Churchill's "toys" had opened the eyes of the army to the fact that armored fighting vehicles were possible, and in 1915, development started on the tank, a new weapon that would alter the face of the war. In the following *Soldiers* scenario, the player can see how the Armored Car, in its few actions in 1914, made a lasting impression on the British staff. It is not only included for its

historical importance and for being good "games" but so that players could see what it was like to be a "Panzer Leader," — 1914 style.



## RULES FOR VEHICLES

In *Soldiers* there are two types of vehicles — armored cars and buses. Only British Naval and Marine units were equipped with such vehicles. Bus units may be used to transport infantry or Machine gun units. Armored Car units cannot transport other units but function as mobile machine gun platforms.

(A) Vehicle units may move only on Road Hexes or through Clear Terrain Hexes.

(B) Up to one Infantry or Machine Gun company may be transported by a bus unit in a given Movement Phase.

(C) To pick up a "passenger" unit, the bus expends four Movement Points and the "passenger" unit expends two Movement Points. The "passenger" unit may move to the hex which the bus is on or the bus may move to a unit's hex to pick it up. No actual movement on the map is accomplished by the Movement Point costs of boarding the bus.

(D) Leaving a bus requires the bus unit to expend an additional four Movement Points and the passenger unit must expend two Movement Points. Again no movement on the mapsheet is accomplished by this Movement Point cost.

(e) When a unit is moving on board a bus, place the bus unit on top of it. A unit may end its Movement Phase on board a bus.

(F) Units may not fire or "observe" fire while being transported in a bus.

(G) Bus units defend with the Defense Strength of "2" regardless of the type of hex they are in. If a bus unit is "eliminated" while transporting a unit, the unit(s) are also "eliminated." If bus units are "disrupted" while transport units the "passenger" units are considered dropped-off before a "disrupted" marker is placed on top of them. The bus unit itself may not move in its next Movement Phase.

(H) Armored Car units are armed with Machine Guns. They have the same combat capability as British Machine Gun units; i.e., their Attack Strength doubles against units three or less

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hexes distant, they may fire over units, they may interdict two adjacent Clear Terrain hexes.

(J) Armored Car units have a Defense Strength of "seven" except when in Town hexes. In Town hexes their Defense Strength is "twelve."

(K) Only Artillery and Machine Gun units may attack Armored Car units. Machine Gun units must be in an adjacent hex to fire on armored car units. Artillery units may attack armored cars up to their maximum range.

(L) Each Armored Car unit must be attacked individually. Results affecting other units in the same hex as an armored car unit have no effect on the Armored Car unit. Results of attacks on Armored Car units also do not effect any other unit in the same hex.

(M) If an "e" result is obtained in an attack on an Armored Car unit the unit is destroyed. If a "d" result occurs the Armored Car unit must use all its Movement Points to retreat in its next Movement Phase directly away from the unit that fired on it. It may not fire at the end of this retreat movement.

(N) Armored Car units require two unused Movement Points to fire in the Fire Phase after their Movement.

(P) Armored Car and Bus units may never go into Improved Positions or enter Entrenched hexes.

(Q) Armored Car and Bus units may not be in the same hex with Mounted Cavalry units; otherwise vehicle units do not count toward stacking limits at all.

### *FRENCH AND BRITISH REPULSE OF GERMAN PROBE, MOTBEQUE-CASSEL AREA (30 SEPTEMBER 1914)*

The British Marine Brigade landed at Dunkirk to help safeguard the flank. They brought with them their armored cars, the first of their type. The Marines scouted from their base at Cassel with Commander Sampson's eight armored cars accompanied by Marines in commandeered London buses. Cooperating with the French 63rd Independent Chasseur regiment, they repulsed a probe by units of the German 9th Cavalry Division, who ran when they saw their carbine bullets bouncing off the armored cars.

### *ORDERS OF BATTLE*

#### ALLIED

6 French infantry companies, 2 French machine gun sections, 4 armored cars, 3 bus units, 2 British infantry companies, 2 British machine gun sections. DEPLOY first. All French units deploy in Wood H. All British units enter the mapsheet by road 6. All British units may be carried in buses at the start.

#### GERMAN

12 cavalry squadrons, 1 cavalry machine gun section, 2 gun batteries. DEPLOY enter the mapsheet turn 1 from the northern edge, anywhere west of the railroad. MOVE FIRST.

#### GAME LENGTH

12 Game-Turns

#### VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Allied Player wins if there are less than 3 undisrupted German units south of the canal at the end of the game.

The German Player wins if the Allied Player cannot fulfill his victory conditions. ●●