

The World War I Motor Transport Corps, the Transportation Corps, and the World War II to Present Transportation Corps

The Quartermaster General's Department, which in 1912 became the Quartermaster Corps, was responsible for army transportation until World War I. In 1918 the Motor Transport Service part of the Quartermaster Corps was made a separate army branch: the Motor Transport Corps. It lasted until 1920. Between 1920 and 1942 the Quartermaster Corps resumed responsibility for motor and other transportation, but in July 1942 the army formed the Transportation Corps that assumed control of army transportation by truck, rail, and marine means.

For an insignia the Motor Transport Corps adopted a seven-spoke (occasionally eight) truck's wheel with Mercury's winged helmet in the center. For officer's collar devices the tire on the wheel was silver, while on some chevrons the tire was white. For enlisted men's one-inch collar disk the tire, like all of the insignia, had a black finish.



Mercury's helmet was to face the observer's left, but some insignia were made facing to the right, as shown at the left.



Officers' insignia also came in a range of sizes. Normally they were one inch in diameter, but a few were larger. Small shirt insignia were commonly worn but the army never specified a small size for shirt collars. Below are three examples.

The left insignia is one inch in diameter, the right is a half-inch wide.

A variety of interesting MTC officers' insignia follow, including one with a gold finish rather than the prescribed black-bronze and another made in France that was cast.

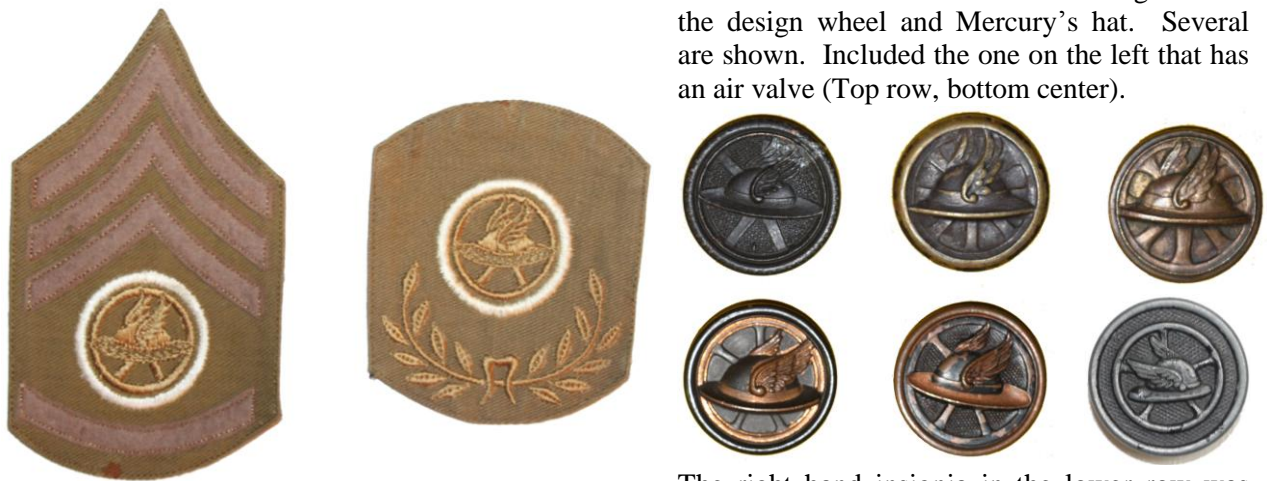


Chevrons worn 1918-1920 by Motor Transport Corps are shown next. During this period soldiers wore chevron their rank on the right sleeve only. A variety of these chevrons are shown.





Enlisted men wore bronze collar insignia with the design wheel and Mercury's hat. Several are shown. Included the one on the left that has an air valve (Top row, bottom center).



The right hand insignia in the lower row was produced by a button company in Germany in 1919 for U. S. forces. This gray disk, painted black, has the helmet facing the wrong way and has only 5 spokes.

In 1918 the army also instituted the Transportation Corps, which was responsible for rail transportation. The central design is a winged railway wheel on a short section of track. Officers' insignia had the design placed in a cut-out ring, while the enlisted disk was solid.



In 1942 the army created a new Transportation Corps that had responsibilities for army water, rail, and motor transportation. In February 1943 the gold color insignia was announced that showed all three modes of transportation. The shield in the center was in the shape of a federal highway sign, thus represented motor transportation. An insignia made by Gaunt, London, is shown (right), front and back.



A bullion insignia embroidered on navy blue for a dress uniform is depicted. That is followed by officer insignia with unit numbers. The "S&T" stands for Supply and Transport battalion.



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From the end of World War II until the late 1950s enlisted insignia with the one-inch disk formed into a dome shape were popular. A few of these are shown.

