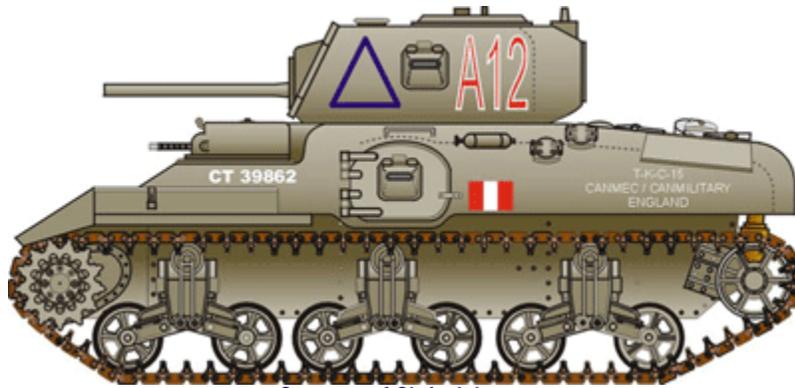


Tank, Cruiser, Ram II



Courtesy of Chris Johnson

This illustration depicts an early Ram II of 'A' Sqn as it may have appeared as a tank of the Grey and Simcoe Foresters. This regiment, together with the 16/22 Saskatchewan Horse and Halifax Rifles, constituted the original 2nd Army Tank Brigade which was formed in Canada, before embarking for the United Kingdom. As the Grey and Simcoe Foresters were the junior regiment in the brigade, the tac signs were painted blue.

Country of Origin:	Canada
Crew:	5 (Commander, Gunner, Driver, Assistant Driver, Loader)
Length:	19 feet
Width:	9 feet 1 inch
Height:	8 feet 9 inches
Weight:	65,000 pounds
Engine:	Continental 9 cylinder radial, gasoline
Maximum Speed:	25 mph
Range:	144 miles
Armour:	Maximum: 87 mm / Minimum: 25 mm 6 pdr Ordnance Quick Firing Mk 3 in turret
Armament:	.30 calibre MG M1919A4 co-axial to 6 pdr Gun .30 calibre MG M1919A4 in hull auxiliary MG turret

German military successes in the early days of WWII led to a realization that British tank production would be stretched to the limit to equip their own army, let alone Canadian Army requirements. With the fall of France and the danger of an invasion of Great Britain, it was further decided that more military production should be concentrated in Canada. With plans to mobilize two armoured divisions herself, Canada's cruiser tank requirements would be in the area of 1,000 vehicles, and there was absolutely no hope that Britain would be able to supply the necessary tanks. British and Canadian Army officials

saw serious design flaws in the U.S. medium M3 tank with its hull mounted main gun of limited traverse. To overcome those design flaws, the design and production of a cruiser tank in Canada was therefore undertaken. The design team appreciated the robust reliability of the M3 chassis and chose to incorporate it in the Canadian cruiser, in combination with a hull and turret that would meet Canadian/British requirements. A running prototype was completed in June 1941. As the 6pdr main gun drawings had not arrived from Great Britain, it was decided to mount the 2pdr gun in the first fifty vehicles which would be called the Ram I. In the summer of 1941, the Ram I prototype underwent trials at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in the U.S. Whether or not the Ram design influenced the U.S. T6 (M4 prototype) is still open to debate. The two tanks certainly shared similarities in design. One notable difference however, was that the driver's station in the Ram followed British practise and was on the right side of the tank. The Americans eventually gave the Ram Cruiser the paper designation M4A5. By the end of 1942, 40 of the original 50 Ram Is had been shipped overseas to Great Britain to partially equip Canadian armoured units.

In January 1942, after the completion of the first fifty Rams armed with 2pdr guns, full production started with Rams equipped with the 6pdr gun. These were all designated "Ram II". During its production life, the Ram II went through a variety of modifications, mostly as a result of user reports from the field. It was never to see action as a gun tank, and was used strictly for training purposes.