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AEC Dorchester

2nd Armd. Div.

North Africa



Step-by-Step Finishing British Armor

By Glenn Bartolotti



A complete Step-by-Step guide to Painting and Finishing Armor Models and Figures

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Models and Figures



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Materials Used

The materials I use are very easy to obtain and simple to use. Most are inexpensive and found at most all art supply stores. Over the years I have learned to use these basic materials to obtain finishes that look very realistic. Consistency is very important and following each step is very important to obtain the desired finish.

You will notice that in none of the steps will you see the method of dry-brushing. I do not like to use this method as some armor modelers do. I prefer a more subtle look in which I feel represents the look of a full scale armor vehicle.

The major materials below were used to finish the 1 model in this volume. Other supplies may be needed.

.010 & .020 sheet styrene - Italeri Bedford truck chassis, Resin AEC wheels from Accurate Armor & .030 plastic rivets

Xactor knife, steel ruler to cut sheet styrene and liquid model cement

Orderless Turpentine

Micro Sol Decal setting solution

1 each No. 3 round paint brush

1 each No. 0 round paint brush

1 can generic flat grey spray primer

1 can Testors Model Master gloss spray

1 can Testors Model Master lusterless flat spray

Testors Model Master flat enamel paints-*colors specified in text*

Testors Model Master airbrush thinner

Model Color Vellejo acrylic paint

Black

Armor Yellow

Red Brown

Artist oil paint

White

Black

Raw Umber

Burnt Sienna

Naples Yellow

Pastel Sticks

Rust

Light Sand

No. 2 Pencil



*Note: Materials used for painting and weathering only.
The figures seen in some of the photos used more
paint colors than listed above.*

AEC Dorchester

During the World War II the United Kingdom was the only country to develop and widely employ purpose-built armoured command vehicles. Those were essentially armoured buses based on truck chassis.

The most common ACV of the British Army was the AEC 4x4 ACV. The vehicle, based on AEC Matador chassis, entered production in 1941. A total of about 415 units were built. The vehicle was used for the first time in the North African Campaign and remained in service until the end of the war. Big and comfortable, it was nicknamed Dorchester by the troops, after the luxury hotel in London. Three ACVs of this type were captured by the German Afrika Korps. Two of them, named "Max" and "Moritz", were employed by Rommel and his staff throughout the campaign.

In 1944 a larger AEC 6x6 ACV was developed. The vehicle was based on AEC 0857 lorry chassis and was powered by the AEC 198 150 hp engine. The hull was

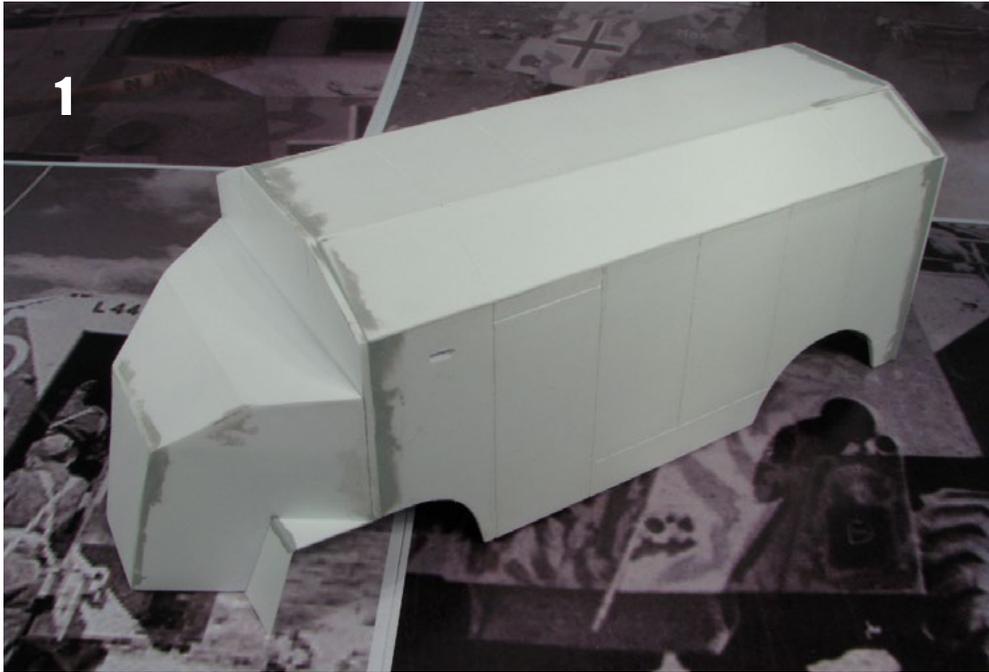
welded from 9 mm thick rolled steel. The weight of the vehicle reached 17 tons. One hundred and fifty one units were built.

Both vehicles were built in two configurations, called LP (Low Power) and HP (High Power), with different radio equipment.

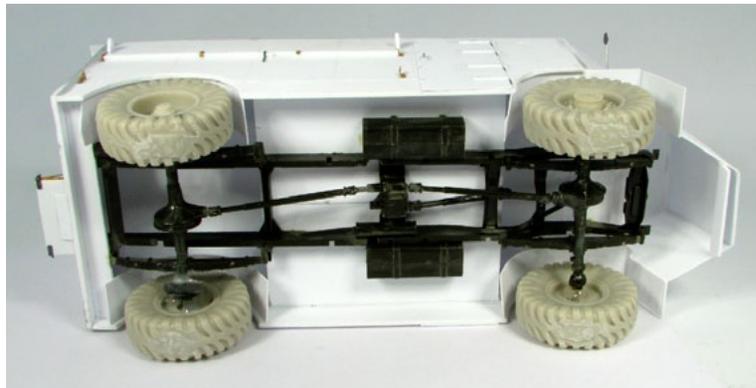
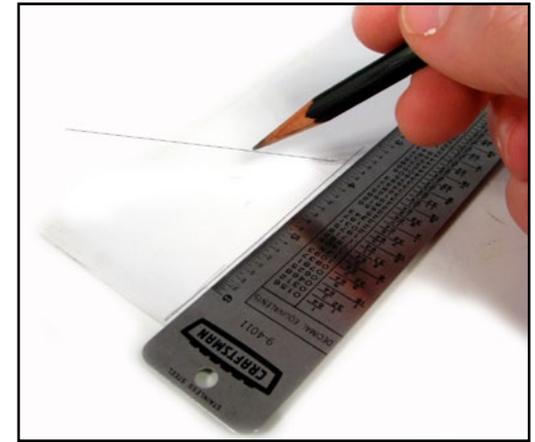


This project was very rewarding for me by building a model from almost all scratch. My main interest was the attractive paint scheme. The British Army adopted a disruptive scheme for their vehicles operating in the stony desert of the North African Campaign and also Greece, retrospectively known as the

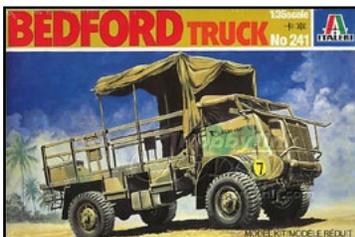
"Caunter scheme". This used up to six colors applied with straight lines.



1. To start the model the plans that are in this volume were drawn onto .020 sheet styrene and cut using the scribe and snap method. The plastic is scribed with a x-acto knife and cut by bending to snap plastic apart. It is easy and makes the cuts clean. The back was built first then the front cab.



2. The wheels/tires are resin products purchased from Accurate Armor. The chassis is modified from the Testors Italeri Bedford Truck model kit. The chassis needs to be shorten the the center and rear end. A floor was made after the chassis was assembled and put inside the body it was then adjusted so the wheels set at the correct height, then glued in place. I made just a basic chassis but you can go further and add more details.



<http://www.accurate-armor.com>

3



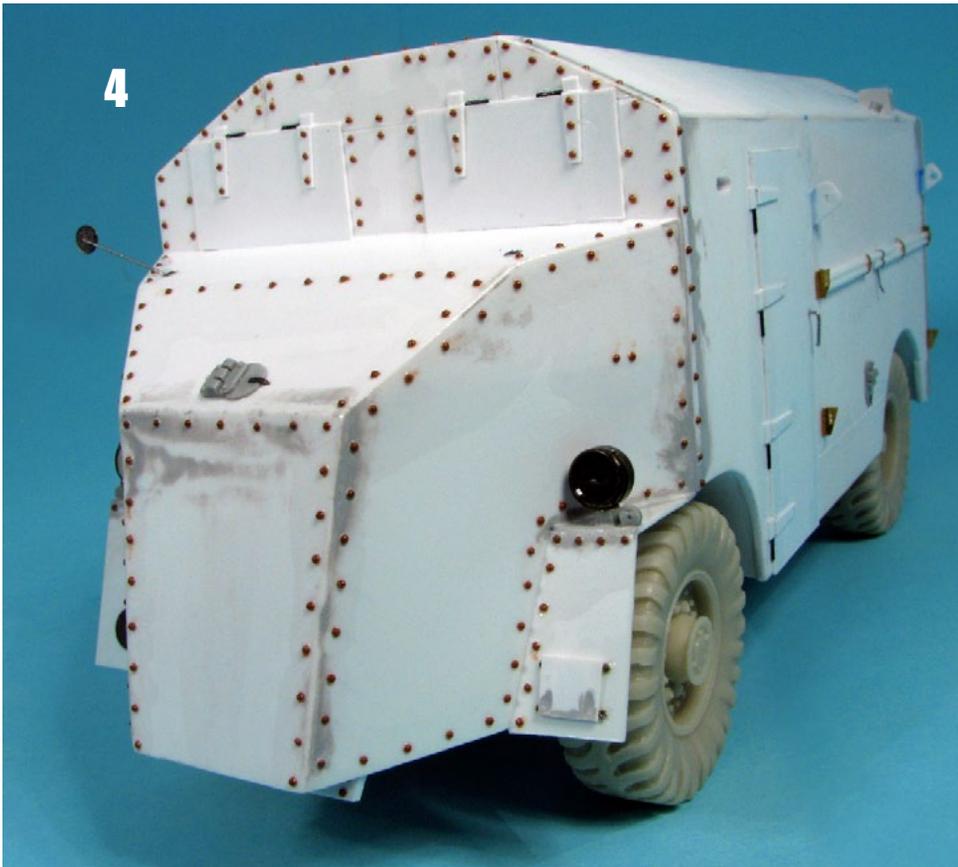
3. Details like the doors and hinges were cut from .010 sheet styrene. The fuel filler caps are spares from a DML Hummel, they looked close so I used them.

4. Head lights are from Italeri Truck kits I had in my spares box. Plastic rod stock was used for the tarp racks. The rear view mirror was made from wire and un-used PE piece of round metal.

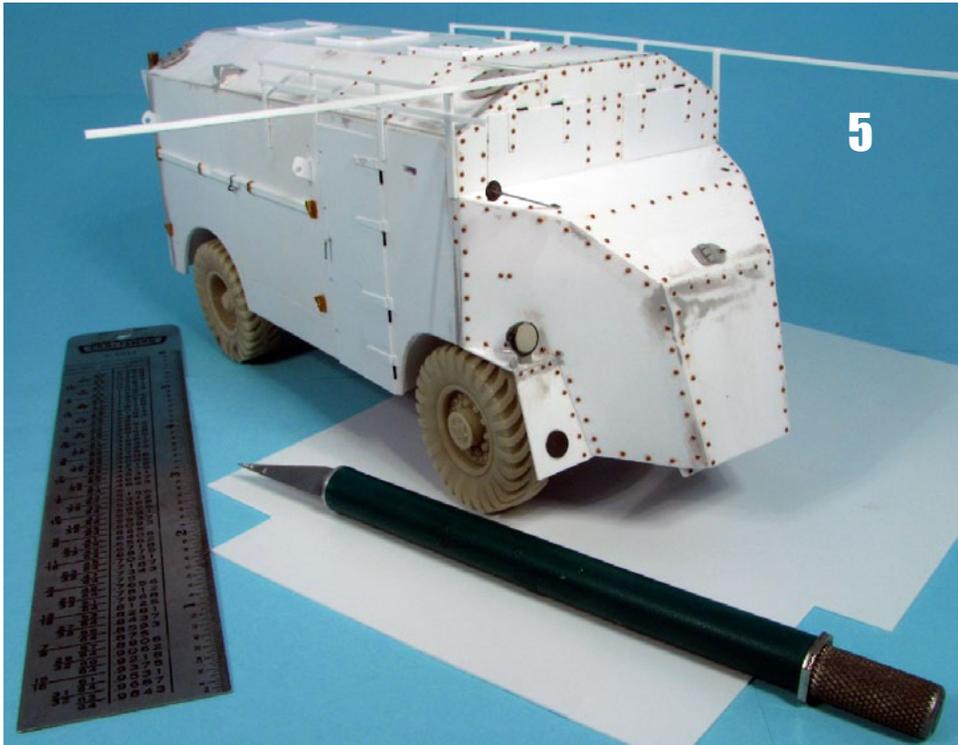
The rivets used are .030 plastic rivets that I purchased from a company called Tichy Train Group. They come on a sprue and have to be cut off with a #17 blade. Each rivet was placed by eye, a long process but well worth it. I pick a section a night to work on and was finished in a week.



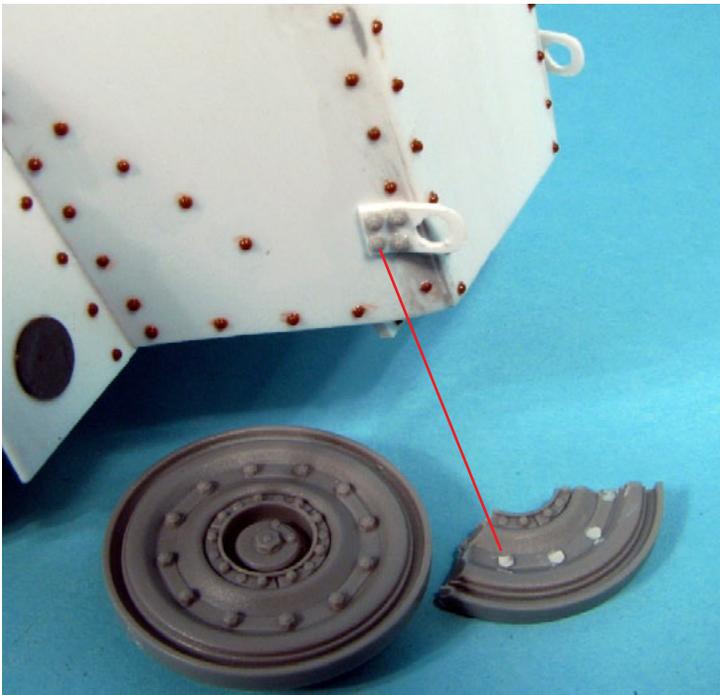
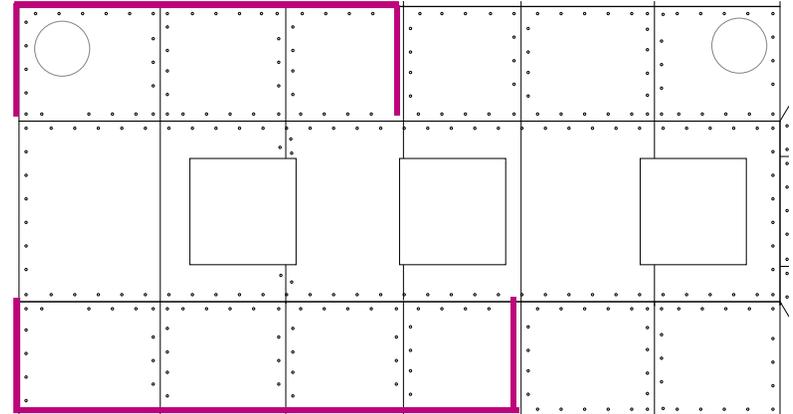
4



[Click on the photo above to watch video.](#)

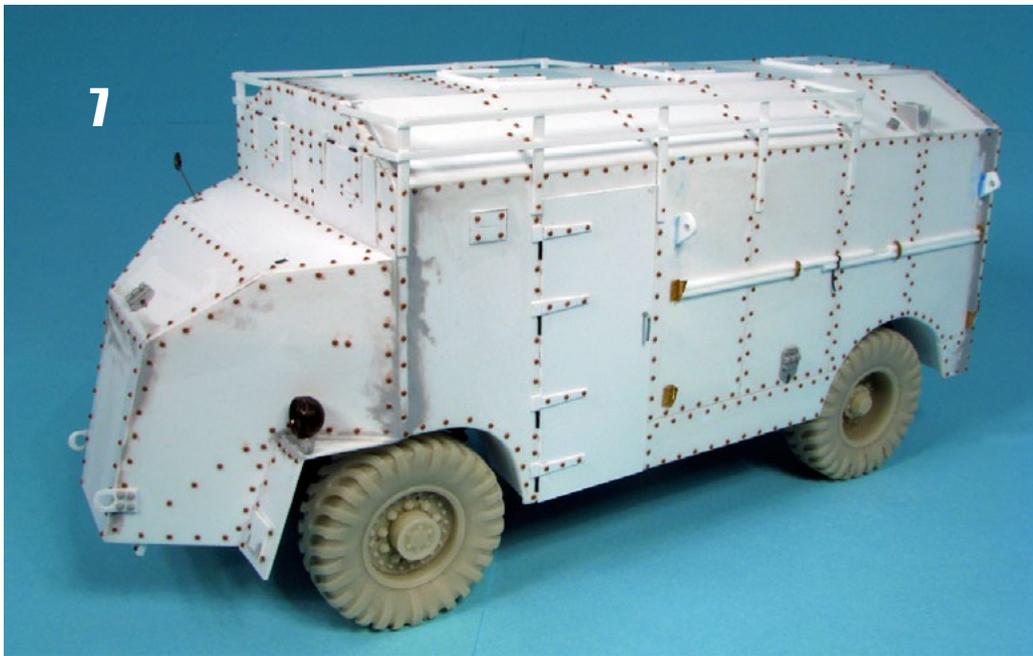


5. I did not add the storage racks to the plan drawings but they are made from cutting strips from .010 sheet styrene. They were placed even with the top of the roof and one side section is longer than the other. See below.



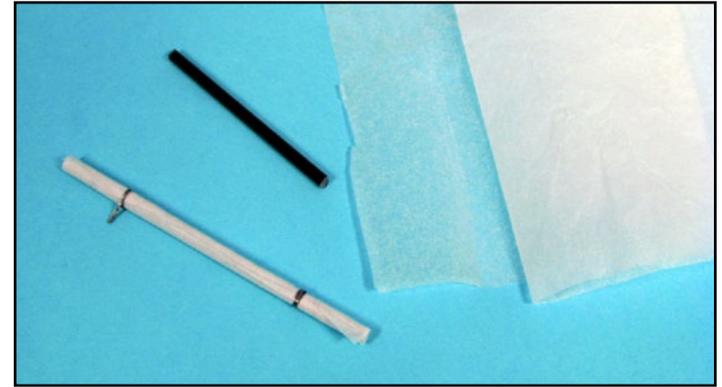
6. Some of the details have to be cut and the sanded to shape like the front tow rings. They were detailed by trimming off the nut and bolt detail from a spare tiger tank wheel and then glued in place..

7



7. Here is the finished model less the roll up tarp.

The roll canvas tarp was made using a piece of spure from a model kit. It was cut to size and tissue paper was wrapped around for the tarp. It was later painted with oils paint. Straps are lead foil.

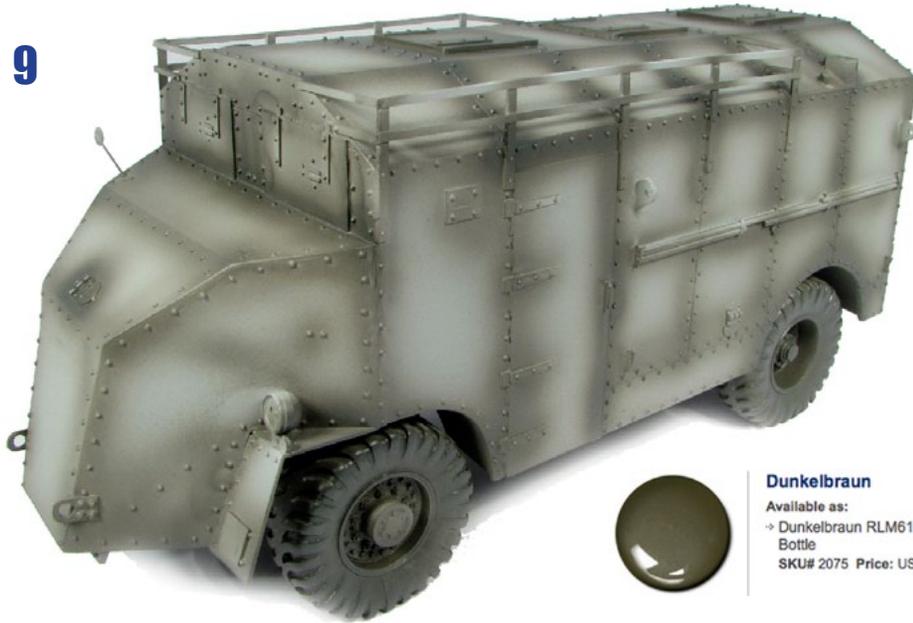


8



8. The model is given a **primer coat** to give the model a good base to start the paint process. I use a basic spray can primer that can be purchased at the local home store. This primer coat makes painting the steps much easier because you get a smooth coat of color to allow you to see all the areas that will be needed to be painted in the steps used to shade and high light the model.

9



Dunkelbraun

Available as:

→ Dunkelbraun RLM61 (SG) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2075 Price: US\$3.29

9. The first step in the painting process is the **pre-shade**. This is the darkest shadow color. Dunkel Braun RLM 61(which looks gray?) What you are trying to achieve in this is to make sure any areas that your light source cannot hit is painted. You are for the most part adding artificial shadows. All the recesses, corners, wheels, and under objects that stand off the truck. It is also best achieved in some areas by painting the areas from under the truck as to just paint under the objects.

10A. The first step in the painting process is the **1st camo color**. I used Afrika Braun for this. I did not need to mask this color as all the remaining camo colors will be painted over it.

10B. This is the **highlight** to the 1st camo color. I mixed some Flat White to the Afrika Braun to make it lighter and it was sprayed just in the center areas of the first color.

10A

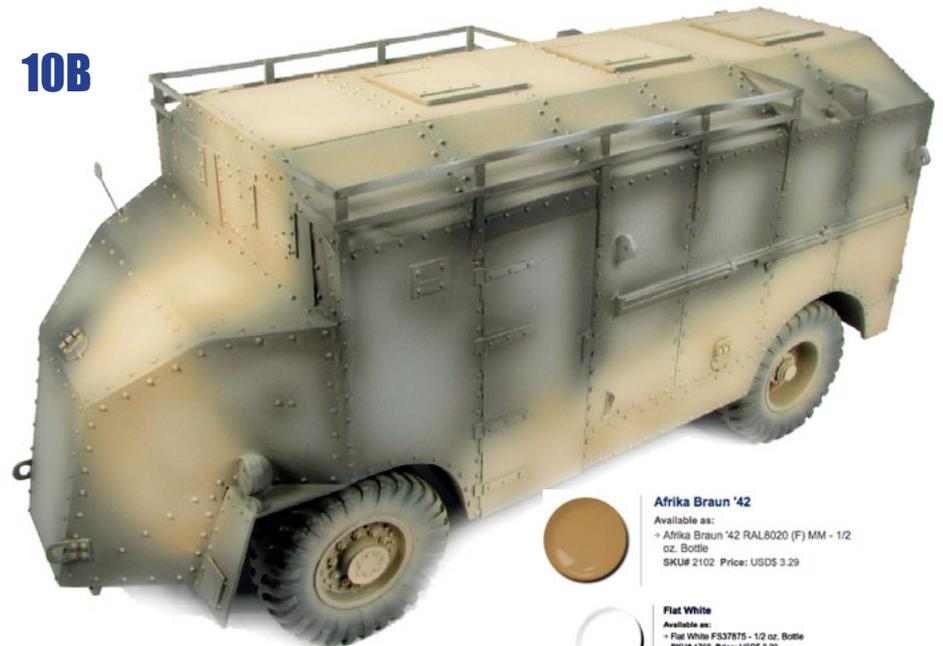


Afrika Braun '42

Available as:

→ Afrika Braun '42 RAL8020 (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2102 Price: US\$3.29

10B



Afrika Braun '42

Available as:

→ Afrika Braun '42 RAL8020 (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2102 Price: US\$3.29

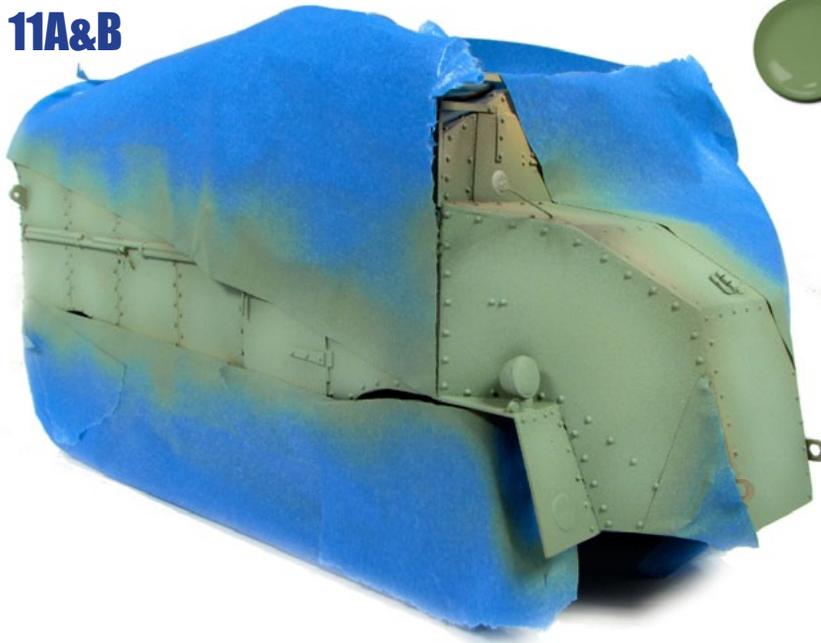


Flat White

Available as:

→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 1708 Price: US\$3.29

11A&B



RAF Interior Green

Available as:
→ RAF Interior Green (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2062 Price: USD\$ 3.29



Flat White

Available as:
→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 1709 Price: USD\$ 3.29

11A&B Next I masked the truck with painters masking tape for the 2nd camo color. I followed the rendering I made as I masked the truck. RAF Interior Green was used for this step.

Next just as in step 10B I painted the **highlight** to the 2nd camo color. I mixed some Flat White to the RAF Interior Green to make it lighter and it was sprayed just in

12A&B Next I masked the truck with painters masking tape for the 3rd camo color. I followed the rendering I made as I masked the truck. Grun was used for this step.

Next just like the previous steps I painted the **highlight** to the 3rd camo color. I mixed some Flat White to the Grun to make it lighter and it was sprayed just in the center areas of the first color.

12A&B



Grun

Available as:
→ Grun RLM62 (SG) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2076 Price: USD\$ 3.29

→ Grun RLM72 (SG) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2082 Price: USD\$ 3.29

→ Grun RLM73 (SG) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2083 Price: USD\$ 3.29



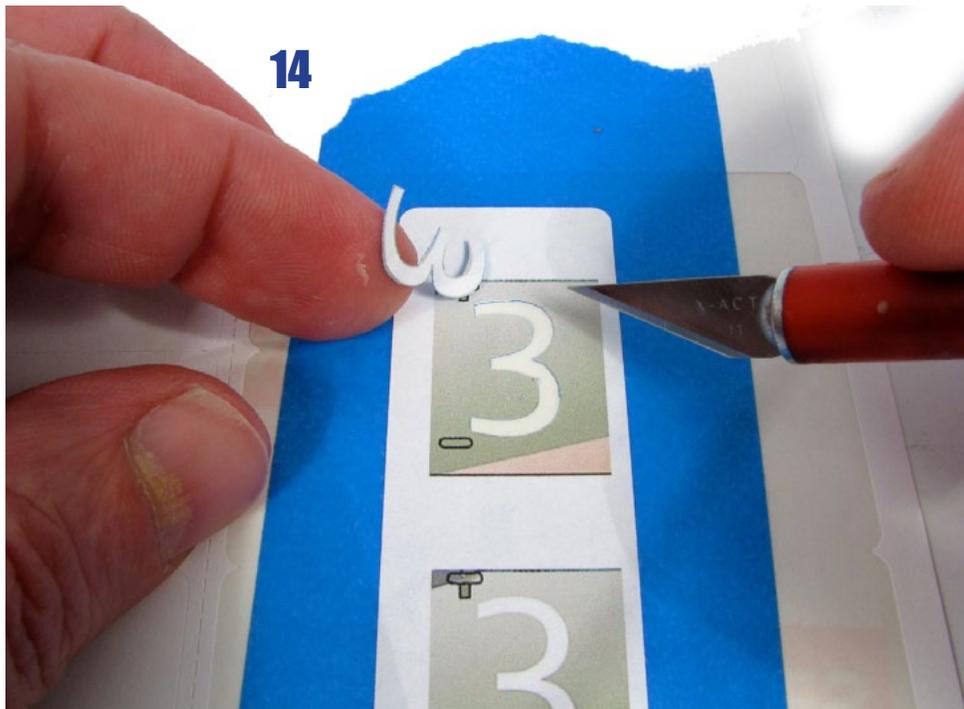
Flat White

Available as:
→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 1709 Price: USD\$ 3.29

13. Below is the painted model with the 3 color "Caunter scheme" camo colors.



13



14

14. Since all my renderings were scaled and used to make the model I cropped and printed out the section that had the just the number 3 on to a laser printer label. The label was then adhered to a piece of painters masking tape. The number 3 was then cut out with a sharp x-acto knife to use as a stencil.



15

15. I then placed this **stencil** on the truck and used Flat White paint to create the number 3 that is on the sides, front and back. Make sure you spray straight at the stencil and not at a angle causing the paint to bleed.

16



16. The model is now given a Testors clear gloss coat only in the areas that the **decals** will be applied. I used various decals from my spare decal box, most are generic markings and numbers. When dry spray the tank with Testors lusterless clear flat.

17



17. After the Testors clear flat has dried completely the next step in the painting process is the **fading**. Fading helps tie the colors together, tone down the decal markings and get the tank the look that it has been in the elements. Afrika Braun and a touch of Flat white is mixed with Testors airbrush thinner 10/1 mixture is used for this. Set your airbrush at a high pressure with a wide spray and make passes over the entire model. The more passes you make the more it will fade the paint. This step really ties things together!



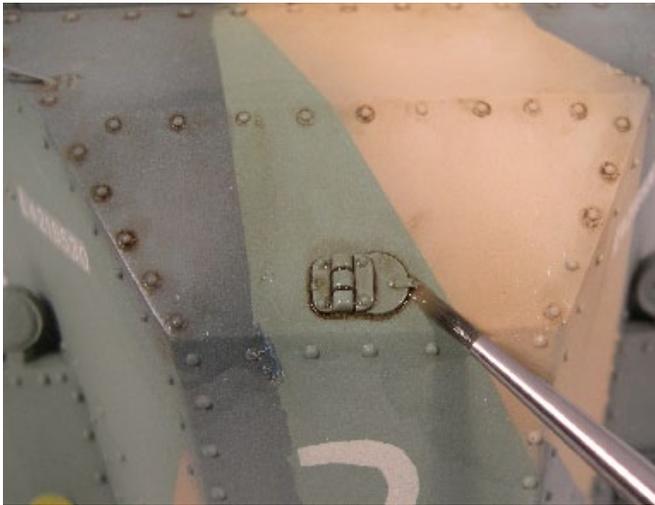
Afrika Braun '42

Available as:
→ Afrika Braun '42 RAL8020 (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2102 Price: USD\$ 3.29



Flat White

Available as:
→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 1768 Price: USD\$ 3.29



17

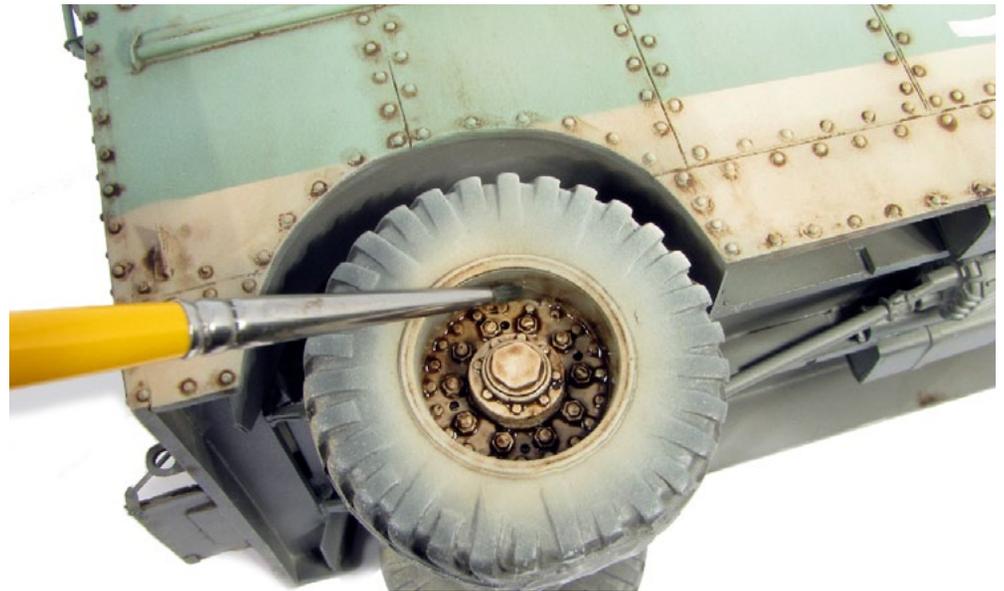
17. Next step is the **wash**.

First I brush the model with clean turpentine. I put a dab of raw umber oil paint on a pallet, the **oil paint is thinned with turpentine on the pallet and then applied to the model** with a small brush. I do not want the wash to coat the entire model, it is controlled just where I want it. This is sometimes called a pin wash, apply to all of the surface details to create false shadows around each one, and any excess wash is blended into the surrounding surface before drying. I streak it down the sides like it would naturally in some areas, but care should be taken not to overdo this...be subtle.

Once the body of the trucks wash has dried it is turned on its side and the wheels are given a wash. It is put on its side so the wash stays around the bolts and details not allowing the wash to drain down to the bottom of the wheels only. This gives the wheels a even effect all around.



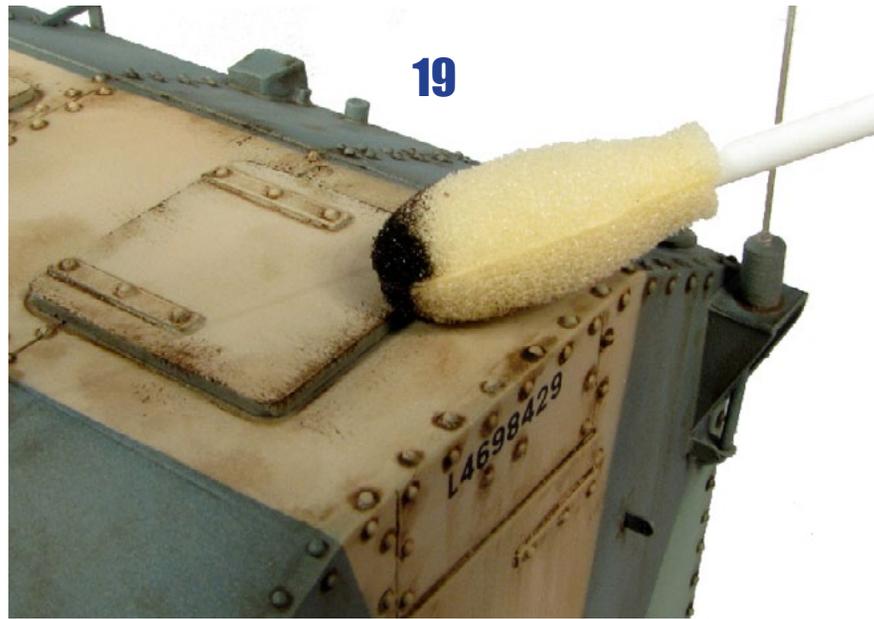
[Click on the photo above to watch video.](#)



18



18. Next the **tires** are given a very thin wash of black artist oil paint thinned with turpentine. The wash works well because stark black rubber is not realistic. Let wash flow all around the tire but not in the wheels. You can use acrylic paint thinned down as well.



19. Next step in the weathering process is the **paint chips & scratches**. I add chipped paint with raw umber oil paint. A small sponge or make-up applicator is used to apply the chips. The sponge is pressed into raw umber oil paint then onto the armor surface lightly. The key to chips is to make them **small** and without any pattern, keeping them on the most abused edges and damaged areas. Use common sense and remember that less is more with chipped/worn areas, and think very small!



20. Next step is the **effects**. I use heavily thinned white mixed with Naples yellow artist oil paint to give flat areas of the tank a look as though water that has mixed with dust and dried on the surface. In this case it will fade the paint as the sun does very fast in the desert.

I paint the area with clean turpentine as before. I put a dab of oil paint mixture on a pallet, the oil paint is thinned with turpentine on the pallet and then applied to the model with a small brush as dots. Blend in with clean turpentine being very subtle as you go over the model. Allow this to drain down the sides as it would in real life.

Allow this mixture to flow in the tire treads so it gives the effect of sand that is trapped in the cracks of the tread. Make sure you diluted the mixture heavily with turpentine.



Finished Model



Finished Model



The Captured AEC Dorchester Armoured Command Vehicles

Anyone who has followed the Rommel in North Africa story will have heard of his captured Armoured Command Vehicle named "Moritz", captured during the early advances in the Mechili region. In all, three of these AEC "Dorchester" ACV vehicles were captured. These HQ vehicles had left Barce a day ahead of the generals themselves, who followed later in their Humber Snipe staff car. They were caught up in a traffic jam around Derna, and were captured by an advance German motorcycle platoon. The Dorchester ACVs were captured on the outskirts of Mechili.

These HQ vehicles originally belonged to:

- White #1 Lt.Gen. Sir Richard O'Connor, assistant commander of the 8th Army.
- White #2 Lt.Gen. Sir Philip Neams VC, commander of the 8th Army.
- White #3 Maj.Gen. Gambier-Parry, commander of 2nd Armd.Div.

- White #1 MAX and used by Rommel
- White #2 MORITZ and used by both Generalleutnant Ludwig Crüwell & Rommel
- White #3 Used by Generalmajor Johannes Streich

MAX was hit by either a bit of shrapnel from an aerial bombardment or stumbled across a mine during an air attack in September 1941. Rommel went back to using his Omnibus in the weeks prior to Operation Crusader.

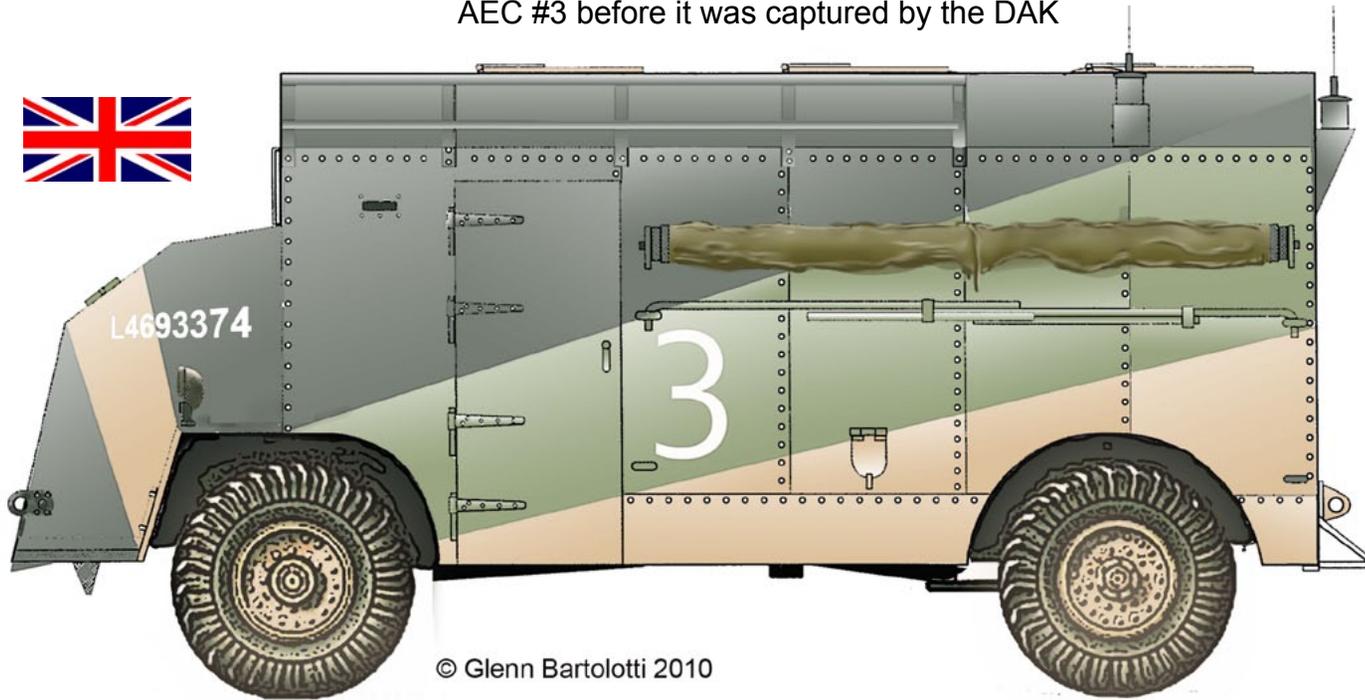


"MAX"



"Rommel"

AEC #3 before it was captured by the DAK

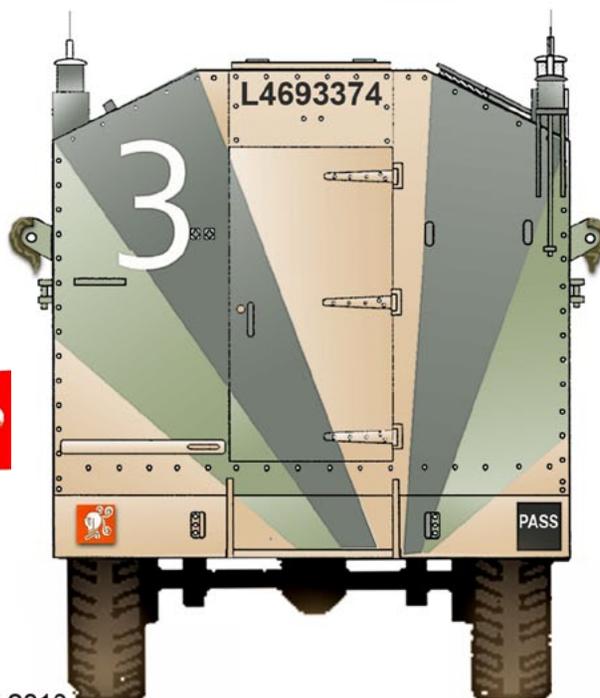
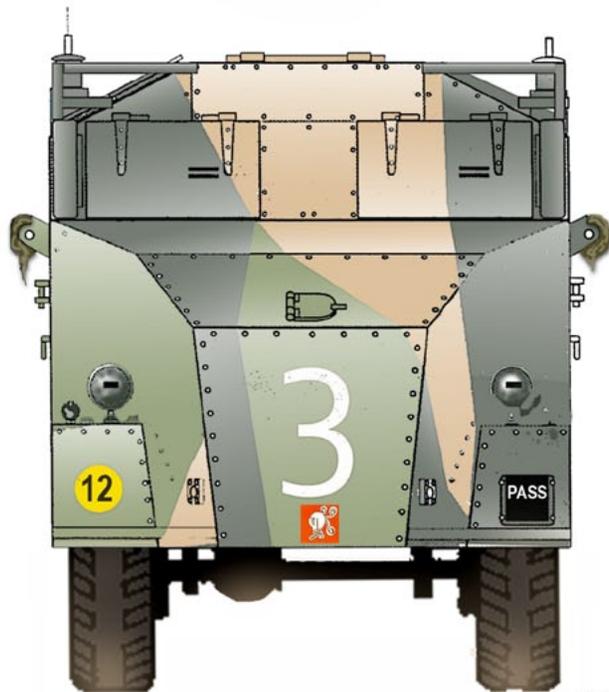


© Glenn Bartolotti 2010

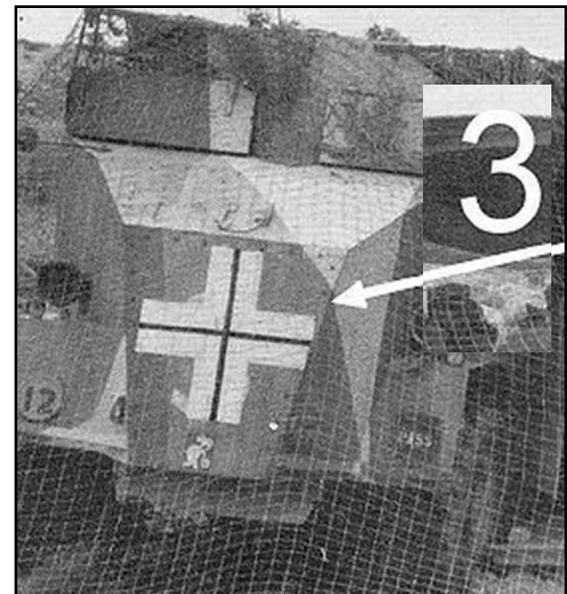
#3

Maj.Gen. Gambier-Parry,
commander of 2nd Armd.Div.

Later captured by DAK
Used by Generalmajor
Johannes Streich

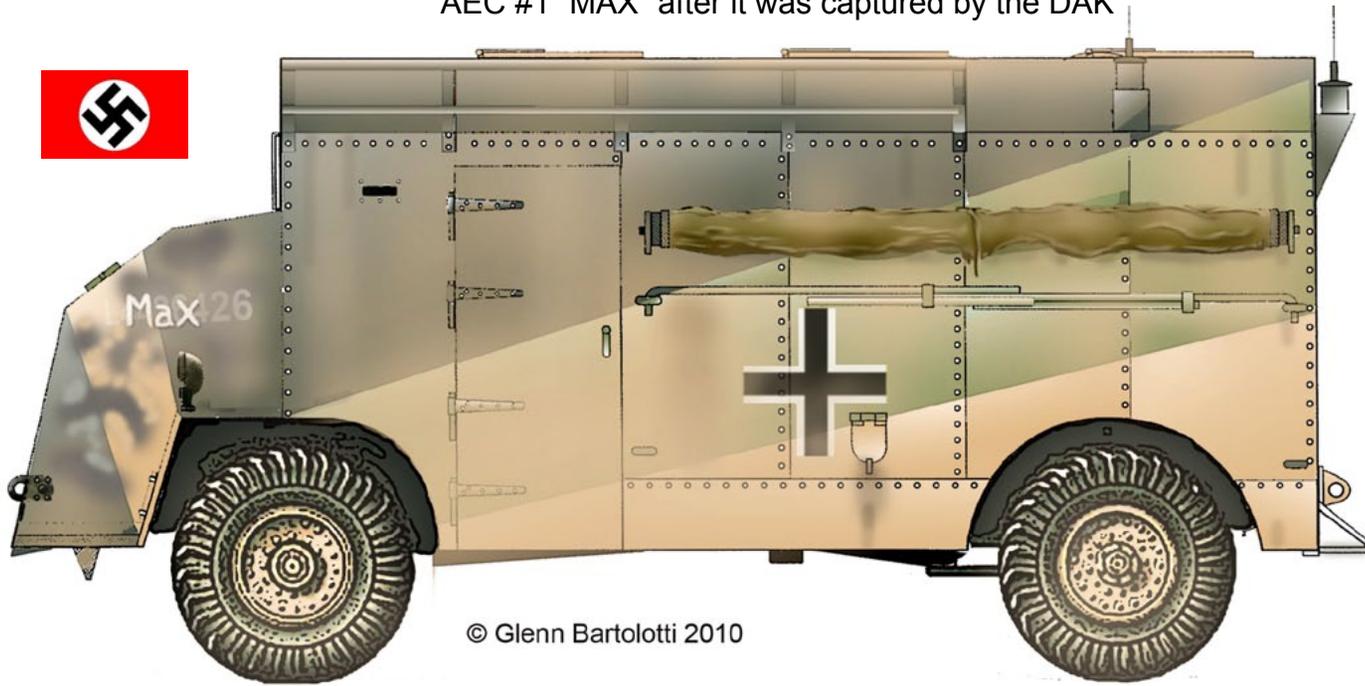


© Glenn Bartolotti 2010



*In this photo you can see
the #3 behind the cross.*

AEC #1 "MAX" after it was captured by the DAK



© Glenn Bartolotti 2010

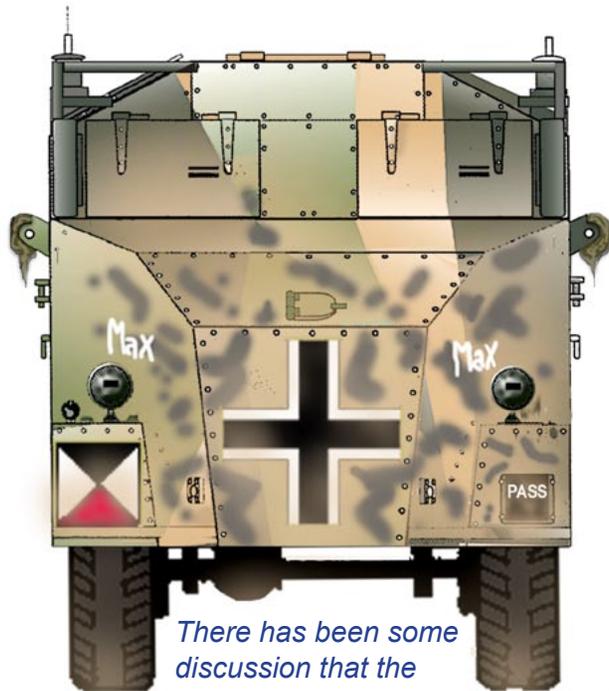
#1

Lt.Gen. Sir Richard O'Connor, assistant commander of the 8th Army.

Seen here captured by DAK
MAX was used by Rommel



*This photo shows
MAX before the
#1 was painted
over and named.*

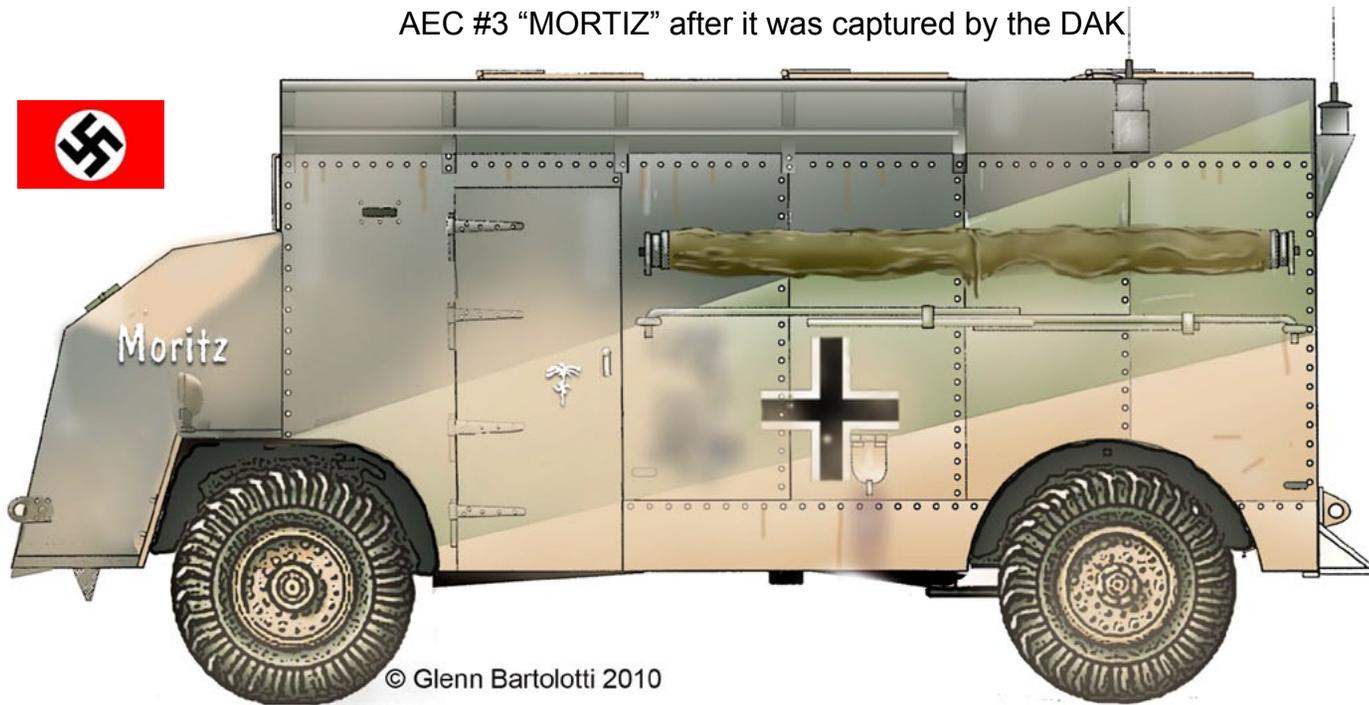


*There has been some
discussion that the
gray camo could very
well been red brown?*

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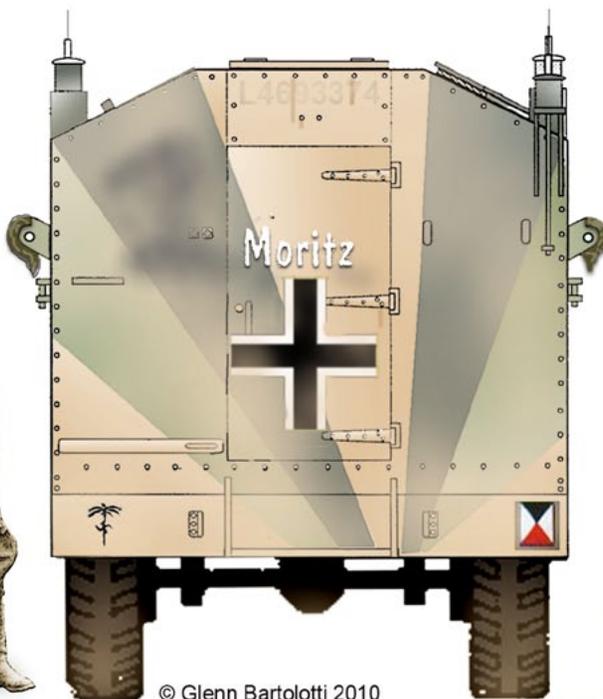
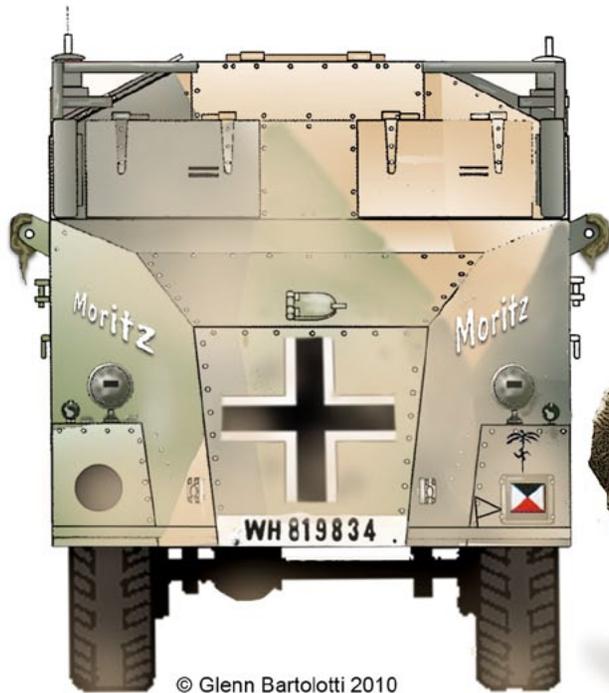
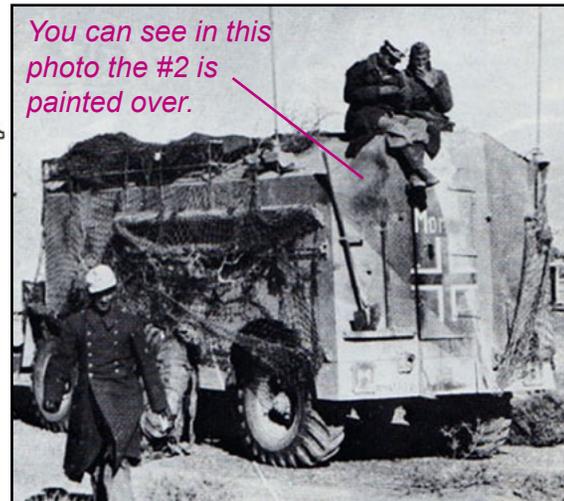
AEC #3 "MORTIZ" after it was captured by the DAK

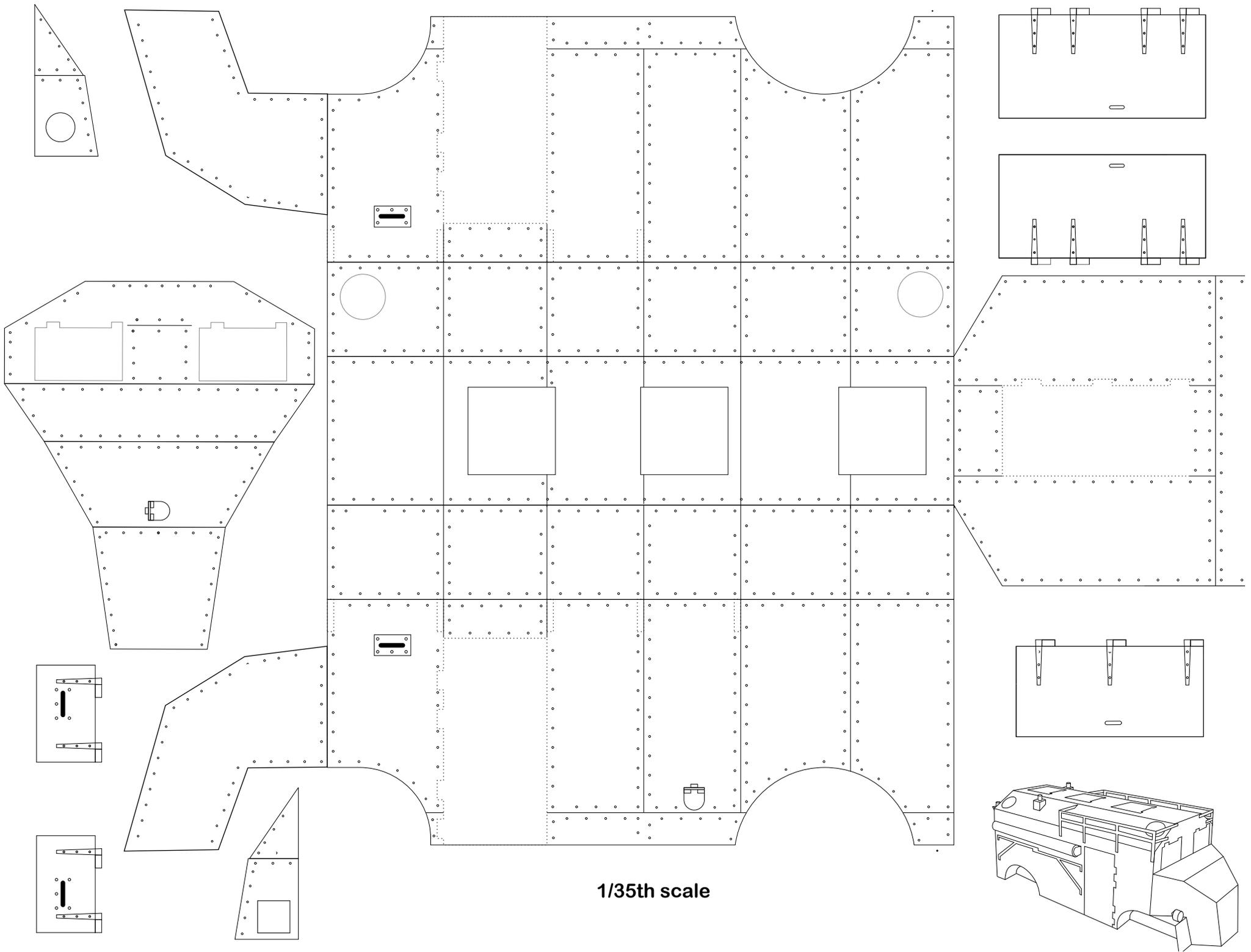


#2

Lt. Gen. Sir Philip Neams VC, commander of the 8th Army.

Seen here captured by DAK MORITZ was used by both Generalleutnant Ludwig Crüwell & Rommel





Stay Tuned!

Be on the look out for more **Step-by-Step Armor Finishing!**



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