

# Railway Troops

## Canadian Overseas Railway Construction Corps May 1915 - September 1918

As early as October of 1914 Canada offered to raise a railway construction corps of 500 skilled railway men at its own expense for service with the Imperial Government at that time the offer was declined. However the offer was accepted by telegram on January 21st 1915 and on February 2nd 1915 the mobilization of the Canadian Overseas Railway Construction Corps commenced from experienced workers from the Canadian Pacific Railway at Saint John, N.B. The Corps comprising of a regimental headquarters with two companies plus a 100 man reserve the organization being completed by May 15th 1915 the unit sailing for England June 15th 1915 and to France September 15th 1915. Under General Order 11 of September 1918 the Overseas Canadian Railway Corps established March 5th 1915 and organized under G.O. 86 of July 1st 1915 was disbanded. This brought under command of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops on its formation authorized under General Order 109 September 3rd 1918. Headquarters in France was under command of Major-General J.W. Stewart from March 2nd 1917 until demobilization. In England command was under Colonel B.M. Humble from March 18th 1917 until demobilization.

### First issue by Scully



60-4-11-102 Cap Brown finish. Fully struck up reserve. Not maker marked



60-4-12-102 Collar Natural gilding metal finish. Flat back stamped W.Scully

### Officers



60-4-11-106 Cap Bronzed OSD with bronzed with overlay by W. Scully



60-4-12-106 Collar Bronze OSD with bronze overlay by Scully but not maker marked



60-4-14-106 Title Brown finish. Maker marked Birks

## OVERSEAS

Formation patch worn on red brassard. Worn on right sleeve above the elbow by General Staff officers and Administrative Staff officers of the Canadian Railway Troops .



Formation Patch White bar on red patch worn on red brassard

By 1918 the Canadian Overseas Railway Construction Corps had grown to two companies of 500 men each and a headquarters this being officially disbanded under General Order 111 of September 1918. It is thought that the unit on paper became the 14th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops as this previously unlisted Battalion was included in General Order 196 of November 1st 1920 under which all Canadian CEF Railway units were disbanded.



60-4-11-108 Cap Red/brown maker marked 'Tiptaft B'ham'



60-4-12-108 Collar Red/brown maker marked 'Tiptaft B'ham'

### Officers



60-4-11-110 Cap Bronzed OSD without overlay by Tiptaft but not maker marked



60-4-12-110 Collar Bronzed OSD without overlay by Tiptaft but not maker marked

### Counterfeits



60-4-11-112 Cap Blackened finish.

Modern UK pressure cast reproduction. Extra long lug fasteners these not noted on badges produced by Tiptaft and stamped with the word 'silver'. All sterling items produced in England must be hallmarked. The only exception items produced for sale overseas.

### Counterfeit (UK 2018)



60-4-11-113 Cap Pressure cast silver. Note the blurred detail and extra metal around the design this not found on original die struck examples.

## Corps of Canadian Railway Troops April 1918

The Corps of Canadian Railway Troops was formed in France on April 23rd 1918 under General Order 109 of September 1918, bringing all thirteen Canadian Railway Troop companies and the formerly independent Canadian Overseas Railway Construction Corps, the 58th Broad Gage Operating Company, the 13th Light Operating Company, the 85th Engine Crew Company and the 69th Wagon Erecting Company under its administrative control. Also under the supervision of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops were the 5000+ British Royal Engineer Railway Troops. A generic Canadian Railway Corps cap badge design was approved in October 1918 but the Armistice saw its manufacture cancelled. In Canada a depot was established June 5th 1918 as the Railway Construction Depot, M.D. 2, (this originally organized as a Forestry Depot under G.O. 74 of 1917) under General Order 110 of September 1918 laid down as a depot battalion with a headquarters and four companies.

During the last great German offensive in the spring of 1918 a number of Canadian Railway Troops were included in ad hoc infantry brigades to stem the German advance. 400 officers and men of the 2nd Battalion Canadian Railway Troops March 25th - 26th at Amiens and the personnel of the 5th and 11th CRT to help hold part of the front for the British 1st Division being bolstered by the addition of the 7th CRT a few days later.

## Canadian Railway Construction Battalions

No.1 and No.2 Construction Battalions were authorized under General Order 69 of July 1916 and disbanded under General Order 149 of September 15th 1920. Both units were raised in April 1916 from



unskilled but experienced building labor.

The 1st Canadian Construction Battalion arrived in France in October 1916 where effective November 11th was converted and designated as the 1st Canadian Railway Construction Battalion. In February 1917 the designation was changed to the 1st Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. This unit being disbanded under General Order 196 of 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the original contingent of the No.1 Construction Battalion was 1,081001 - 1,083000. (No. 1 Company 1,081001- 1,081500. No. 2 Company 1,081501 - 1,082000, No.3 Company 1,082001 - 1,082500. No.4 Company 1,082501 - 1,083000.)

## **No. 1 Canadian Construction Battalion**

### **Badges by P.W. Ellis**

The head of the Beaver extends over the annulus. Collar badge face.

#### **Other ranks**

60-4-11-114 Cap Brown finish. N/S lug fasteners. Not maker marked



60-4-12-114 Collar Brown finish gilding metal. N/S lug fasteners. By Ellis not maker marked



60-4-14-114 Title Brown finish. Maker marked and dated P.W.Ellis Co 1916



60-4-11-116 Cap Pickled finish. E/W lug fasteners. Marked Ellis Bros



60-4-12-116 Collar Brass by Ellis not maker marked

### Officers

60-4-11-118 Cap Blackened with silver numeral by Ellis

60-4-12-118 Collar Blackened with silver numeral by Ellis

### OVERSEAS

The 1st Canadian Construction Battalion arrived in France in October 1916 where effective November 11th was converted and designated as the 1st Canadian Railway Construction Battalion. In February 1917 the designation was changed to the 1st Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. This unit being disbanded under General Order 196 of 1920.

The head of the beaver is within the annulus on the Tiptaft cap badges



60-4-11-120 Cap Dark brown finish by Tiptaft but not maker marked

60-4-12-120 Collar Dark brown finish by Tiptaft but not maker marked

60-4-11-122 Cap OR's Natural brass voided by Tiptaft but not maker marked

60-4-12-122 Collar OR's Natural brass voided by Tiptaft but not maker marked



60-4-14-122 Title Natural gilding metal by Tiptaft but not maker marked

### Officers



60-4-11-124 Cap      Bronzed Tiptaft marked leaf with silvered collar overlay

60-4-12-124 Collar      A matching wm collar is not currently confirmed

## **1st Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917**

### **Badges by Firmin, London**

#### **Other ranks**



60-4-11-126 Cap      Brass. Maker not identified



60-4-12-126 Collar      Natural gilding metal. Maker not identified

#### **Officers**



60-4-11-128 Cap Silver plate

60-4-12-128 Collar Silver plate

60-4-11-130 Cap Brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. 'Firmin London' makers tab



60-4-12-130 Collar Brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. 'Firmin London' makers tab

### **Bandsman(?)**

60-4-11-132 Cap Gilt Maker not identified

60-4-12-132 Collar Gilt Maker not identified

## **2nd Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops**

The 2nd Construction Battalion was unique in the Canadian Army being entirely raised from black troops but under command of white officers with one exception the battalion Chaplain, Honourary Captain William A. White, the only black officer to serve in the Great War in the entire British Empire. A shameful fact that this battalion is never mentioned in any of the WWI histories including Nicholson's 1962 Official History of the CEF. After arrival in England in 1917 the designation was altered to No.2 Construction Company and the unit was absorbed into the Canadian Forestry Corps. Serving in France for the duration of the war.

The regimental numbers block for No.2 Construction Battalion was 931001 - 933000.

The photograph below is taken from the on line site of Guysborough County N.S. which gives an excellent fully detailed history of the No 2 Construction Battalion.





### Badges by un-attributed maker

#### Other ranks



60-4-11-134 Cap Pickled finish. Slide fastener. Not maker marked

#### Officers



60-4-11-136 Cap As for other ranks. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked



60-4-12-136 Collar Pickled finish. Pin Fastener. Not maker marked



60-4-14-136 Title Pickled Finish. Not maker marked

60-4-11-138 Cap Pickled with silver overlay. Reported not confirmed

60-4-12-138 Collar Pickled with silver overlay. Reported not confirmed

### Counterfeit cap badges

A genuine other ranks cap badge illustrated above was used to make moulds for the counterfeit badges pictured below these offered for sale on the United Kingdom eBay site. Note the blurred detail, 'off metals' and extra metal around the design this not found on the original die struck example.



60-4-11-140 Cap Pressure cast brass. No jewels in the central arch of the Tudor Crown. Lug fasteners



60-4-11-142 Cap Pressure cast silver. No jewels in the central arch of the Tudor Crown.

### 127th Overseas (12th York Rangers) Railway Construction Battalion

The 127th Battalion was recruited November 12th 1915 with mobilization headquarters at Toronto under General Order 151 of December 22nd 1915. The battalion was raised by the 12th Regiment York Rangers this previously having contributed 273 volunteers to the 4th Battalion on its formation at Camp Valcartier in August 1914, and later raised or provided volunteers to the 1st Construction Battalion and the 20th, 81st,

83rd, and 220th Infantry Battalions.

On the expansion of the Canadian Railway Troops in 1916 the 127th Battalion requested that it be allowed to remain in tact as a railway construction battalion. Due to a high preponderance of the battalion being former railway men the offer was accepted and in November the 127th Infantry Battalion was redesignated as the 127th Battalion (Canadian Railway Troops). The battalion had already previously sent a strong contingent to the 1st Construction Battalion on its conversion to the 1st Battalion Canadian Railway Construction Battalion.

The 127th Battalion embarked for England August 24th 1916 with a strength of 32 officers and 972 OR's under command of Lieutenant-Colonel F.F. Clarke (12th York Rangers). Effective February 3rd 1917 the 127th Battalion (Canadian Railway Troops) was designated as the 2nd Canadian Railway Troops. The unit sailed for France from Folkestone on March 11th 1917 serving on the Western Front for the duration of the Great War. The Battalion never adopted a 'regimental' pattern badge but continued to wear their original 127th Battalion pattern CEF badges. The 2nd Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were disbanded under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 127th Canadian Infantry Battalion was 778001 - 781000.

### **First issue by Ellis**

The cap badges with pointed maple leaf the head of the lion with ears this maker marked 'Ellis Bros. The collars marked 'P.W. Ellis & Co. Toronto'. The numerals on the officers badges are silver plated.

### **Other ranks**



- |            |        |   |
|------------|--------|---|
| 627-11-102 | Cap    | Brown finish. Lug fasteners. Maker marked Ellis Bros        |
| 627-12-102 | Collar | Brown finish. Lug fasteners. Marked P.W. Ellis & Co Toronto |

### **NCOs**

- |            |        |   |
|------------|--------|---|
| 627-12-104 | Collar | Dark brown finish. Pin fastener. Maker marked P.W. Ellis & Co Toronto |
|------------|--------|---|

### **Shoulder strap numerals**



- |            |         |   |
|------------|---------|---|
| 627-14-106 | Numeral | Gilding metal. By Caron Bros not maker marked |
| 627-14-108 | Numeral | Brown finish. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'       |



627-14-110 Numeral Brown finish. Maker marked W. Scully Montreal.

### Officers badges by Ellis

627-11-112 Cap Pickled finish with silver numerals. Lug fasteners. Maker marked Ellis Bros

627-12-112 Collar Pickled finish with silver numerals. Lug fasteners. Maker marked Ellis Bros

### Officers badges by Birks



627-11-114 Cap Brown OSD with silver numerals. Lug fasteners. Marked Birks 1916



627-12-114 Collar Brown OSD with silver numerals. Lug fasteners. Marked 'Birks 1916'

## OVERSEAS

### Badges by J.W. Tiptaft & Son Ltd.

Cap badge with blunt maple leaf the head of the lion without visible ears. The motto ribbons framed.

### Other ranks





- |            |         |  |
|------------|---------|--|
| 624-11-116 | Cap     | Brown finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked                    |
| 224-13-116 | Collar  | Brown finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked                    |
| 627-14-116 | Numeral | Brown finish. With both upper and lower 'bars'. Not maker marked |

### Officers



- |            |        |  |
|------------|--------|--|
| 627-11-118 | Cap    | Brown finish, silver numerals. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked |
| 627-12-118 | Collar | Brown finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked                  |

### Eaton's Stores Sweetheart Badges

Sweetheart or souvenir badges were very popular amongst wives and mothers with husbands and sons serving with the CEF. These were produced both in Canada and England in various materials including gold, silver and often with elaborate multi-colour enamels. T.E. Eaton's stores sold a series of cap badge size badges mostly fitted with pin fasteners but occasionally with lugs, as souvenir pieces. These are believed to have been produced by Caron Bros. Montreal.



- |            |              |   |
|------------|--------------|---|
| 627-11-120 | 'Sweetheart' | Pickled finish. Lugs or pin fasteners. Not maker marked |
|------------|--------------|---|



## 3rd Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917

### 239th Overseas Railway Construction Battalion (May 5th 1916)

The 239th Overseas Railway Construction Battalion was recruited from skilled railway personnel from Ontario and Quebec with mobilization headquarters at Camp Valcartier May 5th 1916 under General Order 69 of July 15th 1916. The battalion embarked for England December 15th 1916 under command of Lieutenant -Colonel J.B.L. MacDonald (C.E.), with a strength of 26 officers and 738 OR's. After its arrival from Canada the 239th Overseas Construction Corps was redesignated as the 3rd Battalion Canadian Railway Troops sailing for France March 22nd 1917 where the unit served for the duration of the war. The 239th Overseas Railway Construction Battalion was disbanded under General Order 149 of September 15th 1920. The 3rd Battalion Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 239th Canadian Infantry Battalion was 1,039001 - 1,042000.

### 239th (Infantry) Battalion catalogue numbers are used

#### Badges by Birks



739-11-102 Cap

Brown finish. Flat lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'



739-12-102 Collar

Brown finish. Flat lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'



739-14-102 Title

Natural gilding metal. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

Shoulder strap numerals for the 239th Battalion are currently reported

## NCOs

739-11-104 Cap Pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'



739-12-104 Collar Pickled finish. Pin fasteners. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'

## Officers

739-11-106 Cap Brown OSD finish. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'



739-12-106 Collar Brown OSD finish. Pin fastener. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'

739-11-108 Cap Silvered '239' on light brown finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked



739-12-108 Collar Silvered numerals. N/S Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

739-14-110 Title Natural gilding metal 'Beaver/239/Canada'. Lug fasteners. Not marked

## Officers/Sweetheart(?)

739-17-112 Cap size Silvered maple leaf with gilt collar overlay. Pin back

Prior to obtaining 3rd Battalion Canadian Railway Troops badges some of the 239th Battalion other ranks badges were modified by having the numerals '2' and '9' cut out.



60-4-11-142 Cap Browning gilding metal maker marked and dated Birks 1916

### Other ranks



60-4-11-144 Cap Wm overlay on brass 2 piece construction. Maker not identified



60-4-12-144 Collar Brass. Small brass lugs



60-4-12-145 Collar Brass. Large Hicks type lugs

### Officers



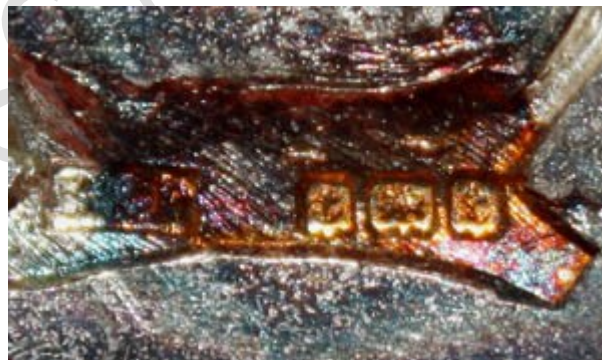
60-4-11-146 Cap Brown finish with silver overlay. Maker not identified



60-4-12-146 Collar Brown OSD finish.



60-4-12-148 Collar Sterling silver Hallmark Padgett & Braham, Birmingham 1918/19



60-4-11-150 Cap Reported but not currently identified



60-4-12-150 Collar Gilt two piece

### **4th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917**

The 4th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was formed from experienced railway workers at the Canadian Railway Depot at Purfleet in England effective 29th January 1917. The 4th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked from Folkstone for France on the 23rd February 1917. The unit served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

#### **Other ranks**

60-4-11-152 Cap Darkened brass with red felt insert. With 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab



60-4-12-152 Collar Darkened brass with red felt insert. With 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab

#### **Officers**

60-4-11-154 Cap Officers gilt by Gaunt



60-4-12-154 Collar Gilt with felt insert. With 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab

60-4-11-156 Cap Sterling silver by Gaunt





60-4-12-156 Collar Sterling silver by Gaunt

**Unidentified maker (Hicks & Sons ?)**



60-4-11-158 Cap Brown OSD with red enamel overlaid with brass numeral '4'

A 'made up' cap badge with a miniature Fleur de Leys mounted in the centre of the 'square' is also known for this battalion.

60-4-11-160 Cap

### **5th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917**

The 5th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was formed from experienced railway workers at the Canadian Railway Depot at Purfleet in England effective 29th January 1917. The 5th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked for France from Folkstone on the 24th February 1917. The unit served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

**Badges by Goldsmiths & Silversmiths Co.**

**Other ranks**



60-4-11-162 Cap Bronze finish. G & S Co. London' makers tab



60-4-12-162 Collar Bronze finish. G & S Co. London' makers tab

### Officers

60-4-11-164 Cap Brown finish. 'G & S Co. London' makers tab



60-4-12-164 Collar Brown finish. 'G & S Co. London' makers tab

60-4-11-166 Cap Gilt. Non-voided. 'G & S Co. London' makers tab

60-4-12-166 Collar Gilt. Non-voided. 'G & S Co. London' makers t



60-4-11-168 Cap Made up badge with collar mounted on Railway Construction Corps cap badge

## 6th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917

The 6th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were originally raised as the 228th Battalion CEF. The 228th Battalion CEF (Northern Fusiliers) was raised from the 23rd Northern Pioneers with mobilization headquarters at North Bay effective July 15th 1916. The battalion sailed for England February 16th 1917 where on arrival were sent to the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet where on the 8th March 1917 were redesignated as the 6th Battalion Railway Troops. The Battalion sailed for France during the first week of April 1917 and served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

## 228th Railway Construction Battalion (Northern Fusiliers) 1916-1917

The 228th (Northern Fusiliers) Battalion was recruited in the Nippising and Sudbury areas of Northern Ontario with mobilization headquarters at North Bay under General Order 69 of July 15th 1916 by the 97th Algonquin Rifles the regiment previously having provided 263 volunteers to the 15th Battalion on its formation at Camp Valcartier in August 1914 and later raised the 159th and 256th Railway Construction Battalion. The 228th Battalion embarked for England February 16th 1917 under command of Lieutenant-Colonel A. Earchman (34th Ontario Regiment), with a strength of 31 officers and 756 other ranks. On March 8th 1917 the battalion was sent to the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet being redesignated as the 6th Battalion Railway Troops. The Battalion sailed for France during the first week of April 1917 and served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 228th Battalion is not listed as being disbanded as an infantry battalion in the General Orders but the 6th Canadian Railway Troops were disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 228th Canadian Infantry Battalion was 1,006001 - 1,009000.

The 228th Battalion had a large brass band with 34 bandsmen, five buglers, and a pipe band of seven pipers and three drummers.

Badges by J.D. Bailey. (Believed to have been struck by P.W. Ellis Co.) On March 23rd 1916 the 228th Battalion applied to the G.O.C. 2nd Division in Toronto to name the battalion the 228th Northern Fusiliers, the reply dated March 26th 1916 stated that the words 'Overseas Battalion' must be included in the title. In correspondence dated July 17th 1916 directed from the D.A.A. & Q.M.G. at Camp Borden to the O.C. 228th O.S. Battalion in part reads "The cap and collar badges appear to be correct, but if there is any militia unit using the title 'Northern Fusiliers', it will be necessary to get permission in writing from the Officer Commanding to the effect that he has no objection to this. The shoulder numeral (title) cannot be approved. Instructions on this point are very definite. Units must wear '228', 'INF', 'CANADA'. However at the request of the O.C. 228th Battalion the shoulder titles were included when samples were forwarded to Ottawa and were approved for use. The proposed finish for the badges was 'the whole in grey gun metal'.

## **228th (Infantry) Battalion catalogue numbers are used**

### **Other ranks**



728-11-102 Cap

Antique copper finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked



728-12-102 Collar Antique copper finish. N/S Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

### Shoulder title

728-14-102 (228-93) Title Antique copper 228 intertwined with CANADA. Marked' J.D. Bailey

### Shoulder strap numerals



728-14-106 Numeral Gilding metal. By Caron Bros. Not Maker marked.

728-14-106 Numeral Brown finish 228. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'

### Officers



728-11-110 Cap Dull silver plate. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

728-12-110 Collar Dull silver plate. N/S Lug fasteners. Not maker marked



728-14-110 Title Dull silver plate. 228 intertwined with CANADA'. Marked' J.D. Bailey'  
Badges in sterling silver are also reported but not currently confirmed

728-11-112 Cap Gilt and enamels (Reported not confirmed possibly a sweetheart pin)

## **Grenade pattern**

### **Other ranks**

60-4-11-170 Cap Pickled finish. Lug fasteners. 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab



60-4-12-170 Collar Pickled finish. Lug fasteners. 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab

### **Officers**



60-4-11-172 Cap Brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab



60-4-12-172 Collar Brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab

### **Officers Maple Leaf pattern**



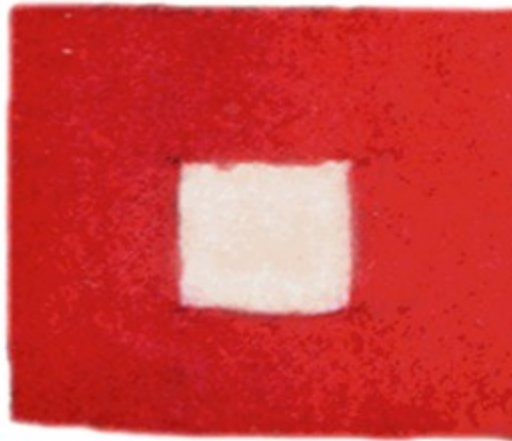


60-4-11-174 Cap Gilt with 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab on the reverse



60-4-12-174 Collar Gilt with 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab on the reverse

### **(Distinctive) 6th Battalion Railway Troops Formation Patch**



60-4-23-174 Formation patch. Red square with  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch white centre

## **7th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917**

### **257th Overseas (Railway Construction) Battalion**

The 257th Railway Construction Battalion was recruited in Eastern Ontario with mobilization headquarters at the Exhibition Grounds, Toronto being authorized under General Order 48 of May 1st 1917. The actual date of formation is currently undetermined but likely in late 1916 as the badges were approved January 18th 1917. The battalion embarked for England February 16th 1917 under command of Lieutenant-Colonel L.T. Martin (43rd Duke of Cornwall's Own Rifles), with a strength of 29 officers and 902 OR's where on

the 8th March 1917 it was redesignated as the 7th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. The Battalion sailed for France during the first week of April 1917 and served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 257th Railway Construction Battalion was 1,102001 - 1,105000.

Two different patterns of badges were produced for the 257th Battalion one without the word 'Overseas'.

### **Badges by Stanley & Aylward**

#### **All ranks**



757-11-102 Cap Brass. Lug fasteners. Marked. Stanley and Aylward Toronto.

Matching collar badges are not reported



757-14-102 Numeral Unit made. Angular numerals attached to lower bar. Lug fasteners. Not marked

#### **Authorized pattern approved January 23rd 1917**



757-11-104 Cap Brown finish. Lug fasteners. By Stanley & Aylward. Not maker marked.



757-12-104 Collar

Brass. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked.

### Shoulder strap numerals

757-14-106 Numeral

Brown finish. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'

### Pattern or Proto-type



60-4-11-176 Cap

Brown finish. Stamped J.R.Gaunt London.

### Approved pattern

### Other ranks



60-4-11-178 Cap

Pickled with 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab on the reverse



60-4-12-178 Collar Darkened gilding metal with 'J.R.Gaunt London' makers tab on the reverse

### Officers



60-4-11-180 Cap Bronzed with silver overlay stamped 'J.R.Gaunt London'



60-4-12-180 Collar Silver plate stamped 'J.R.Gaunt London'

## 8th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops 1917

The 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were formed from the experienced railway workers from the 211th and 218th Battalions and from the reinforcing Drafts for the Canadian Railway Troops sent from Canada. No less than 25 Railway Construction Reinforcing Drafts were sent to England all of these being authorized under General Order 63 of June 15th 1917. The 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked for France on April 17th 1917 serving on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. As were all 25 Reinforcing Drafts and the Ruthenian Railway Construction Company. (Please see below.)

### 211th Overseas (Railway Construction) Battalion 1916-1917 'Alberta Americans'

The 211th (Alberta Americans) Battalion was recruited in the Western provinces of British Columbia and Alberta with mobilization headquarters at Vancouver under General Order 69 of July 15th 1916. Volunteers being attested at Victoria, Vancouver and Calgary. The 211th Battalion embarked for England December 20th 1916 under command of Lieutenant-Colonel W.M. Sage (103rd Calgary Rifles), with a strength of 25 officers and 662 other ranks. On arrival the battalion was absorbed into the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet merging with the 218th Battalion and drafts of skilled railway troops sent from Canada to form the 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. The 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked for France on April 17th 1917 serving on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 8th Railway Troops were disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. The 211th Canadian Infantry Battalion was disbanded under General Order 149 of September 15th 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 211th Canadian Infantry Battalion was 258001 - 259033. (These numbers apparently used, with the number 261000 listed in parentheses presumably available for use in the

different cities where the volunteers attested).

Although no documentation is currently located it would appear that the commanding officers of the five battalions of expatriate US volunteers, apparently not all volunteers were of American birth or domicile; corresponded with regard of the formation of an all American infantry brigade to be called the 'American Legion' with each battalion wearing similar patterns of badges. The files regarding the design and authorization of badges for most of the units raised in Military District No.2 are documented in the Canadian Archives but unfortunately those for other Military Districts are not known. A sketch of the proposed design for the badges of the 213th Battalion (St Catharines) was submitted for approval to the A.A.G. & Q.M.G. on April 29th 1916, presumably those for the 211th, 212th and 237th being made at the same time to their respective Military District A.A.G. & Q.M.G.'s, these with 'AMERICAN LEGION' motto ribbons. Although badges with the 'AMERICAN LEGION' motto were struck for most of the five U.S. Volunteer battalions the use of this motto was denied, being replaced in May 1916 with the authorized motto 'ACTA NON VERBA'. Interestingly the motto 'AMERICAN LEGION' had been authorized for the 97th Battalion in January 1916, but this naming was rescinded in April 1916. The badges of the five American volunteer battalions incorporated the Coat-of-Arms of George Washington as the main element of their design.

### **211th (Infantry) Battalion catalogue numbers are used**

#### **American Legion**

Pattern or proto-type 211th ('American Legion) motto badges. Maker not identified

- |            |        |  |
|------------|--------|--|
| 711-11-102 | Cap    | Pickled finish.  |
| 711-12-102 | Collar | Pickled finish.  |
| 711-14-102 | Title  | Elliptical 'CANADA/211/AMERICAN LEGION'. Lug fasteners |

#### **Acta non Verba**

Authorized pattern 211th ('Acta non Verba) motto badges. Blunt Maple leaf, the motto ribbons with small lettering. It is reported that the dies were cut by Geo. Lees badges being struck by both P.W.Ellis and Hemsley.

#### **Other ranks**

- |            |     |  |
|------------|-----|--|
| 711-11-104 | Cap | Pickled finished. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked. |
|------------|-----|--|



- |            |        |  |
|------------|--------|--|
| 711-12-104 | Collar | Pickled finished. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked. |
|------------|--------|--|

#### **Shoulder strap numerals**

- |            |         |   |
|------------|---------|---|
| 711-14-106 | Numeral | Gilding metal. By Caron Bros. Not maker marked. |
|------------|---------|---|





711-14-108 Numeral Brown finish. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'.

### Shoulder title

Made up title with cut sheet brass '211' numeral braised over 'INF' and voided 'CANADA' title.

711-14-110 Title Gilding metal 211/INF/CANADA. Unit made

### Officers



711-11-112 Cap Silver overlay on pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked.



711-12-112 Collar Silver overlay on pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked.



711-14-112 Title Silver overlay on pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

### Bandsman/sweetheart (?)

711-11-114 Cap Gilt finish

711-12-114 Collar Gilt finish

### OVERSEAS

#### Badges by J.W. Tiptaft & Son. Ltd.

Pointed Maple leaf, the motto ribbons with large lettering.

### **Other ranks**

711-11-116 Cap Blackened/pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

711-12-116 Collar Blackened/pickled finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

### **218th Overseas (Railway Construction) Battalion 1916-1918 'Edmonton Irish'**

The 218th (Edmonton Irish) Battalion was recruited and mobilized at Edmonton under General Order 69 of July 15th 1916. The battalion embarked for England February 17th 1917 with 32 officers and 883 other ranks under command of Lieutenant-Colonel J.K. Cornwall (101st Edmonton Fusiliers), where it was absorbed into the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet merging with the 211th Battalion and drafts of skilled railway troops sent from Canada to form the 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. The 8th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked for France on April 17th 1917 serving on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 8th Railway Troops were disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. The 218th Canadian Infantry Battalion was disbanded under General Order 60 of April 15th 1918.

The regimental numbers block for the 218th Canadian Infantry Battalion was 279001 - 282000.

**Badges marked 'Jackson Bros. But made under contract by Hemsley**

**218th (Infantry) Battalion catalogue numbers are used**

### **Other ranks**



718-11-102 Cap Pickled finished. Lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros



718-13-102 Collar Pickled finished. Lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros



718-150-102 Title Pickled finish voided '218/CANADA'. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros'

### **Shoulder strap numerals**

718-150-104 Numeral Gilding metal. By Caron Bros. Not maker marked. Not reported



718-14-106 Numeral Brown finish. Maker marked 'Birks 1916'. Not reported

718-150-108 Numeral Unit made gilding metal 218 attached to lower 'bar'. Not maker marked.

### **Unit made shoulder title**

718-14-110 Title Unit made '218' braised to voided 'CANADA'. Not maker marked

### **Bandsman (?)**

718-11-112 Cap Gilt finish. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros'

718-12-112 Collar Gilt finish. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros'

### **Officers**

718-11-114 Cap Applied brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

718-12-114 Collar Applied brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked

718-11-116 Cap Sterling silver. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros' 'Sterling'

718-12-116 Collar Sterling silver. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros' 'Sterling'

### **Bandsman (?)**

718-11-118 Cap Gilt finish. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros'

718-12-118 Collar Gilt finish. Maker marked 'Jackson Bros'

### **Sweetheart pin.**

Numeral '218' on long 'CANADA' scroll over a small maple leaf with pin fastener.

718-14-130 Sweetheart Gilt with pin fastener. By Jackson not maker marked.

## **The Rutheranian Railway Construction Company**

The 258th Battalion was raised as the Ruthenian Railway Construction Company under General Order 11 of February 1917. The Rutherian's were an ethnic/religious group of the Eastern Orthodox sect and are generally associated with the Ukraine and northern Romania. The unit consisting of 16 Officers and 215

OR's was formed from railway personnel in Military District No.5 with mobilization headquarters at Quebec City the Company (it never approached battalion strength), sailed for England October 16th 1917 where they became a Forestry Company. The unit was disbanded under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. (This the General Order disbanding the Railway units of the CEF.)

### Other ranks



50-4-8-11-102 Cap Brass with red felt insert. Slide fastener. J.R.Gaunt London makers tab



50-4-8-11-104 Cap Brass with red felt insert. Lug fasteners. J.R.Gaunt London makers tab



50-4-8-12-104 Collar Darkened brass with red felt insert. J.R.Gaunt London makers tab

### Officers

50-4-8-11-106 Cap Silver plate. Lug fasteners. J.R. Gaunt London tab



50-4-8-12-106 Collar Silver plate. Pin fastener. J.R. Gaunt London tab



50-4-8-11-108 Cap Hallmarked sterling silver Hallmark Gaunt Birmingham 197/18



50-4-8-12-108 Collar Hallmarked sterling silver Hallmark Gaunt Birmingham 197/18

## 9th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops

The 9th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were originally raised as the 1st Pioneer Battalion this authorized December 22nd 1915 under General Order 151 of December 22nd 1915. The nucleus of the 1st Pioneers was raised in British Columbia where the unit had originally been envisioned as the 80th (Pioneer) Battalion in the summer of 1915 however the unit was not formed until December long after the 80th Infantry Battalion had been formed in Eastern Ontario. The 1st Pioneers sailed for England in February 1916 and to France on March 11th 1916 being attached to the 1st Division. Eventually seven Pioneer battalions served in France these numbered the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 67th (Western Scots), 107th (Timber wolves) 123rd (Royal Grenadier) and the 124th (Governor General's Body Guard) Battalions. Apparently these rotated back and forth to England only four serving in France at any one time. The Pioneer Battalions were under command of Divisional Headquarters but the work was supposed to be organized by the Canadian Engineers, an unworkable arrangement that was scrapped in the 1917 post Sir Sam Hughes reorganization of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The 1st Pioneers were detached from the 1st Division in March 1917 and attached to the 5th Canadian Railway Troops. Effective May 17th 1917 the unit was designated as the 9th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops serving in this capacity on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. The 9th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops never adopted a 'regimental' pattern badge but presumably continued to wear their 1st Pioneers badges or adopted the authorized General Service maple leaf patterns.



**Please see 1st Pioneer Battalion for badge issues**

## **10th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops**

The 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was raised in Toronto and Northern Ontario as the 256th Canadian Railway Construction Battalion with mobilization headquarters at Toronto under General Order 69 of July 1916. The Battalion sailed for England March 28th 1917 with 18 officers and 531 Other Ranks where it was designated as the 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops. The Battalion sailed for France June 9th 1917 serving on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

### **256th Overseas (Railway Construction) Battalion**

The 256th Overseas Infantry Battalion was raised in Northern Ontario as a specialized railway construction battalion with mobilization headquarters at the Exhibition Grounds, Toronto under General Order 48 of May 1st 1917. The actual date of formation is currently undetermined but the badge design was forwarded to Ottawa January 27th 1917, and approved February 6th 1917. The 256th Battalion was raised by the 97th Algonquin Rifles the regiment previously having provided 263 volunteers to the 15th Battalion on its formation at Camp Valcartier in August 1914 and later raising the 159th and 228th Battalions. The 256th Battalion embarked for England March 28th 1917 under command of Lieutenant-Colonel W.A. McConnell (109th Regiment), with a strength of 18 officers and 531 OR's where it was assigned to the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet. The 256th Battalion was designated as the 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 63 of June 15th 1917 sailing for France June 9th 1917 where it served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 256th Railway Construction Battalion was 1,099001 - 1,102000.

### **256th Railway Construction Battalion catalogue numbers are used**

The 256th Overseas Infantry Battalion was raised in Northern Ontario as a specialized railway construction battalion with mobilization headquarters at the Exhibition Grounds, Toronto under General Order 48 of May 1st 1917. The actual date of formation is currently undetermined but the badge design was forwarded to Ottawa January 27th 1917, and approved February 6th 1917. The 256th Battalion was raised by the 97th Algonquin Rifles the regiment previously having provided 263 volunteers to the 15th Battalion on its formation at Camp Valcartier in August 1914 and later raising the 159th and 228th Battalions. The 256th Battalion embarked for England March 28th 1917 under command of Lieutenant-Colonel W.A. McConnell (109th Regiment), with a strength of 18 officers and 531 OR's where it was assigned to the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet. The 256th Battalion was designated as the 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 63 of June 15th 1917 sailing for France June 9th 1917 where it served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 10th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

The regimental numbers block for the 256th Railway Construction Battalion was 1,099001 - 1,102000.

### **Other ranks**



756-11-102 Cap Brown finish. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'



756-12-102 Collar Brown finish. Flat lug fasteners. Maker marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'

Shoulder strap numerals are not currently reported for the 256th Battalion

### NCOs(?)



756-11-104 Cap Pickled finish. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'

756-12-104 Collar Pickled finish. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'

### Officers



756-11-106 Cap Gilt. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'

756-12-106 Collar Gilt. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'



756-14-106 Title Gilt. Lug fasteners. Not maker marked



756-11-108 Cap Red brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'



756-12-108 Collar Red brown OSD finish. Lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto'

756-11-110 Cap Silver. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto' & 'Sterling'

756-12-110 Collar Silver. Flat lug fasteners. Marked 'Roden Bros Toronto' & 'Sterling'

### Officers

Two 'made up' pattern cap badges are noted for the 10th Bn. C.R.T. A modified OR's 256th Bn. badge with numeral '10' overlaid on OR's '256' Battalion cap badge by Roden Bros.

50-4-10-12-104 Cap Bronzed with silver overlay on '10' with 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab on the reverse

50-4-10-12-104 Collar Bronzed with silver overlay on '10' with 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab on the reverse

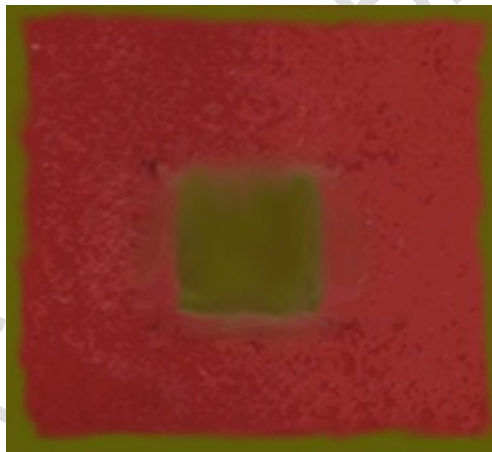
**Made up possibly a Fantasy(?)**



50-4-10-11-106 Cap Centre of a cut down cap badge overlaid on a brass generic maple leaf.

50-4-10-11-108 Cap A similar badge with a silver overlay is reported but not currently confirmed.

**(Distinctive) 10th Battalion Railway Troops Formation Patch**



50-4-10-23-108 Red three inch square with  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch square cut out



### **11th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops**

The 11th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were originally raised as the 3rd Pioneer Battalion from category 'B' men in England in December 1916. On November 23rd 1916 the unit was employed unloading ships at Dunkirk when it was redesignated as the 11th Battalion Railway Troops with the addition of specialized railway workers arrived in the Drafts from Canada the new unit began its first railway work on December 17th 1917. The 11th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

#### **Other ranks**



50-4-11-11-102 Cap Dark brown with red enamel centre. 'Hicks & Sons London' tab





50-4-11-12-102 Collar Dark brown with red enamel centre. 'Hicks & Sons London' tab

### Officers

50-4-11-11-104 Cap Sterling silver with red enamel centre. 'Hicks & Sons London' tab

50-4-11-12-104 Collar Sterling silver with red enamel centre. 'Hicks & Sons London' tab

## 12th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops

The 12th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were originally raised as the 2nd Pioneer Battalion from category 'B' men in England in December 1916. The unit was employed in light railway construction in France when on November 22nd 1916 the unit redesignated as the 12th Battalion Railway Troops with the addition of specialized railway workers arriving with the Drafts from Canada. The 12th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

### Other ranks



50-4-12-11-102 Cap Brown finished brass with red felt centre. 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab



50-4-12-12-102 Collar Brown finished brass with red felt centre. 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab

### Officers



50-4-12-11-104 Cap Silver with red enamel. Hallmark 'J.R.G & S' Birmingham, date 'S' 1917/18'

50-4-12-12-104 Collar Silver with red enamel centre. 'J.R.Gaunt London' tab

### **1st Bridging Company, Canadian Railway Troops**

On August 20th 1918 a bridging unit was formed from volunteers of the 12th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops for service in Palestine. Named the 1st Bridging Company, Canadian Railway Troops the unit sailed for Egypt September 28th 1918 with a total of six officers and 255 Other Ranks. The 1st Bridging Company started its first work in the Middle East on October 5th 1918 with attached Egyptian labor. Malaria was a serious problem and within a few weeks only six men were able to perform work. Four Canadians died two from Malaria and two from Pneumonia before the job was finished October 26th 1918. The unit continued to work in the middle east until February 1919 leaving from Egypt on March 14th 1919 with their sick comrades still in Hospital in Egypt.



50-4-14-11-102 Cap Brass maker not identified



50-4-14-12-102 Collar

Brass maker not identified

## 13th Battalion, Canadian Railway Troops

The 13th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops was formed at the Canadian Railway Troops Depot at Purfleet in March 1918. The 13th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops embarked for France from Southampton March 28th 1918 where they served on the Western Front until the Armistice in November 1918. The 13th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops were disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

### Badges by 'Service Supply Rochester'

#### Other ranks



50-4-13-11-102 Cap Brown finish. Maker marked 'Service Supply Rochester' in Kent UK

#### Officers



50-4-13-11-104 Cap Brown with red with red enamel centre. Marked 'Service Supply Rochester'



50-4-13-12-104 Collar Gilding metal '13' over 'CRT' by 'Service Supply Rochester' not marked  
(These collars are often (wrongly) described as shoulder titles)

## SKILLED RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

On July 27th 1916 the British Government asked if Canada could supply railway specialists in addition to the railway construction battalions either serving in France or being formed. Three sections of skilled railway employees were raised and later a fourth was formed from skilled personnel in France. These were raised as operating and engineering companies and not construction units, all serving under the British Royal Engineers.

### No.1 Section Skilled railway Employees

No.1 Section Skilled Railway Employees was authorized under General Order 11 of February 1917 having been raised in MD. 2 on December 1st 1916. Regimental numbers block 2,124801 - 2,125800. The unit arrived in England March 15th 1917 where it was renamed 12th (Canadian) Light Railway Operating Company R.E. The unit, comprising of three officers and 264 OR's, apparently disliked the term 'Light Railway' and on April 17th 1917 at their own request were redesignated the 58th Broad Gage Operating Company R.E. arrived at Audruicq in France April 23rd 1917 where it served under the British Royal Engineers Railway Operating Department, maintaining 60 miles of track (apparently the French railways were of broader gage than the standard and light railways built by the British and Canadian Railway Troops.) On May 18th 1918 on the formation of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops The 58th Broad Gage Operating Company was absorbed into the Canadian Corps of Railway Troops as No.1 Section Skilled railway Employees.

### 58th Broad Gage Operating Company



50-4-4-23-100 Formation patch 58th Broad Gage Operating Co. Red chevron over crimson

The construction of this formation patch, due to its paper backing, indicates British manufacture produced before the unit proceeded to France. Formation patches on the Continent were initially provided by the CASC but soon thereafter each unit was provided with funds to purchase these locally, apparently from French laundry women.

### Other ranks



50-4-15-11-102 Cap Brass by Birks but not maker marked



50-4-15-12-102 Collar Brass by Birks but not maker marked



50-4-15-14-102 Title Gilding metal

### Officers

50-4-15-11-104 Cap Bronzed with silver overlay by Birks

50-4-15-12-104 Collar Bronzed with silver overlay by Birks

### No.2 Section Skilled railway Employees

No.2 Section Skilled Railway Employees was authorized under General Order 63 of June 15th 1917 having been raised in MD. 13 January 27th 1917. Regimental numbers block 2,125801 - 2,126800. The unit comprised of three officers and 264 OR's arrived in England at the end of April 1917 where it was renamed 13th Light Railway Operating Company R.E. (No.2 Section Skilled Railway Employees CEF). In September 1917 the designation became the 13th Light Railway Operating Company (No.2 Section Skilled Railway Employees CEF) and in November 1917 the 13th Light Railway Operating Company (Canadians) and finally in March 1918 as the 13th Canadian Light Railway Operating Company. The unit arrived in France in June 1917 where on May 18th 1918 on the formation of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops The 13th Canadian Light Railway Operating Company was absorbed into the Canadian Corps of Railway Troops as No.2 Section Skilled railway Employees. The 13th Canadian Light Railway Operating Company was disbanded under General Order 196, 1st November 1920 along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops CEF.

### Other ranks





50-4-15-11-106 Cap Brass attributed to Birks but not maker marked



50-4-15-12-106 Collar Brass attributed to Birks but not maker marked



50-4-15-14-106 Title Gilding metal 'S.R.E.' by Caron Bros worn over 'CANADA'

### Officers



50-4-15-11-108 Cap Gilt with silver wash on maple leaf. Attributed to Birks but not maker marked

50-4-15-12-108 Collar Gilt with silver wash on maple leaf. Attributed to Birks but not maker marked

Also reported in sterling silver but not currently confirmed

### Reinforcements

### Other ranks

50-4-15-11-110 Cap Blackened finish. By J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked



50-4-15-12-110 Collar Blackened finish. By J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked

### Officers

50-4-15-11-112 Cap Bronzed with silver overlay by Gaunt

50-4-15-12-112 Collar Bronzed with silver overlay by Gaunt

### No.3 Section Skilled Railway Employees

No.3 Section Skilled Railway Employees was formed at St. John's (St. Jean) Quebec with mainly railway men from Moncton. (No authorizing General Order is listed) Regimental numbers block 2,126801 - 2,127800. The unit arrived in England on March 14th 1918 where on the 16th it was designated the 69th Canadian Wagon Erecting Company. It arrived in France April 15th 1918 the last Canadian railway troop unit to do so and was the first of the formerly independent units to leave France in February 1919. On the formation of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops the 69th Canadian Wagon Erecting Company was designated as No.3 Section Skilled railway Employees. No official date of disbandment is listed in the General Orders possibly served as part of the British Royal Engineers.

### Other ranks



50-4-15-11-114 Cap Pickled by J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked



50-4-15-12-114 Collar Pickled by J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked

## Officers



- |                |        |  |
|----------------|--------|--|
| 50-4-15-11-116 | Cap    | Brown OSD by J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked            |
| 50-4-15-12-116 | Collar | Brown OSD by J.R.Gaunt but not maker marked            |
| 50-4-15-11-118 | Cap    | Wm overlay on brass. Maker marked 'J.R. Gaunt London'. |
| 50-4-15-12-118 | Collar | Wm overlay on brass. Maker marked 'J.R. Gaunt London'. |

## Officers(?)



- |                |     |   |
|----------------|-----|---|
| 50-4-15-11-120 | Cap | Oxidized. Maker marked 'J.R. Gaunt London'. |
|----------------|-----|---|

## No.4 Section Skilled railway Employees

No.4 Section Skilled Railway Employees was formed at Purfleet on September 7th 1917 as the 85th Canadian Engine Crew Company it was formed for service in France. (Assigned regimental numbers block 2,127801 - 2,128800.) The unit provided 108 train crews, (approximately 300 all ranks) and sailed for France December 12th 1917. On May 18th 1918 on the formation of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops the 85th Canadian Engine Crew Company was absorbed into the Canadian Corps of Railway Troops as No.4 Section Skilled railway Employees. No official date of disbandment is listed in the General Orders. No public sales of badges to this unit have been recorded and it is likely that if produced were patterns or proto types and never general issues.

## CANADIAN RAILWAY TROOPS DEPOT

In November 1916 the Headquarters of the Canadian Railway Troops was set up in France with an Administrative Office in London and a Depot and Training Centre at Purfleet, Essex in England. In March 1917 the Administrative Headquarters was established at the General Headquarters of the British Armies in France. The only complete unit furnished by the Depot and Training Centre at Purfleet in 1918 was the 13th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops this in March 1917 after which date it only supplied reinforcements to the Battalions in France from the reinforcing drafts arriving from Canada. The unit is thought to have

obtained badges during this period. After the signing of the Armistice the Canadian Railway Troops Depot was relocated to Knotty Ash to become a Repatriation Depot. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920.

### Other ranks



50-4-15-11-130 Cap Dark Brown. Maker not identified

50-4-15-12-130 Collar Other ranks collar badges are not reported

### Officers

50-4-15-11-132 Cap Blackened with silver overlay Maker not identified



50-4-15-12-132 Collar Blackened with silver overlay Maker not identified

In Canada the Depot of the Corps of Canadian Railway Troops was established in Military District No.2 effective June 5th 1918 under General Order 110 of 1918. The unit was disbanded along with the rest of the Canadian Railway Troops under General Order 196 of November 1st 1920. In Canada only the General Service Maple Leaf pattern badges were authorized for Depot Battalions.

### RAILWAY SERVICE GUARDS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

The British Government employed many foreign laborers under contract for service in France during WWI. These were drawn from both the Colonies and from Foreign powers. Over the course of the war 195 Companies of Chinese Laborers were hired in China transported across the Pacific to Vancouver sent across Canada by rail then on across the Atlantic to France. Some of these Chinese Labor Companies worked with Engineers others with the Canadian Forestry Corps in France. A special unit was created in Canada, the Canadian Railway Guards, to accompany the Chinese and other foreign Laborers from Vancouver to their port of embarkation on the East coast of Canada. It is reported that the unit was formed in 1915 long before the Special Service Companies to which the badges of this unit have traditionally been assigned.

Listed as Special Service Company for Guard Duty. Regimental numbers block 2,765001 - 2,766000.

A detailed history of the Canadian Railway Service Guards and Chinese Labour Corps was printed in the Military Collectors Club of Canada Journal of Summer 1992 (Edition 169)

### Other ranks



50-5-1-11-102 Cap Brown finish. Fold over tangs. Maker marked O.B.Allan



50-5-1-12-102 Collar Brown OSD. Fold over tangs. Maker marked O.B.Allan

### Officers



50-5-1-11-104 Cap Brown OSD. Lug fasteners. Maker marked O.B.Allan

50-5-1-12-104 Collar Brown OSD. Lug fasteners. Maker marked O.B.Allan





50-5-1-11-106 Cap Silver. Pin fastener. With pin fastener. Marked Sterling and O.B.Allan

50-5-1-12-106 Collar Silver. Pin fastener. Maker marked O.B.Allan with pin fastener

## CANADIAN LABOR BATTALIONS

A General Order establishing the formation of the Canadian Labor Battalions in England have not been located. It is known these were formed in December 1916 from Category 'B' men available in the pioneer and railway depots in England. Four were established one for each of the four Canadian Divisions serving with the Canadian Corps in France.

### Canadian Labour Group Headquarters

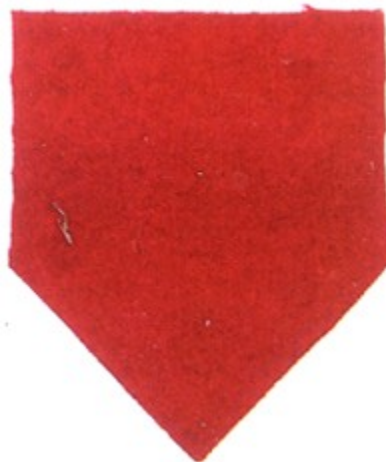
The Canadian Labor Group Headquarters was located at Corps Headquarters. The formation patch adopted comprised of a red cloth rectangle with three white horizontal bars.

50-4-6-23-112 Formation patch

### 1st Canadian Labour Battalion

The patches worn by the Labour Battalions, like those of the Railway troops, were initially worn on the back below the collar.

### 1st pattern Formation patch



50-6-6-23-102 Formation patch. Red felt or melton worn on back below collar

## 2nd pattern Formation patch



50-6-6-23-104 Formation patch. Red felt or melton strip worn on upper sleeve

In the spring of 1918 the 1st Labor Battalion was reorganized to form the 1st and 2nd Infantry Works Companies.

## 1st Canadian Infantry Works Company



50-4-6-11-110 Cap Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '1' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-12-110 Collar Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '1' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'

## 2nd Canadian Labour Battalion

### 2nd pattern Formation patch



50-4-6-23-106 Formation patch.

Effective November 22nd 1917 the 2nd Canadian Labor Battalion was redesignated as the 12th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops.



2nd Canadian Labor Battalion steel trench helmet with cover

### **2nd Canadian Infantry Works Company**



50-4-6-11-120 Cap Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '2' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-11-120 Cap Brown OSD with wm overlay on the numeral '2' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-12-120 Collar Brown OSD with wm overlay on the numeral '2' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'

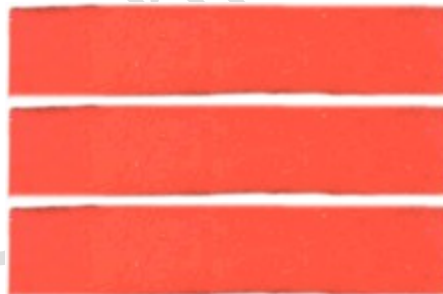


50-4-6-23-120 Formation patch.

### **3rd Canadian Labour Battalion**

It is known that the officers of the 3rd Labor Battalion wore their original battalion cap badges but it is believed that the other ranks wore only the General Service Maple Leaf patterns.

#### **2nd pattern Formation patch**



50-4-6-23-108 Formation patch

Effective November 25th 1917 the 3rd Canadian Labor Battalion was redesignated as the 11th Battalion Canadian Railway Troops.

### **4th Canadian Labour Battalion**

On the conversion of the 2nd and 3rd Labor Battalions to Railway Troops the 1st and 4th Labor Battalions were reorganized to form the 1st through 4th Infantry Works Companies.

The only known metal badges for the Canadian Labor Battalions are for the 4th Battalion these probably being produced and issued in England after the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions had left for France.



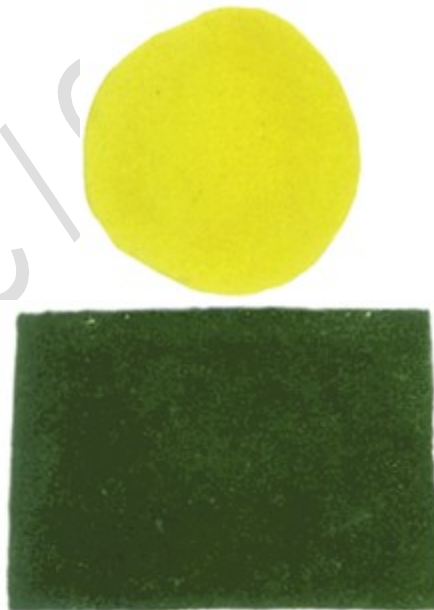
50-4-6-11-140 Cap OR's Bronzed finish with white metal overlay the maker unidentified



50-4-6-12-140 Collar OR's Bronzed finish with white metal overlay the maker unidentified

50-4-6-14-140 Title OR's Natural gilding metal finish the maker unidentified

### 1st pattern Formation patch

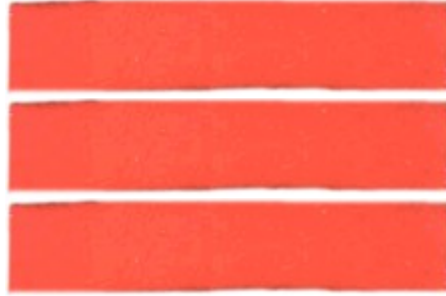


50-4-6-23-110 Formation patch. (2nd type) sleeve badge. Yellow disc worn 1/2-inch over green rectangle

### 2nd pattern Formation patch







50-4-6-23-112 Formation patch

### Officers

An officers patterns in gilt with a white metal overlay is reported but no public sales are recorded.

In the spring of 1918 the 4th Labor Battalion was reorganized to form the 3rd and 4th Infantry Works Companies.

### 3rd Canadian Infantry Works Company

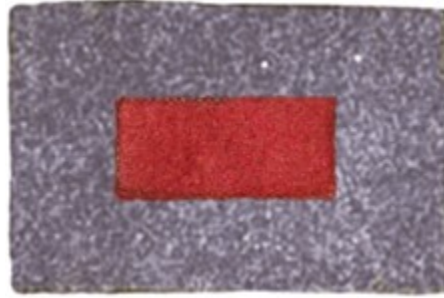
Cap and collar badges are known for all four companies but their rarity would indicate they were worn only by Officers



50-4-6-11-130 Cap Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '3' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-12-130 Collar Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '3' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-23-130 Formation patch

### **4th Canadian Infantry Works Company**

50-4-6-11-142 Cap Bronzed with wm overlay on the numeral '4' by the 'Gold & Silversmiths Co.'



50-4-6-12-142 Collar Extremely rare. Only a single specimen reported

### **Formation patch**



50-4-6-23-114 Formation patch

### **Foreign Labour Companies**

The History of the Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers, Volume 1. Printed on authority of the Military Engineers Association of Canada, Ottawa 1962. Lists some details of foreign laborers.

Page 121 "It was also made responsible for the construction of special Kaffir compounds for coloured labor troops."

Page 272 (March 25th 1917) "The 7th Battalion (Railway Troops) started near Bonneville with 11 labor companies (Chinese) and the 9th Battalion ,C.R.T., (less two companies) at Thievers with 3200 laborers."

Page 279 "On one hand there was the Burmese Labor Company working for the 2nd Battalion (C.R.T.) that downed tools on November 1st (1918) and insisted on being sent home, because it's year contract had expired."

### **Chinese Labour Corps**

The war diaries of the Canadian Reserve artillery at Shorncliffe for the summer of 1917 show that the reinforcements proceeded to France not as complete batteries either assigned to specific unit or as unassigned. A draft proceeding overseas on the 18th July 1917 lists 18 Officers as reinforcements to the C.F.A., 2nd Heavy Battery and Chinese Labor Battalion.

50-4-7-11-100 Hat Workers badge pressed thin sheet gilding metal with 'fold over' tangs



50-4-7-11-102 Hat Foreman's (?) badge gilt pressed thin sheet gilding metal with 'fold over' tangs

### South African Labor Contingent



50-4-7-11-132 Cap Gilding metal with lug fasteners maker not identified

No.32 Canadian Forestry Company worked under Central Group and was located at Dreux from June 1917 to October 1918 and then at La Trappe from October 1918 until January 1919. The above previously unlisted badge is die struck and apparently produced for their South African Labor Company. No other Labor Company badges have been reported but others may have been produced.