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Artillery-Weapons/Systems/Gear

NOTE: 75MM PACK HOWITZER, M1A1, IN WAR & PEACE

The 75mm pack howitzer was developed in the 1920s but not mass produced until the outbreak of World War II. Under its original design, it could be broken down into six loads each bearable by mule to otherwise inaccessible areas. While the theory had merit, the first combat use of mule-transported artillery proved less than auspicious. See:

Green, Constance M., et al. The Ordnance Department: Planning Munitions for War. In series USAWWII. Wash, DC: Office, Chief of Mil Hist, 1955. pp. 180-82. D769A533v6pt3v1.

Miller, John, Jr. Guadalcanal: The First Offensive. In series USAWWII. Wash, DC: Hist Div, Dept of Army, 1949. p. 314. D769A533v2pt2.

Other units, including the 5037th Composite Group (Merrill's Marauders) and the 10th Mountain Division used pack artillery during the war. See pertinent unit histories and archival papers.

FIELD MANUALS:

U.S. Dept. of Army. 75mm Pack Howitzer M1A1: Field Manual 6-78, dated Aug 1962. 141 p. AuthPub-FM.
Prescribes crew drill.

U.S. War Department. Pack Artillery: FM 6-110, dated Mar 1940. 204 p. AuthPub-FM.
Also 1947 ed.

_____. Pack Transportation: FM 25-7, dated Aug 1944. 170 p. AuthPub-FM.
Includes extensive info on Phillips pack saddle.

_____. Service of the Piece, 75mm Howitzer, Horse and Truck Drawn: FM 6-70, dated Oct 1939. 58 p. AuthPub-FM.

TABLES OF ORGANIZATION & EQUIPMENT

U.S. War Dept. Field Artillery Battalion, 75mm Howitzer, Pack: Table of Organization and

Equipment 6-155. AuthPub-TOE.

Eds of 1 Nov 1940 (2 p.); 1 Apr 42 w/ chngs (4 p); 4 May 43 (3 p).

TECHNICAL MANUALS

U.S. War Dept. 75mm Pack Howitzer M1A1 and Carriage, M8: Technical Manual 9-319, dated May 1943. 250 p. AuthPub-TM.

See also 1944 & 1948 eds; preparations for parachute and glider delivery described.

_____. 75mm Howitzer Materiel: TM 9-320, dated Jun 1941. 160 p. AuthPub-TM.

Includes info on M2A1, M3 and M3A1 carriages and the M1 and M1A1 howitzers.

_____. 75mm Howitzer M1A1 in Motor Carriage T30: TM 9-321, dated Jul 1943. AuthPub-TM.

_____. Ordnance Maintenance, 75mm Howitzer Materiel: TM 9-1320, dated Jun 1941. 47 p. AuthPub-TM.

Includes info on M1 howitzer, M1 cassion, M2 light limer, M2A1, M3 and M3A1 carriages. See also 1944 ed.

_____. 75mm Howitzer M1A1 in Motor Carriage T30: TM 9-321, dated Jul 1943. AuthPub-TM.

In addition to service with mule units, the 75mm howitzer became the main gun for glider and parachute artillery battalions in WWII. Airborne units so equipped won honors at Bastogne, Normandy and Arnhem. The chief difference between pack howitzers for mule use and those for airborne operations were the wheels: the former had spoked wheels and the latter had pneumatic tires. As an example of glider artillery operations, see:

U.S. Army. 321 Glider Field Artillery Battalion. Mission Accomplished. Salzburg, Austria: Kiesel, 1945. pp. 55-59. #202-321.1945.

Some US Army posts currently use an artillery piece to fire the morning gun and salute the flag at daily retreat. Of these weapons, 75mm Pack Howitzers, M1A1, appear popular. See mil pubs cited above.

See also:

Bib on Pack Artillery in Artillery-Wpns/Syst/Gear.