

THE JIMMY'S ANCESTRY

The CCKW in Detail and
The Collector's Syndrome

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Part VII

THE '43's

The Fourth-Series:

The fourth-series trucks, those built from late April, 1943, through January, 1944, (serial numbers 213652 to 321077), were the very plain, standard truck. All were open cab, and used the wartime wooden cargo body. After the first month of production, changes were few and far between.

Late spring, 1943, was when virtually all the U.S. Army's 'Standard' vehicles reached full flower. Jeep fans must remember, it was around March 1943 when the MB/GPW arrived at its definitive form; with gas can carrier, blackout drive lamp, bare spoke steering wheel and the windshield mounted rifle carrier.

Late April and early May 1943, saw three changes that stamped the characteristics of this series. First, at serial number 219512, the '3199' model engine was introduced. This was just another accessory change; spark plug wire suppressors and positive crankcase ventilation. The positive crankcase ventilation system was exactly the same as that fitted to the other Army standard vehicles. The intake manifold was modified to accept the ventilation valve, which was plumbed to an elbow on the top of the valve cover. This was just like the Jeep and Dodge installation.

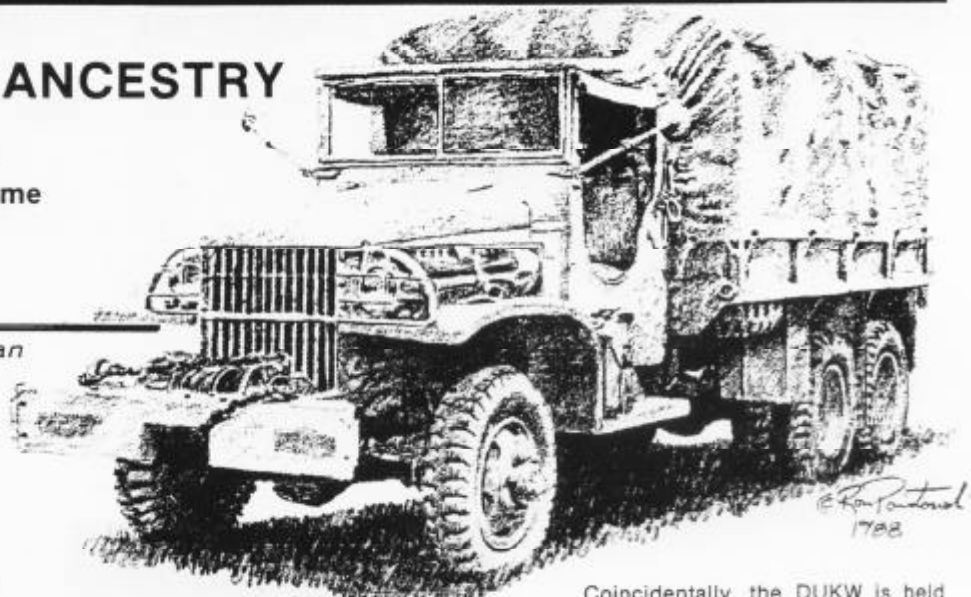
The 3199 engine had just entered production when a week or so later it was replaced with a revised model - the 3020. While this was another unserialized change, and it involved a lot of parts, it was a dated change: May 1, 1943. This revision was the introduction of the deep, or two-piece oil pan. The reason for this change was two-fold. First, it achieved greater engine interchangeability between the split and the Banjo

drivelines and second, it prevented the lube oil from foaming. This was caused by the crankshaft dipping into the oil on very steep grades. This change required many engine and chassis parts: oil pump, oil pick-up system, oil filler, frame, front spring stops and a lot of other hardware.

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1930-40 era General Motors engines, was the use of round-head screws to hold the sheet metal parts (oil pan, valve side cover and timing gear cover) to the blocks. With the '270, there were 49 of these so called 'stove bolts'. They are correctly termed 'Cross-Recessed, Round Head 1/4" x 20 Machine Screws'. The reason for these Phillip Head screws was simple, to prevent overtightening, and distortion of the sheet metal parts, as only a limited amount of torque could be applied with a common screw driver. The only rub was that by 1943 (and the DUKW) engine access was getting so poor that you couldn't get any sort of screw driver on the screw heads. With the 3020 engine (and DUKW production), the 49 round head screws were replaced by an equally distinctive GM style fastener - the Hex-Recessed Head 1/4" x 20 Cap Screw. This was a hex cap screw with a Phillips-style cross recess in them.

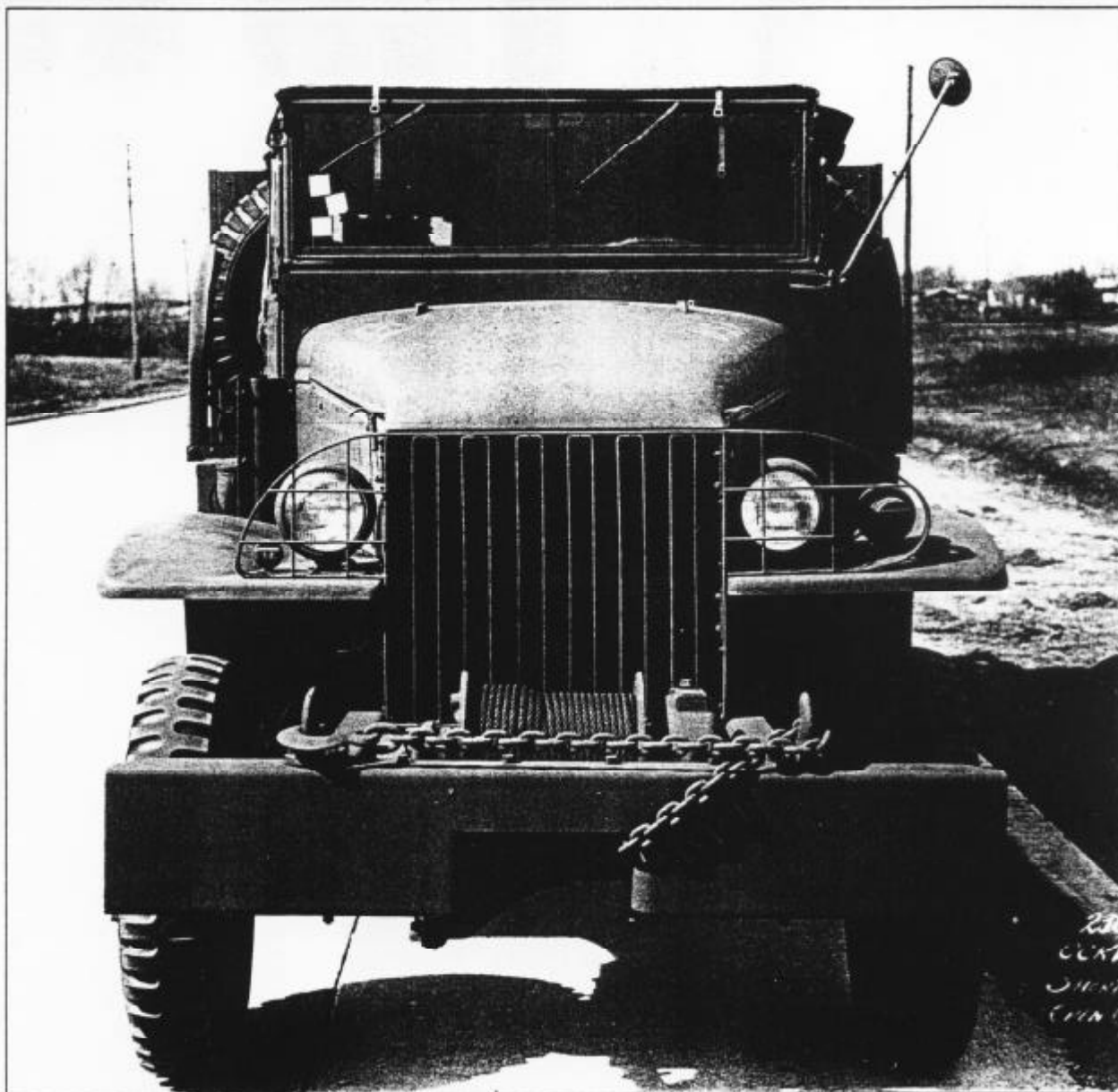


Coincidentally, the DUKW is held together by a vast number of these strange bolts. Both these features are as uniquely GM as the Script F-bolt is of the Ford GPW.

Finally, at serial number 220521, the brake system saw the Bendix '1st-series Hydro Vac' replaced by the improved '2nd-series Hydro Vac' assembly. I kid you not, 1st and 2nd-series are their real names. The two vacuum cylinder assemblies have little in parts interchangeability, but they look very much alike. The easiest way to tell them apart is that the 1st-series unit has square plates at each end with four tie-bolts holding the whole assembly together. The 2nd-series has the four tie-bolts, but instead of the square end plates, there are eight L-shaped clamps holding the cylinder unit together.

For any trucks that have seen prolonged postwar use, it is very common to find both styles of the original Hydro-Vac's replaced by much later vintage, service replacement units. The large surplus dealers were really big on selling these aftermarket upgrading kits.

While progressing through this, all those engine detail changes that should provide ready identification clues for trucks of various eras have one very basic flaw. Most of the engine improvements; large single oil filter, water bypass, positive crankcase ventilation and finally the two piece oil pan, were all supplied as contemporary factory upgrading kits for field installation. The installation of these bolt-on modification kits was very aggressively pushed not only by GMC's Service Division, but by the Quartermaster Corps and, later by the Ordnance Department. Replacement or rebuilt engines invariably incorpo-



Front view of an early fourth-series CCKW-352. The GMC logo is long gone from the brushguard, but the very obsolete 4" registration numbers still linger on in the May 1943 portrait view. May 13, 1943.

GMC T&C #280016

rated all these changes. All factory supplied replacement engines had the exact engine model (i.e.: SN-3199, SN-3020, etc.) stencilled on the rocker arm cover in black, 1-inch, Gothic-style characters. To find an original, early truck with all the serial number keyed features would be very difficult, if not impossible. Since these changes were made during the war it makes no difference if your truck is some mint, original, 4,000 mile specimen from an Idaho Civil Defense Unit, or a veteran of a couple of European/NATO rebuilds. Due to these wartime upgrading kits, half a dozen differ-

ent model replacement engines and the 'echelon maintenance' system, the absolutely, 100-percent, original, early truck probably doesn't exist.

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In mid 1943, Yellow Truck and Coach was reorganized and became General Motors Truck and Coach Division. This meant that the vehicle nomenclature plates had to be revised. The new plate was slightly taller and the wording was slightly re-arranged. The big change, of course, was in the heading and manufacturers/name section. There was, however, one very slight change in format that made this new plate the truly universal CCKW data plate. The early formatted plates (used from February, 1941 up until mid 1943), required a different plate for both the long and short

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Right-front 3/4 Portrait view of a true classic. Points of interest to the collector in this May 1943 view: the last use of the large 4" numbers, the early style (1942/43) canvas with the floppy top and the large/small side curtain windows. Note also, no gas can holders on the running boards, but the large gas fillers have appeared. And, of course, the standard wartime wooden cargo body. Less than 10% of the CCKW's were the short wheelbase version. April 13, 1943.

GMC T&C #2800-13

wheelbase trucks. The one for the short trucks had the model etched in as CCKW 352 and one for the long trucks has CCKW 353 etched in, followed by a blank pad where the serial number was stamped. The new plate just had CCKW etched in. The blank pad was longer and 352 or 353 had to be stamped in with the rest of the serial number. This universal plate was only in general use for six months or so. In early 1944, the nomenclature plate format was changed again.

Starting in mid 1943, the Corps of Engineers began ordering a very limited number of special, long wheelbase, Banjo chassis and cabs, with high flotation tires. By the end of the war these special ordered chassis had only totaled some 478 units. The trucks these chassis were used for were all unique models: Pontoon Bolster Trucks, Class 530 Overseas Fire Trucks, ABM 51 Airborne Truck Crane, etc. Only Banjo axled trucks came this way, as all the odd parts were production DUKW pieces: tires, wheels, brake drums and hubs. As rare as these trucks were when new, six-wheeled DUKW tired CCKW's seem to be a common item in junkyards. This was a surprisingly common civilian modification. All it required to make a real off-road truck out of a Jimmy was a nearby DUKW hulk.

The reason for this minor digression, is to bring up the point that all -1 and -2 Chassis Cabs were not created equal.

They were not built on speculation or for stock. The ultimate use for each and every one had to be known, if for no other reason than the application of the correctly prefixed U.S.A. Registration Number (Medical Corps, Signal Corps, Air Corps, Ordnance, etc.) and what holes to drill in the frame.

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Careful examination of the Frame-section ORD 9, indicates that the -1 and -2 Chassis Cabs came in their own array of distinct sub-types. There was a bewildering selection of frame rails, frame reinforcements, spare tire carriers, exhaust systems, wiring harnesses, optional fuel tanks with different brackets; all this in addition to the add/deleted parts: pintle hook, rear bumperettes, gas tank, battery carrier, etc. These differences depended on what the chassis was to be used for.

Among the optional items on these Chassis-cabs were a lot of mounting holes. Just because the cargo trucks were the most common of the common, does not mean that the bare, ex-shop van, Chassis cab that Farmer Jones sold you for a hundred dollars is going to

have all the required holes to mount the standard cargo truck parts. This can lead to a lot of frustration.

That just about takes care of the serialized changes to the fourth-series trucks. However, there were a many highly visible (late) changes made to these trucks that were un-serialized. These changes were all mechanically insignificant. But, due to their high visibility, they are the subject of the nit-pickers interest. These items were all listed in section 1808 of the ORD 9 (Stowage). These three pages list all those parts that collectors go nuts over. The average collector doesn't care if his truck has the first or second-series brake system (or even if it works), but mention some doo-hickey that bolts to the outside of the truck and everyone goes bananas. This is the material that arguments are made of.

Section 1808 is where all those little details are listed: spare parts box, rifle holders (both covered and uncovered), gas can carriers, lube chart holder, oil can holder, etc. There is only one thing wrong with all this. Since these parts didn't replace anything, didn't affect anything if they were not there, and were totally non-mechanical, there are no serial numbers or application details. Nowhere does it say what trucks (late-ones, early-ones, open-cab or closed-cab) they fit. The only specific application given is incorrect: the rifle holder in open-cabs only. The late closed cabs



A real late fourth series truck. It still has the 1942/43 style wooden cargo bed, but it has the very late improved cab with the revised, late style large windowed doors, and the much tighter metal side rail reinforced top. Just barely visible you can see the shovel stowed on the running board. Yes, the small 2" regulation registration numbers finally appeared on CCKW's in mid 1943. January, 1944.

had them also. The March, 1943 revised TUP Re-Assembly Manual shows and details the installation of the rifle holders in the late closed-cab trucks. The 1808 section does not say which open cabs were to use the rifle holder with the zippered canvas cover, as both are listed.

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For these nagging exterior details, forget the parts books, maintenance manuals and the French GMC books. The only place you are going to find these parts documented is in a factory photograph. That is a photo with a serial number and date in the corner. In fact, the very reason that a lot of these photos were taken was to show those exterior stowage parts. For CCKW's there were a number of these portraits made. Unfortunately, most of them are tucked away in the GM archives and we cannot see them.

In March, 1943, there were a number of these portraits made of the very late closed-cab, and the then 'current' open-cab trucks. These photos were used as

the basis for the retouched illustrations in the first edition of TM 9-801 (April, 1943). In January, 1944, there was another photo session to supply the material to illustrate TM 9-1801, and the second edition of TM 9-801 (April, 1944). From these two photo sessions came virtually all of the photos used to illustrate the CCKW.

Getting back to the stowage parts of the CCKW, what's to be found in the Spring, 1943, portraits? These photos were taken at the very end of closed-cab production. They show that no production closed-cab trucks were built with factory installed large neck fuel fillers. Again, this is one of those details that there are no serial number notations of when the change was made. The late tanks, with the large 3 3/4" fillers, readily fit most of the earlier trucks. The parts book indicates that they will fit all trucks after serial number 41189. But, none of the books say just when they were introduced into production; late spring, early summer 1943? These spring portraits also show that no CCKW's were yet fitted with factory installed gas can holders. The closed-cab trucks never came with them. For the open-cabs, like the large fuel fillers, the can carriers came in early summer around serial

GMC T&C #2800-107

number 235,000. That's a best guess, but that's about when the familiar running board mounted can carriers entered production.

Also, these '43 portraits show that no CCKW's had any sign, or any provision for factory installation of the rectangular, Army Standard Pioneer Tool Carrier. Unlike the Dodge 3/4-ton series, none of the production model CCKW's ever came with the rectangular tool rack factory mounted. These racks were field installed, following War Department guidelines: WDTB-ORD 93, TB-ORD FE25, etc.

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From mid-summer until November '43, the trucks remained pretty much unchanged. In November, at s/n 311835, the leather transfer case lever boot was replaced with the cheapo floor seal. The floor seal was nothing more than a piece of punched tarpaper, with a C-shaped metal reinforcement riveted to it. This new floor seal did nothing more than generally cover the large hole in the floor where the levers went through. The



A perfectly average mid 1943 CCKW-353 Compressor Truck. It's late enough to have the gas can carriers, but not late enough to have the running board mounted pioneer tools or the late canvas. The top shown is the early one, without the metal side rail. The only options are: the unit badge and flag on the brushguard, and the kinked fenders. U.S. Army SC 380093

only good thing about it, was that it was a serial change and it gives a good idea of when it and the following cab revision was done. The revision of the cab was a totally un-serialized change, but it all happened about the same time as the floor seal change. This was when the running board mounted pioneer tool brackets, spare parts box and gas can spout were introduced. The late-style running board, those with the holes for the two mounting brackets, are the common replacement running board. They show up on many ex-European trucks, no matter what their age. Like the early/late style Blackout Marker lights, today they are not a valid I.D. feature.

It was also in this early winter of 1943/44, that the early style cab canvas was replaced with the very nice 'late' set. The early canvas was characterized by the loose, floppy top, and the side curtains with one large and one small window. The revised set had the tailored top with the metal side rails attached, and the doors had two, large, equal-sized windows. Through the years, a large number of minor variations of these two basic canvas sets have appeared. But it still comes down to the simple fact, that there is an early or late-style. The revised canvas is a very nice setup. You can almost keep the rain out, heat in, and see out, all at the same time - absolutely revolutionary.

The CCKW and all other large trucks were issued with complete canvas enclosures.

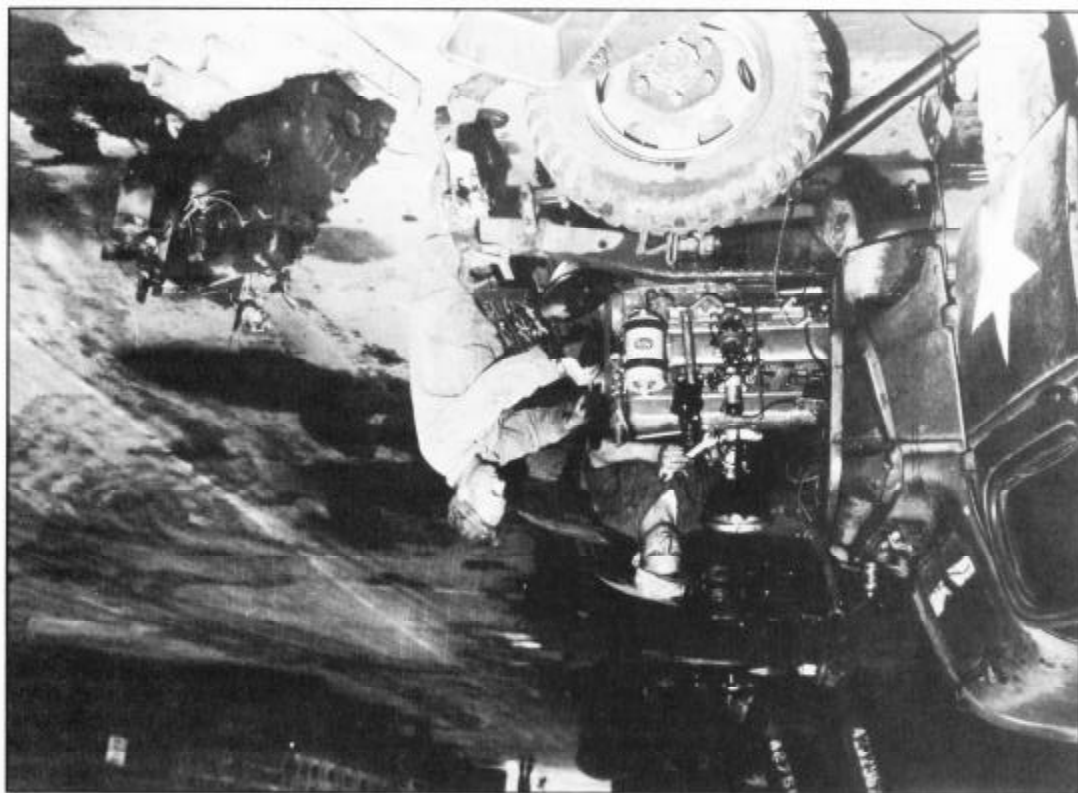
A note to Jeep/Dodge weapons carrier owners: with the Jeep or the Dodge, the full canvas cab enclosure was a very rare, and hard to get Winterization Kit. On the other hand, the CCKW and all other large trucks were issued with complete canvas enclosures. Every open-cab Jimmy that left the Pontiac assembly line went with a full top, back curtain and a pair of side curtains. Unfortunately, they did not come with heaters.

An interesting bit of trivia... GMC internal communications refer to the revision of the detailing on the late 1943's as the 'New/Revised' Open Cab. The interesting note here, while the cab was revised, the model didn't change. It was still the model 1619 Open Cab. You'll recall when the closed cab was revised, it changed model numbers from 1574 to 1608/1609 (with or without hole in roof). The basic sheetmetal of the new cab changed not a bit.

During the winter of 1943/44, there were a couple of more un-serialized mechanical changes made. Being interchangeable with the old parts, the only

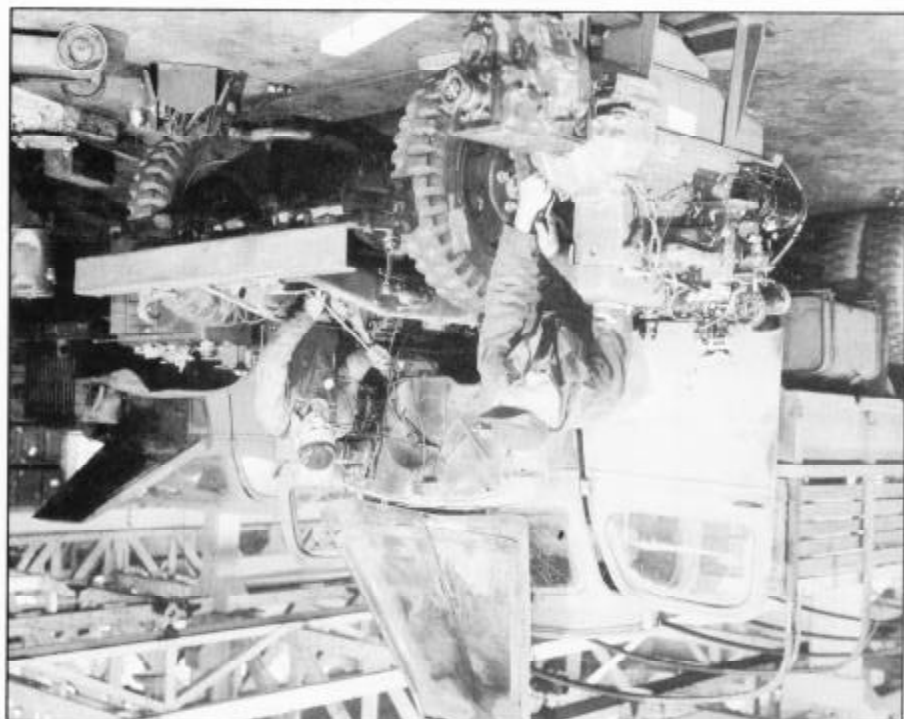
public mention of the new pieces was, again, the GMC Service Bulletins. This was when the Dodge style, demountable brake drums and the zinc di-chromate plated wheel brake cylinders entered production. This was another change inspired from DUKW practice, and it really simplified brake maintenance. No longer was it necessary to pull axle shafts and wheel bearings to remove the brake drum/hub assemblies to gain access. And the plated wheel cylinders drastically reduced the amount of brake work required - no more end caps rusting to the ends of those awful Chevrolet/Huck style wheel cylinders. It wasn't until the M38, that the Jeep got the demountable style brake drums.

Finally, in January 1944, the rear spring trunnion bearing seat design was reworked. Previously the maintenance schedule required the whole trunnion assembly to be taken apart every 5,000 miles to repack and adjust the trunnion bearings. Seldom was this ever done in the real world. The original GM style felt grease retainer was replaced by a real lip-style oil seal, pressure relief valve and a zerk fitting. Now you could pump the housing full of grease at every chassis lube. This was another one of those service bulletin/field kit modifications that seems to be very common on surviving trucks - no matter when they were built.



Two members of an American Ordnance company in France change a motor on a G.I. truck.
September 1944. U.S. Army SC345660

With that, the fourth-series trucks were ready for the January photo session, and the February 1944 model/con- tract change. By early 1944, with the exception of a few bodies, the CCKW looked the way they appear until the end of production. Most of the future chan- ges would be internal.



This GMC CCKW is undergoing a depot rebuild. Note decals and data plate on left side of new engine and the hip ring on the passenger side of the cab roof.
Date and place unknown.
National Archives 111-SC-320380

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A field re-assembly of a crated GMC. Note all the shiny new parts and the octane rating and tappet setting on the valve cover. Date and place unknown.