

FEDERATED MALAY STATES.

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE MALAY STATES VOLUNTEER REGIMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1924

I propose in drawing up this report to follow generally the lines of previous reports with the object of allowing easy comparison of statistics to be made. There was a saving of approximately \$27,360 on the approved estimates. The estimates and expenditure for the last two years were as under:

1923.				1924.	
Estimates.	Expenditure.	...	...	Estimates.	Expenditure.
\$262,852	\$221,509	...	...	\$264,186	\$236,826

I am confident from all I have seen and heard that very definite progress has been made in the building up of a good European volunteer organisation in the Federated Malay States. First and foremost the volunteers themselves have been active and have taken a real and live interest in training and in the organisation generally.

Two years ago it was extremely difficult to get members to reply to correspondence emanating from Malay States Volunteer Regiment Head-quarters or the respective Company Head-quarters and now it is found that 75 per cent. of the circular letters which require replies are answered promptly. Furthermore, volunteers who have suggestions to put forward or complaints to make write in freely. These are pleasing features and show that a good liaison has been established between the permanent staff and the volunteers. It is almost unnecessary to add that such liaison is essential to the well-being of a unit so widely scattered as the Malay States Volunteer Regiment and it should help considerably in furthering recruiting and keenness generally. Some improvement is noticeable in the interest taken in the local units at Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh but they are still far behind outstation units. In making these remarks I do not wish to cast any reflection on the many keen and efficient members whom Kuala Lumpur possesses. Their prowess is well known and evidenced by the many open shooting competitions they won during the year.

Employers on the whole have continued to give their support and in many instances they have given their volunteer employees facilities to attend training.

The Press has also helped to further the interests of volunteering.

Several members have derived considerable benefit from the hospital concessions granted by Government and that such concessions have encouraged efficiency has been proved. Sixty-six certificates were issued during the year. In November those concerned were requested to furnish information confidentially of the actual financial benefit received and by the beginning of January replies were to hand from 47. An analysis of their information shows that the number of cases in which the concession gave a personal saving to the volunteer was 30. In eight of these cases the volunteer himself was a patient while in the remaining 22 cases the patients were members of the families of volunteers.

The average benefit was \$61.90 and maximum benefit in any one case was \$168.00. In 17 cases in which volunteers were patients there was an average saving to the volunteers' employers of \$74.40; the maximum benefit in any one case being \$227.00.

The reorganisation of the Federated Malay States volunteers which was foreshadowed in my predecessor's last report and made possible by the introduction of the 1923 Volunteer Enactment and the appointment of three State Adjutants is now ready for putting into operation and only awaits the approval and publication of the establishments and the new rules and regulations.

In the establishments mentioned a definite establishment per company has been suggested. The numbers vary according to the location of the respective companies and in arriving at them the possible number of available Europeans only was taken into consideration.

STRENGTH.—The strength of the Regiment on the 31st December, 1924, was 36 officers and 1,071 other ranks (including 287 Auxiliary Service members and exclusive of the permanent staff) as against 40 officers and 1,136 other ranks at the end of 1923. There is therefore a nett decrease of 65.

One hundred and forty new enrolments were effected and a satisfactory feature is a drop in the average age of the recruits.

The following figures show the distribution of the strength as at the 31st December, 1924.

	OFFICERS.			OTHER RANKS.		
	Effective.	Non-effective, i.e., absent on leave, etc.	Total.	Effective.	Non-effective, i.e., absent on leave, etc.	Total.
Head-quarters, Kuala Lumpur ...	2	2	4			
"A" Company	8	...	8	250	61	311
"B" " Klang ...	1	3	4	112	45	157
"C" " Ipoh ...	7	2	9	202	65	267
"D" " Taiping ...	4	1	5	109	23	132
"E" " Seremban ...	2	4	6	134	70	204
	24	12	36	807	264	1,071

Medical Officers	5	Colour Service	784
Reserve of Officers	4	Auxiliary Service	287
Attached from other units	1		
Attached to other units	2		1,071

DISCHARGES.—The total number of discharges during the year was 171. In addition 31 were struck of the strength because their whereabouts were unknown. There were also three deaths. The discharges were effected for the reasons given below:

Expiration of agreement	39
Left the country	93
Medical grounds	4
Commissioned into the Malayan Volunteer Infantry	4
Resigned at own request	23
Joined the Police Force	1
Officers of the Regular Army Reserve of Officers (under War Office letter)	7
	171

PERMANENT STAFF.

Command.—Lieutenant-Colonel F. R. W. Graham, D.S.O., M.C., commanded throughout the year and as his term of engagement expires at an early date I should like to take this opportunity of placing on record the excellent services he has rendered in the cause of volunteering in the Federated Malay States.

Adjutant.—Captain A. J. R. M. Leslie continued as Adjutant.

The following changes in the permanent staff took place during the year.

Assistant Staff Officer to Local Forces.—Lieutenant (Local Captain) H. A. A. Howell, The Middlesex Regiment, succeeded Captain D. M. Noyes Lewis on the 6th June, 1924.

State Adjutants.—Lieutenant (Local Captain) E. C. Denis de Vitre, Royal Berkshire Regiment, was appointed State Adjutant, Negri Sembilan, with effect from the 11th April, 1924.

Lieutenant (Local Captain) H. T. Allwright, M.C., D.C.M., Royal Scots, was appointed State Adjutant, Perak, with effect from the 26th April, 1924.

Lieutenant (Local Captain) P. S. Laing, Royal Sussex Regiment, was appointed State Adjutant, Selangor, with effect from the 4th May, 1924.

REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR.—R.S.M. J. Macdonald, D.C.M., Scots Guards, completed his engagement on the 21st November, 1924. The post of Regimental Sergeant Major was then abolished and an additional Company Sergeant Instructor appointed to "A" Company instead. This appointment was taken up by R.Q.M.S. W. Soughton, M.B.E., D.C.M., Royal Sussex Regiment.

COMMAND OF COMPANIES.

"A" Company.—Lieutenant F. D. Evans commanded from the 1st January, 1924, to the 10th September, 1924, when he was transferred to Negri Sembilan. Lieutenant J. H. Harris then took over command.

"B" Company.—Captain E. A. Ash, D.S.O., continued to command.

"C" Company.—Major G. M. P. Hornidge, M.C., took over command from Captain F. Garland, M.C., in February, 1924, and remained in command throughout the remainder of the year.

"D" Company.—Captain V. C. Upton continued to command.

"E" Company.—Captain N. J. A. Foster, M.C., continued to command.

COMMISSIONS AND RESIGNATIONS.—Nine officers were commissioned into the Regiment during the year while one officer resigned his commission.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—State Advisory Committees are now in course of formation. Those for Perak and Selangor have been appointed as under:

Perak.
Mr. R. P. Brash
Mr. C. H. Jenkins
Mr. B. W. Thunder

Selangor.
Major R. F. Grey.
The Hon'ble Mr. R. C. M. Kindersley
Mr. J. R. George
Mr. J. French
Mr. F. W. Palmer, V.C.

TRAINING.—The standard of training shows a marked improvement in all branches over that of 1923. This is due to the facilities offered at the Port Dickson Camp and to the work the State Adjutants have been able to carry out in their respective States.

CAMPS.—Owing to the expenses and difficulties of transport Lumut was abandoned as a camping site in favour of Port Dickson which was used for all units. This camp was open for the Malay States Volunteer Regiment from the 4th May to 16th July. From the 3rd to the 16th August it was utilised for the non-commissioned officers of the Malayan Volunteer Infantry. It was then handed over to the Selangor Cadets for the period 17th to 23rd August. The camping site was on the Kong Sang Estate at the 5th mile on the Port Dickson Road. The site together with a bungalow was rented for the purpose. During the Malay States Volunteer Regiment camp the troops were accommodated under canvas with the mess and ante-room in the bungalow. One-week periods were arranged for each course and for each course the students were organised into a training platoon. Particular attention was paid to the training of individuals as leaders and to specialist training. On the first two days of each course all ranks were put through elementary training, drill and musketry. On the next three days the class was divided up into Vickers Gun, Lewis Gun and Signalling Squads with a specially selected squad under the Commandant. Schemes were carried out by all ranks on the sand table each evening and on the following mornings these schemes were put into operation on the ground. On the last day of each period a staff ride was held and individuals practised in various rôles from section commander upwards. "After dinner" lectures were given twice weekly by Regular Officers from the Malaya Command and also by Volunteer Officers. All ranks lived together in the same mess and the rules of a Regular Officers' mess were strictly enforced.

The discipline throughout was good.

The health was excellent. The practice instituted last year of circularising the men to ascertain if they had contracted any illness as a result of attending the camp was again followed. There was only one case of malaria which with any degree of certainty could be put down as a fresh infection.

AREA TRAINING.—Much more enthusiasm has been shown in area training than formerly. This was undoubtedly due to the better training of officers and non-commissioned officers at the camp and also to the presence of the State Adjutants who are able to devote their time to the work and make training attractive. Concentrated periods of training were organised, and, generally speaking, the attendances were fair. Several field operations in which the Malayan Volunteer Infantry co-operated were held. Some idea of the activity displayed can be gathered from the table below which shows the composition of companies and the number of parades held.

	Parades.	Range Practices.	
		Musketry.	Automatic Guns.
"A" Company (6 platoons) ...	375	136	59
"B" " 4 " ...	170	120	42
"C" " 6 " ...	151	124	30
"D" " 4 " ...	177	57	24
"E" " 5 " ...	221	66	10

Under the heading of Parades are included all operation parades, drills, instruction in Vickers and Lewis Guns, medical, signalling and band.

MUSKETRY.—The results shew an improvement on last year as will be seen from the figures given below. More men fired the annual course and there was a general keenness amongst all ranks to do their best to help in obtaining good platoon and company averages.

	Marksman	1st class shots.	2nd class shots.	3rd class shots.	Failed.
1923 ...	255	173	114	54	16
1924 ...	300	179	110	33	14

The average score was 75.8 as compared with 73.5 last year. The battalion average, obtained by dividing the total scores with the effective strength on the 31st December, was 55.4 as compared with 47.5 last year.

VICKERS GUNNERS.—The number passed as first class gunners was 24 while four qualified: this gives an increase of three on 1923.

LEWIS GUNNERS.—Classification in the Lewis Gun works out as follows: First class 56, second class 18, showing an increase of five over 1923.

BATTALION RIFLE ASSOCIATION.—The Battalion Rifle Association has been very active during the year, many meetings having been held which brought forth keen competition. The Association now consists of a General Council and branches at the following centres: Kinta, Klang, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Selangor, Seremban, Sitiawan, Sungkai, Taiping, Tampin, Tapah and Telok Anson.

All the branches with the exception of Kinta (Ipoh) have been active. Several keen shots have, however, been transferred to Ipoh lately and it is hoped that they will revive local interest.

OPEN COMPETITIONS.—The Regiment has done extraordinarily well in all competitions and its standard of musketry has been proved to be equal to if not better than that of any other Volunteer Corps in Malaya. The results obtained in all inter-Corps competitions are given below. It will be noticed that a win or a place was obtained in every team competition entered and that the honours were well distributed throughout the Regiment.

Thirty yards Range Competition (The Malcolm Cup) open to platoon teams from the Regular Garrison and Volunteers. First, No. XIII Platoon, "D" Company.

The Bromhead Matthews Shield (open to Company teams of Volunteers). First, "A" Company. Second, "E" Company. Fourth, "D" Company.

The Warren Shield (open to Company teams from the Regular Garrison and Volunteers). First, "A" Company. Third, "D" Company.

The Straits Trading Company's Lewis Gun Shield (open to Volunteer platoon Lewis Gun teams). First, No. XIX Platoon, "E" Company. Second, No. II Platoon, "A" Company.

The Vickers Gun (open to Volunteer sub-section teams). Second, "A" Company.

The Fire Competition (open to Company teams from the Regular Garrison and Volunteers). First, "A" Company.

The Royal "Johore" Challenge Cup (open to Regimental teams—Regulars and Volunteers). Second, Malay States Volunteer Regiment team.

In the individual events at the Malaya Command Rifle Meeting members of the Malay States Volunteer Regiment did exceptionally well as was evidenced by the fact that they had seven competitors in the 16 who qualified to compete in the grand aggregate. Second and third places were obtained in the competition.

Private J. W. Gillman, "E" Company, won the Loke Yew Cup open to all volunteers in Malaya.

CEREMONIAL PARADES.—Ceremonial parades were held as under:

A Guard of Honour consisting of 13 officers and 100 other ranks was furnished on the occasion of the unveiling of the Federated Malay States War Memorial at Kuala Lumpur. State contingents of one officer and 50 other ranks from Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan were also present. Parades were held on His Majesty the King's Birthday and Armistice Day at Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Seremban, Klang and Teluk Anson.

INSPECTIONS.—I took various opportunities to inspect the work of companies and detachments.

At the Port Dickson Camp I was impressed with the keenness and interest displayed by the members who were present on the occasion of my visit. In Kuala Lumpur I saw "A" Company at musketry on the range: their standard of shooting is certainly above the average in volunteer units. At Banting I inspected No. VIII Platoon, "B" Company. There was an excellent turnout and I was very pleased with their smartness and general work. This is one of the best turned out platoons that I have seen up to date.

At Ipoh I inspected "C" Company in combined operations with the local Malayan Volunteer Infantry platoons. From the point of view of numbers the turnout was not good; there only being 33 other ranks present. I was, however, very pleased with the turnout of those present and also with the keenness and general knowledge shown by both the officers and other ranks in the tactical exercise.

At Taiping I saw four officers and 39 other ranks of "D" Company in a combined scheme with the local Malayan Volunteer Infantry platoon. Considering the scattered district from which this Company draws its members this number was satisfactory. Their work in the field was good. Before I took over command the Colonel Commandant, Malaya, inspected the Port Dickson Camp and also No. XVIII Platoon "E" Company, Nilai. He reported very favourably on this platoon.

EFFICIENCY.—I am glad to be able to report a satisfactory increase in the number returned as efficient.

Comparative tables are given below:

				Colour Service Strength.	Efficient.	Percentage.
1923	...	...	...	829	480	57.9
1924	...	...	...	784	560	71.4

ARMAMENT.—The armament remains the same as last year.

SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION.—The 500,000 rounds of small arms ammunition which was offered by the Lords of the Treasury in settlement of the outstanding claim referred to in last year's report have been received. Unfortunately a large amount of the old ammunition in possession has been found unserviceable.

Symptoms of possible danger to the firer were first noticed in practice on the range. Tests were then carried out by the Ordnance Department with the result that this ammunition was classified as unsafe.

It was taken over from the Police Department some two years ago; being surplus to Police requirements. The number of rounds affected is now being ascertained by expert investigation and I propose to make recommendations for their disposal in due course.

MILITARY HEAD-QUARTERS,
FORT CANNING,
7th March, 1925.

T. FRASER,
Major-General,
Commanding the Troops, Malaya.