

About Danish infantry 1932-1941, Fodfolksregimentet

Introduction

By the Army Order of 1932, the Infantry came to consist of the following regiments:

Regiment Hjemsted Battalions

Reinforcement battalions

Lifeguard Copenhagen 1st, 2nd and 3rd Lifeguard Battalion --

1st Regiment Copenhagen 1st, 15th and 21st Battalion

24th Reinforcement Battalion

2nd Regiment Haderslev 3rd, 13th and 18th Battalion

22nd Reinforcement Battalion

3rd Regiment Viborg 6th, 9th and 20th Battalions

23rd Reinforcement Battalion

4th Regiment Roskilde 8th, 11th and 17th Battalions

28th Reinforcement Battalion

5th Regiment Vordingborg 7th, 14th and 19th Battalion

25th Reinforcement Battalion

6th Regiment Odense 4th, 5th and 16th Battalion

26th Reinforcement Battalion

7th Regiment Fredericia 2, 10th and 12th Battalion

27th Reinforcement Battalion

In the 1937 scheme, the 6th Regiment was transformed into the Cyclist Regiment, with the 4th and 5th Battalions. At the same time, a new unit of regimental size was created - the Foot Scout Command - with the 1st and 2nd.

Infantry pioneer battalion, home in Tønder and tasks within lighter pioneer work, including roadblocks, road destruction and minor blasting.

The infantry regiment

The infantry regiment consists - according to the 1937 scheme - of:

- Chief (colonel) with staff, train and ammunition column (approx. 150)
- Staff Company (285)
- The shooting company (168) - See the Regiment's gun
- company 3 infantry battalions (á 1469) - See the Infantry battalion

The regiment's total combat strength (without reinforcement battalion) is thus approx. 5,000 men [1](#)), [375](#) horses, approx. 250 bicycles, as well as 175 vehicles (horse-drawn vehicles, motor vehicles and motorcycles).



Danish officers, approx. 1938-39 [2](#)).

Staff and staff company

The staff company consists of:

- Connection sharing
- Anti-aircraft division
- Clarification sharing
- Pioneer division
- Sanitary personnel
- Ammunition column
- train

The mutual distribution of personnel cannot currently be determined precisely, but the staff company itself seems to have consisted of 285 men [3](#)). —

In addition, approx. 150 men in the regiment's command section, ammunition column and train.

The connection sharing

The regiment's liaison platoon is equipped and organized largely like the infantry battalions' liaison platoons (see *Infantry Battalion*). The main difference is simply that additional teams have been added at regimental level.

Connection Sharing (1932 Scheme)

- 1 Platoon leader
- 1 Deputy commander
- 1 flag team (2 men) 1
- observer team (2 men)

- 1 Reserve horn blower 4
- telephone teams (1 team leader and 4 men) 2 signal teams (1 team leader and 5 men)
- 1 reserve team (1 team manager and 3 men)
- 11 ordinances, of which 4 bicycle and motorcycle ordinances) 1 caretaker
-

The following signal equipment is carried on the platoon's horse-drawn signal equipment wagon:

- 9 field telephones (type B or C) 13
- cable towers with accessories and laying rod (cable drum type D) 5 sets of signal flags (each 1 red and 1 white signal flag) 5 electric signal stations 2 flag towers with accessories 1 regimental flag 3 battalion flags 5 signal flags with accessories 2 letter duet flag with accessories 2 depeche books 20 depeche holders
-
-
-
-
-
- 2 signal pistols 50
- signal cartridges with red ball 100
- signal cartridges with white ball 40 signal cartridges with green ball 40 signal cartridges with 4 red balls 40 signal cartridges with 4 white balls 40 signal cartridges with 4 green balls 40 signal cartridges with 2 red and 2 white balls 4
- rocket forks 4) 30 flares (with 6 stars) 30 flares (with 3 stars)
-
-
-
-

Functions of the teams

The telephone team can create 2 telephone exchanges and also has equipment for a number of kilometers of field line.

The signal team can create 1 or 2 stations and can use signal flags or flashing lights depending on the circumstances.

The flag team is in charge 1-2 identification flags and 1 set (3 pcs.) signal flags.

The reserve team is used for Light signal, carrier pigeon and encryption service (= code work) etc. and also forms a reserve for the liaison group's other teams. It has at its disposal material for the conduct of its special service.



Landline telephone [5](#)).

The field telephone is possibly of type E, which was, however, rather used in the artillery than in the infantry.

About the use of recognition flags, signal flags and individual strips

Importance

We are ready to attack.

Attack target reached. We hold the position.

Ammunition wanted.

Location (toward the enemy)



The flag signal is placed next to the flag and at least 5 m away. On the principle sketch, the distance between the regimental flag (which is for the 1st and 2nd Regiment) and the signal flags is compressed (for reasons of space).

Principle sketch - flag signals from infantry and cavalry to airmen.

Drawn from Source 3.

Identification flags are laid out on the ground to indicate the staff's place in front of the pilots.

The flags may only be laid out when:

- Own pilots circle at low altitude above the deployment site
- A pre-arranged signal or marking of the front line is given
- Departments wish to call the pilots' attention to send messages using signal flags.

The flags are retracted as soon as the aviator has given the "understood" or when enemy aviators approach.

Signal flags are used to give short messages to the pilots. The flag signals and their meaning are usually determined by the division and must be changed frequently. Identification flags must be laid out at the same time as the signal flags. The flags are retracted as soon as the aviator has given the "understood" or when enemy aviators approach.

Single -man strips are laid out during combat by the front - and only the front - infantry groups to mark off against their own airmen of the front line of the infantry. They are deployed only when own pilots give the predetermined signal for the deployment, and are involved as soon as the pilot gives "understood".

The single-man strips are led by 3 feeders in each recoilless rifle group.

Practice signal

Importance

Mark the front line.
light (Lay out flags)

White ball of

Understood.
(Indent)

Red ball of light

For practice use, the pilots use signals as shown on the principle sketch.

The current meaning of the signal flags and the pilots' signals will be part of the current signal order.

About the use of phishing

Message fishing is part of the message service between troops on the ground and airmen. It is carried out by a low-flying aviator after the troops on the ground, using partially improvised equipment, have placed the written message so that it can be fished by a message fisher attached to the diving aircraft. See e.g. Army Air Forces in the Field, Part 1, for a more detailed discussion of whistle-blowing.

Practice signal

Importance

The enemy is attacking.
Barrage desired.

Red ball of light

Own artillery is firing at us. Rocket with 6 stars

Bring forward the artillery fire. Rocket with 3 stars

On the Use of Light Signals by Infantry for Artillery

The light signals are fixed for each individual operation (attack or defense), in positional warfare for one or a few days.

About the use of carrier pigeons

For further information on the use of carrier pigeons, see e.g. About the carrier pigeon service in the Danish Army.

The regimental and battalion carrier pigeons are issued from the division's carrier pigeon division.



Carrier pigeon service at Fodfolket, approx. 1935 6).

Although a homing pigeon can fly approx. 1 km/minute - and a well-trained homing pigeon can cover 100-200 km without stopping - then the subsequent signaling can help to delay the message.

Source 3 thus states the following necessary considerations: "... It must be remembered that carrier pigeon communication is more applicable over long distances than over short ones, as one must always add the time the message is about to arrive from the (pigeon) battle to the division, to the pigeon's flight time, when you want to investigate when the division can receive the homing pigeon message. At shorter distances, ordinary ordinance connection will therefore be faster than homing pigeon connection. Only where the conditions are such that the use of ordinances is unjustified, and the signal or telephone connection fails or cannot be used, would it be correct to use the pigeons at shorter distances, for example for connection (between the forward forces and nearest superior units) over terrain that is or may come under strong enemy fire, or in the defense for connection between advanced observation posts, support points in an outpost zone, troops in the front line who have orders to hold the ground even if the enemy breaks into the position. One may, under these conditions, become the only usable means of connection."

The route of the carrier pigeon report is from the sender to the division's carrier pigeon club and carrier pigeon division. From here, the message is passed on to the addressee by telephone via the division.

The Air Defense Division

The Air Defense Division

4 anti-aircraft machine gun groups, each with

- 1 platoon leader
- 1 second in command 2
- motor vehicle drivers

- 1 group leader and 4 privates

- 1 anti-aircraft gunner
- 1 helper 2 suppliers
-

- 1 machine gun M.1929, with accessories

The division is estimated to consist of approx. 24 men.

The anti-aircraft division is equipped with 2 anti-aircraft vehicles, each with 2 anti-aircraft machine guns.

To the machine guns 7) belong

- machine gun foot M.1929 incl. air target pivot anti-aircraft
- stand M.1931

On the anti-aircraft vehicles, e.g. 2 boxes of 720 pcs. armor cartridges, 1 box of 720 pcs. cartridges 1908, 3 boxes of 1,000 pcs. light track cartridges and 12 magazine bags with 48 magazines, each with 30 special cartridges (armor cartridges).

When "ready for battle" - and shooting from a position on the ground - the material is distributed as follows:



*Truck, with machine gun mounted in anti-aircraft pivot.
From Source 5.*

The anti-aircraft machine gun group includes...

Following...

Anti-aircraft gunner

Machine gun

Helps

Discuss

Provide 1

Interchangeable barrel (with sleeve) and air target pivot

Provide 2
Anti-aircraft stand

The truck may not be an actual anti-aircraft vehicle, but only a truck with an anti-aircraft machine gun.

The regiment's anti-aircraft platoon may be equipped with recoilless rifle M.1924 instead of the machine gun.

It is assumed that this is a recoilless rifle with a recoilless rifle (tripod), as well as an anti-aircraft stand.

The clarification division

The regiment's reconnaissance division consists of

- 1 cyclist division 1
- rider half division

The cyclist division

4 groups of cyclists, each with

- 1 platoon leader
- 1 deputy commander
- 1 group leader and 7 men:
 - 1 recoilless gunner 1
 - helper 5 suppliers
 -

The division is estimated to consist of approx. 40 men.

Ammunition for the recoilless rifle

The recoilless rifle shooter has 1 2-magazine bag with 2 recoilless rifle magazines of 20 cartridges each. Auxiliaries and supplies have 1 10-magazine bag with 10 recoilless rifle magazines of 20 cartridges each.



Bicycle M.1903/30, with magazine bags for recoilless rifle.

From Source 6.

The cyclist groups are in principle equipped as recoil rifle groups (minus the hand grenade) in the infantry battalions' recoil rifle companies, see *Recoil Company*.

The rider half

2 groups, each with

- 1 platoon leader
- 1 deputy commander

- 1 group leader and (estimated) 7 men

The soldiers are equipped with cavalry carbine M.1889; the platoon leader with pistol M.1910/21.

The division is estimated to consist of approx. 20 men.



Rider's Ordinance on the way in with a message.

From Source 5.

The currently available sources do not indicate where the rider half came from.

I am therefore not aware of whether it was a question of soldiers trained at the Infantry or the Cavalry, and who in the latter case were part of the infantry regiment upon mobilization.

Source 2 states that the soldiers in the cavalry division were equipped exactly like hussars or dragoons, incl. sword.

The information given is my best guess for the organization of the equestrian division, etc

The pioneer division

The pioneer division

4 pioneer groups, each with

- 1 platoon leader 1
- second in command 4 motor vehicle
- drivers

- 1 squad leader and (estimated) 7 privates

Sources 1 and 2 state nothing about the privates' special functions in the group.

Regarding functional equipment, it is mentioned that the group leader was equipped with barbed wire scissors.

The division is estimated to consist of approx. 40 men.

The pioneer division has 4 pioneer wagons (trucks) on which, among other things, it is transported

- 4 tool boxes (No. 1-4) with:

1. Mining tools 2. Earthmoving tools 3. Logging tools 4. Blockage clearing tools

- 1 rambuk with ram block 1 small

- earth drill 2 boxes of 24 armored

- car mines 8) 6 wire spirals

-

Armament

The regimental pioneers are equipped with rifle M.1889; the platoon leader with pistol M.1910/21.

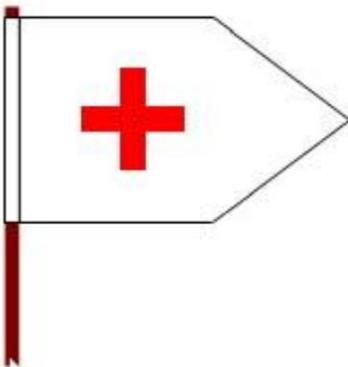
Sanitary personnel

Sanitary personnel

On the horse-drawn medical cart, e.g. following equipment:

- 1 doctor
- 1 canteen soldiers 1
- mounted orderly 1 coachman
-

- 1 canteen Tornyster 1
- larger canteen



Neighborhood label for doctors.

The principle sketch has been prepared based on Source 4 and information in Sources 9 and 10, which, despite the 38-year difference, are largely identical:

The neighborhood mark for doctors is triangular white flags bearing the Geneva cross. They are used for marking the doctor's quarters and dressing areas.

The pole is equipped with a lamp, with the Geneva cross in the lamp lens.



Foot train loaded on railway wagon9).

Apart from the horse-drawn signal equipment wagons and medical wagons, the infantry regiments' train was fully motorized.

The medical wagon was of the same type as the train wagon M.1909, which can be seen in the picture.

train

The staff company's tree (all wagons are light trucks)

- Kitchen trolley

The kitchen trolley carries, among other things:

- Baggage trolley I
- Baggage trolley II

On the baggage wagons are carried, among other things:

- 9 cooking boxes with today's dinner [10](#)
- Kitchen supplies
- 285 bread and dry food portions (for the company for 1 day)
- Oats for 1 day

- The regiment's archive, map and quarter mark
- The crew's luggage racks (Luggage wagon I: 64)
- Commanders' Suitcases (Baggage Cart I: 12)
- Shoemaker's tool
- Tailor's tool
- Spare equipment for one person
- Polishing and cleaning agents

- Spare car

The reserve vehicle carries no special equipment.



Delivery of dinner from a cooking box.

Bagagevogn I was intended for the regimental commander with actual staff, the commander of the staff company and the liaison platoon, while Bagagevogn II [11](#)) was intended for the Luftværnsplatoon, the reconnaissance platoon and the pioneer platoon.

In the Life Garden, there was a Bagagevogn III, which, among other things, transported suitcases and luggage racks for the musicians and their caretakers.

The food must be brought to a boil before it enters the cooking box and can continue to cook according to the hay box system during transport.

The regimental tree

ammunition columns

On each wagon are carried, among other things:

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6 ammunition wagons (8mm) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 54 boxes of 720 pcs. 8 mm cartridges | <p>3
wagons</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 45 boxes of 720 pcs. 8 mm cartridges ● boxes of 8 mm light track and armor cartridges | <p>3
wagons</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9 ammunition wagons (81 mm) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 25 boxes of 12 pcs. 81 mm high-explosive grenades (or 15 boxes of 20 81 mm high-explosive grenades) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 ammunition wagons (20 mm) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 boxes of 150 pcs. 20 mm cartridges | |

- 3 ammunition wagons (37mm)
- 24 boxes of 25 pcs. 37 mm cartridges
- 2 ammunition wagons (hand and rifle grenades)
- 12 (or 13) boxes of 48 hand grenades 12 (or 13) boxes of 48 hand grenades 5 boxes of 60 rifle grenades 96 boxes of 25 cartridges for pistol M.1910/21 12 (or 13) boxes of 12 cartridges for pistol of an older model Inventory of signal cartridges and rockets
-

The regimental staff train and the baggage train

On each wagon are carried, among other things:

- 1 kitchen trolley (for luggage training and command sharing)
- 7 cooking boxes with today's dinner
- Kitchen accessories Approx. 150 bread
- and dry food portions
- 1 luggage trolley (staff's train)
- 9 suitcases and 116 luggage racks
- 1 gas mask sequence
- Reserve stock of gas masks etc. - see below
- 1 saddler's wagon
- 2 saddler's bags and 1 saddler's rucksack
- 1 entrenchment tool wagon
- 200 long spades M.1915 100
- 10 handsaws
- long picks M.1916 25 shovels
- 10 mallets
- 40 forest and 40 hand axes 20 (muckers) 20
- long and 20 short forest saws
- pliers 40 lath
- hammers 10 long
- crowbars
- 2 carpenter's wagons
- Tool and supplement boxes for equipment and material
- 3 workshop and petrol vans
- Cans of gasoline and jugs of oil 1 box of motor
- mechanic tools
- Luggage rack for 1 motor ordinance (on a wagon, however, for 2)

- 2 anti-aircraft vehicles
 - 2 recoilless rifles with anti-aircraft sights
 - 2 anti-aircraft stands
 - 5 boxes of 8 mm cartridges (light track and armor cartridges)
 - 10 spare cars
- The reserve vehicle carries no special equipment.

To complete the overview of the infantry regiment's vehicles, a number of passenger cars and solo and sidecar motorcycles must be added to the above.



Gas mask M.1931. From Source 8.

The gas mask van's reserve stocks consist of:

- 12 boxes of 20 sets of gas masks
- 4 boxes of 125 filters
- 2 cartridge boxes
- M.1912 of 1,200 anti-fog disks
- 200 triplex glasses
- 500 thin and 100 thick rubber rings
- 2 boxes of 448 boxes of anti-fog ointment.
-

Each soldier has been issued a gas mask, with 2 filters. Behind each of the mask's eyeglass holders, there is an anti-fog disk that rests on 1 thick or 2 thin rubber rings, which ensure sealing.

Propellants

The workshop and petrol vans carry the following propellants (operating means, using the terminology of the time):

Per 3 motorcycles 1 piece. 32 l petrol can

Per 3 passenger cars

2 pcs. 32 l petrol can Oil is brought in the proportion of 1/10 of the amount of petrol.

Per 3 light trucks 2 pcs. 32 l petrol can

Armament etc

All who are armed with a rifle or carbine M.1889 are equipped with 40 cartridges, except for the assistant of the anti-aircraft groups and the cyclist groups, who only have 10. However, some of the commanders in the liaison platoon, the cyclist platoon and the pioneer platoon have 20 ordinary 8 mm cartridges as well as 20 armored cartridges.



Recoil gun M.1924 in anti-aircraft tripod M.1931.
From Source 6.

Train's anti-aircraft division

- 4 anti-aircraft machine gun groups, each with
- 1 platoon leader 1
- second in command 2 motor
- vehicle drivers

The division is estimated to consist of approx. 24 men.

- 1 group leader and 4 privates 1 anti-
- aircraft gunner 1 helper 2 suppliers
-
-
- 1 recoilless rifle M.1924, with accessories

At "ready for battle", the material is distributed as follows:

The anti-aircraft recoilless rifle group includes...

Following...

Anti-aircraft gunner

Recoil rifle

Helps

-

Provide 1

Interchangeable barrel (with sleeve)

Provide 2

Anti-aircraft stand

Since the train's anti-aircraft platoon - in contrast to the staff company's - was not equipped with an anti-aircraft pivot, firing against air targets could only be done from a position on the ground.

Sources

1. *Textbook for Infantry Corporal Schools - Equipment and Train*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1941.
2. *Field equipment for Individuals*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1936, with correction sheets up to august 1941.
3. *Field Regulations III - The Notification Service*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1934, with corrections up to september 1938.
4. *Memory book for use in the field, during exercises and war games* by HH Jørgensen, N. Olaf Møllers Forlag, Copenhagen 1936.
5. *The Defense Book* by Colonel T. Andersen, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1941.
6. *Gardehusarkasernen on 29 August 1943* by Anders D. Henriksen, Forlaget Devantier, Næstved 1993, ISBN 87-984530-0-9.
7. *The 1889 rifle in the service of the Danish defense* by AN Hvidt, Special edition of Våbenhistoriske Årbøgers XIII, Copenhagen 1966.
8. *Textbook for Infantry Corporal Schools - Weapons*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1938.
9. *Textbook for paramedics and paramedics*, Ministry of War, Copenhagen 1917.
10. *Textbook for the Army's medical personnel*, the Armed Forces Medical Corps, Copenhagen 1955.
11. *Textbook for the privates of the Army, Part 1, Common for all weapons, corps and divisions*, Copenhagen 1939.

Per Finsted

Postscript - About the reinforcement battalions

With the 1932 scheme, 7 reinforcement battalions were created, which were administratively attached to each of the infantry regiments (except the Life Guards). In case of mobilization, the reinforcement battalions were to be multiplied into 3 reinforcement regiments.

The reinforcement units were low priority. They consisted of older personnel, but were basically organized and equipped as units of the line. However, the manpower was somewhat smaller and the number of supporting weapons was very limited.

The reinforcement battalion

The reinforcement battalions consist of:

- Staff
- 4 recoilless companies 1
- machine gun platoon of 4 machine guns.

Currently available sources unfortunately do not provide further information about the organization of the reinforcement battalions than those listed here.

The reinforcement battalion's machine gun division

Machine guns and ammunition are transported on horses, called *gun* horses and ammunition horses respectively .

On the coat of arms, e.g.

- 1 machine gun M.1929 in holster 3
- interchangeable barrels in separate
- interchangeable barrel holsters 1 machine gun
- foot with cover 1 air target pivot 2 10-magazine
- bags M.1924 12) 2 direction sticks
-

On the ammunition horse, i.a.

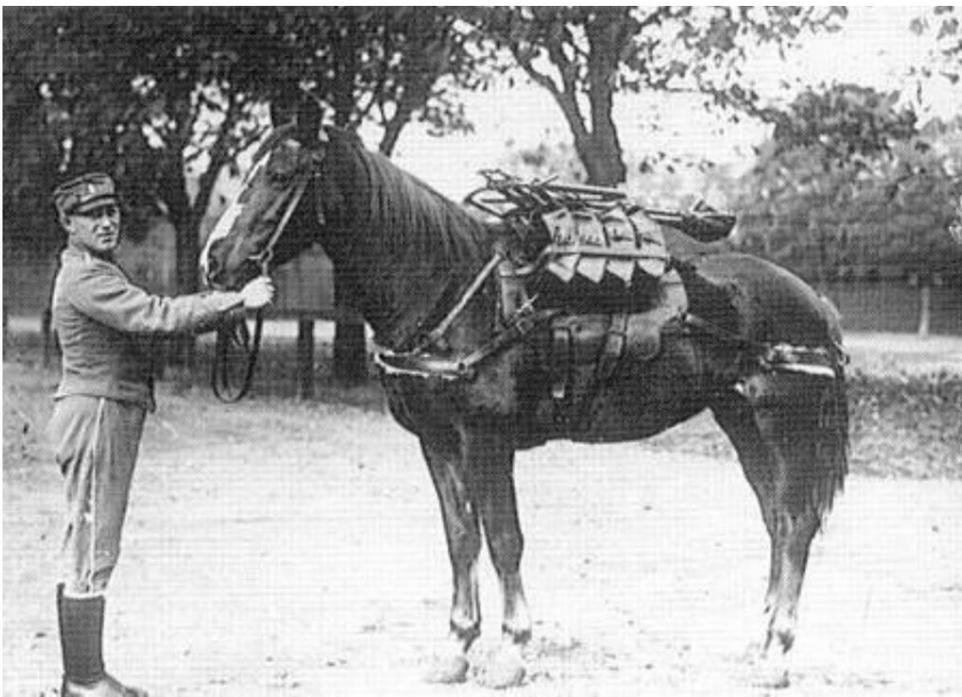
- 8 10-magazine bags M.1924.

The machine gun division has the same functions as the machine gun divisions of the line battalions.

In addition, the platoon is apparently supplemented with an ammunition group, which may have been standardized as a corresponding group in the 1932 scheme's ammunition platoon (in the machine gun company).

Ammunition group *(possible organization)*

- 1 driver,
- 8 suppliers, 1
- cartman, 1
- horse-drawn carriage
-
- 1 cartridge carriage train with 1 stage and 3 cartridge carriages



Ammunition horse, with ammunition saddle M.1927. From Source 6.

This is not an ammunition horse from one of the reinforcement battalions, but from the Guards Hussar Regiment.

The picture does, however, give an impression of how the machine gun division's ammunition horses - apart from the recoilless foot on top of the saddle - got out.

To note:

1) The figure does not apply to the 6th Regiment (from 1937 *Cyklistregimentet*) and the Infantry Scout Command, as these regiments have a different organization and will be described separately. The reinforcement battalions are described in more detail in the postscript to this article.

2) From *the Garrison, No. 3/2001*, published by Published by Aalborg Forsvars- og Garnisonsmuseums Støtteforening. The third officer (from the right) is the then first lieutenant, and later major general, Jens Skriver Jensen, whose career is described in the magazine in question. From 1935 to 1941 the First Lieutenant served in various traditional roles with the 5th Battalion and 6th Regiment.

3) In the Lifeguard, the number is 334 men. The difference is made up by this regiment's music corps - the only one in the Army after the disbandment of regimental music in 1932. The 49 men are the musicians and their caretakers.

4) The rocket fork was 133 cm long and made of iron. (Source 7.)

5) From *Danish military Monthly*, No. 7, 1942.

6) From *carrier pigeons in the defense* of Sune Wadskjær Nielsen, FOV Newsletter no. 17.9.2002.

7) See *Skytskompagniet, Part 2*, for pictures of the machine gun and machine gun mount.

8) Source 1 states that the regiment has a *minecart*, with a total of 192 armored car mines (packed in 16 boxes), but on the other hand, not that the pioneer cars carry mines. Most likely the "same" mines, just carried on a separate truck.

9) From *Our Army in War and Peace, Volume II* by Arne Stevns, Nordiske Landes Bogforlag, 1943.

10) In the Life Guard, as cf. note 2, which due to its band had a larger staff company, the number of cooking boxes was 11 and the number of bread and dry food portions 334.

11) Source 2 does not contain information on the exact number of suitcases and luggage racks on Bagagevogn II.

12) Source 2 specifically mentions that weapons and ammunition horses carry magazines M.1924, which are 20-shot magazines intended for the recoilless rifle, and not - as expected - the 30-shot magazine M.1929, which belongs to the machine gun. The machine gun division is thus also at a disadvantage in terms of the possibility of firing longer bursts, without magazine changes.