

The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-1945 - Sanitetskompagniet

Introduction

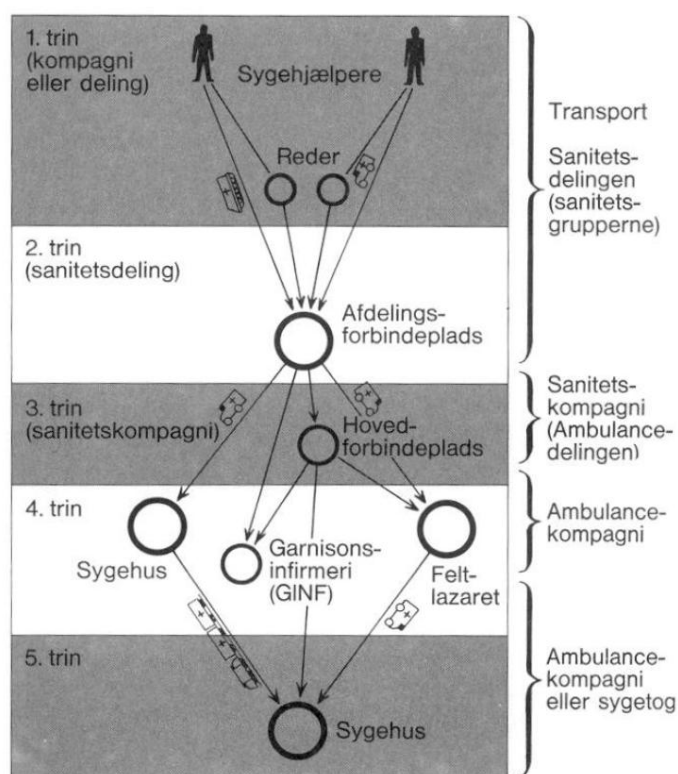
The sanitary company was a miniature version of the Army Medical Corps and had the medical responsibility for the sanitary service at the Brigade. All sanitary personnel (doctors, sub-doctors, nurses, porters, nurses and sanitary porters) were numbered at the company, which was also responsible for all sanitary equipment. In Sweden, the brigade's lottery corps was also administratively linked to the Sanitetskompagniet.

The brigade doctor, chief physician in the Army, Holger CS Terp, was the highest medical authority, while Captain Erik Rype became the tactical and administrative head of the Sanitetskompagniet. In close collaboration, they built up the sanitary service at Brigadier and came up with the basic military requirements for organization and equipment.

The material was mainly purchased from the Swedish army's stocks, but was further supplemented by purchases on the free market.

War Medical Service

Den såredes vej - principskitse



The general evacuation route for the wounded is basically based on 5 treatment steps (see the principle sketch), of which the first 4 belong to the actual war medical service.

The names of the individual steps have changed somewhat over time, but the principles should be fairly universal.

At the Brigade

The medical service at the Brigade was planned according to a simplified principle that was also used by the Norwegian police troops in Sweden. In practice, this meant omitting the main medical center (Step 3) and instead sending the wounded directly from the *department* medical center to the *field hospital*. This simplified the sorting of the wounded, who now received effective treatment more quickly.

A prerequisite for this arrangement was that the roads and transport options in the Brigade's operational area were good, so that there was easy access to transport the wounded to the rear.

In addition, the opportunity to give the wounded a blood transfusion early in the process was also required. For this purpose, the car stops were equipped *with a blood centre*. (The car park was a kind of intermediate station between the branch connection points and the main connection points; in Brigaden's case, however, the field hospital).

From *Field Service for Individuals, Volume 5: Field Knowledge, First Aid and Sanitation Service, 1979*.

Organization At

the Brigade's concentration in Scania in April/May 1945, the Sanitetskompagniet was organized as follows. The tables have been prepared based on Source 1.

Command group The

command group consisted of a total of 35 people: • Chief

(1), deputy commander (1), head of the field hospital (1), quartermaster (1), sanitary equipment manager (1), scribe (1), depot manager (1), office orderly (1), garage master (1), motor vehicle drivers (12), motor officer (1), office lots (3) and field kitchen lots (10).

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Major General Kristian Knudtzon inspects a sanitation exercise in the Håtunaholm settlement, July 1944. From Source 5.

The photo shows brigade doctor Terp (1), major general Knudtzon (2) and the chief of staff, captain PAF Norup (3).

Organization and composition of the sanitation company

Disposition unit	Employee										
The field hospital											
Reception department	2									3 2	7
Dressing department	2	1								2 4	9
Department of Surgery	6 2 3			1						11 8 31	
Medical department	2	1								2 3	8
X-ray department	1						1			1 4	
Blood center A	3									2 2	7
Field laboratory and Pharmacy		1		1							1 3
Epidemic Command	3					1 6				2 3 15	
Ambulance command						1 6					7
Evacuation department	1	1									2 4
Car park I (Blood center B)	1	1					6				2 10
Car park II (Blood center C)	1	1					6				2 10
Medical convoy									4 2 2		8
Total	22 8 3 1			1	2		1 4 25 32 123				

The capacity of the field hospital was 200 patients. During the Sanitetskompagniet's transfer to Denmark, however, only material for 60 patients was brought, for immediate use; the rest were brought along with the reserve stocks.

train

The sanitation company had the following vehicles at its disposal: • Passenger vans (2), trucks (3), trailer, four-wheeler (1), kitchen vans (2), motorcycle (1), passenger vans with sanitary trailers (3) and sanitary motor vehicle with sanitary trailer (1).

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*Morning gymnastics, Gödelöv, April/May 1945.
From Source 2.*

Some of the company's vehicles can be seen in the background.

From the company's diary, which is quoted in Source 2, it appears that the march to Helsingborg on 5 May 1945 took place in the company's own 5 passenger cars and 8 freight cars, supplemented by 14 vehicles, which partly came from the Motorvognskompagniet and partly from the pool of Swedish military vehicles which were made available for Brigaden's transport to Helsingborg.



The sanitary company rests, on the way to Helsingborg, 5 May 1945. From Source 2.

Instead of a traditional field cloak, a trench coat was issued to the brigadiers.

Materiel

The field hospital included a large number of tents, so that the company was able to set up the hospital, with all its departments, in the open field. This was calculated as an emergency solution, as the Field Hospital was to be set up in permanent buildings as far as possible, partly out of consideration for the patients' opportunity for peace and rest, partly out of consideration for the doctors' working conditions.

When the field hospital's material was packed, it filled 8 large lorries, which were transported by the Motor vehicle company's arrangement.



The tent camp at Gödelöv, April/May 1945. From Source 2.

At the Brigade's concentration in Scania in April 1945, the Sanitation Company was located at a school in Göde löv.

An infirmary was set up in the school's gymnasium, while the staff were housed in tents.

The uniform depot could initially only issue work uniforms to the called-up personnel, but eventually everyone was equipped with the correct field uniform.

Provided personnel and sanitary equipment

The brigade's departments had to be able to fend for themselves as far as possible during minor combat operations and the Sanitation Company therefore provided sanitary professional support to the units, see the following table.

The department connection places, etc. used sanitary equipment that was at the units in question. For each of the 4 combat battalions, battalion packs, intended for 1,000 men, had been issued.

The department connection areas had Swedish model bicycle carrier equipment.

The sanitary material, which had been handed out to the other units, came from the educational relocations.

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Units								
The regimental staff	1				1			2
The regimental staff company 1st		1		1			1	3
Battalion 2nd Battalion 3rd Battalion		2	1	2	12			2
4th Battalion 5th Battalion Pioneer		2	1	2	12			2
Command		2	1	2	12			2
		2	1	2	12			2
		1		1	2			6
		1	1	1				3
The motor vehicle company		1						1
The Air Force		1	1				1	4
The flotilla		2					1	3
The Order Police Force		1	1				1	3
The fire command		1						1
Total	1	17	8	13	48	2	13	102

Remark:

In addition to this, every 10 men had received basic first aid training, in the style of what is known from recent times.

Additionally, 3 soldiers per de ling received extended first aid training, in the style of what is known from, for example, the training of group sanitation men in the Home Guard.

The platoon's sanitary personnel were apparently equipped with a canteen spoon, perhaps of the type designated *Dressing Bag* I.

From Source 2 and 4.



Båreeksercits, Håtunaholm, July 1944.
From Source 2.



Example of the bicycle carrier material, shown here with Swedish soldiers.
From Source 8.

reserve material

In addition to the medical equipment that was part of the Medical Company or was issued to departments and sub-departments, there was also purchased and stored medical equipment for 2 regiments (2 x 5,000 men), i.e. the force that was to be set up to supplement the Brigade, after the transfer to Denmark.

The reserve equipment, together with the Sanitetskompagniet's other equipment, was handed over to the Army Medical Corps in July 1945, and the Swedish medical equipment was thus included in the stocks that were the basis for the re-establishment of the Army.

The personnel

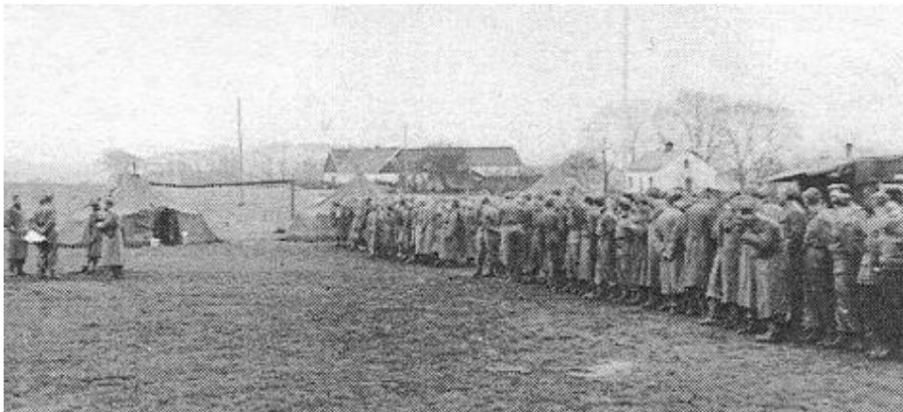
With a few exceptions, the majority of the Sanitary Company consisted of civilians who had come in uniform, and not all of them had the same command of military manners. A doctor who saluted with his left hand was thus not an unfamiliar sight.

However, the company commander notes in Source 1 that everyone was inspired by the same thought, namely to contribute to the liberation of Denmark, which is why it was an easy task to command the force. At the same time, it was his clear conviction that both materiel and personnel would have met the requirements if the Brigade had entered into battle.

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Some of the company's doctors, nurses and lotters had, however, already made a great effort in March and April 1945, in connection with the treatment of the thousands of heavily involved concentration camp prisoners, which the Swedish Red Cross had evacuated to Sweden.

The effort was carried out in collaboration with sanitary personnel from the Norwegian police force and Swedish authorities. Initially, the situation was chaotic, to say the least, but gradually organization and treatment became customary. The brigade's sanitary personnel left this service on mobilization at the end of April 1945.



*The sanitary company prepares for muster, Gödelöv, April/May 1945.
From Source 2.*



Dr. Gregers Nørby and a nurse, between Kolding and Haderslev, 7 May 1945. From Source 2.

Dr. Nørby was part of the force that was immediately sent to the Border to assist in checking the German forces that were on their way home to Germany. The border command consisted of personnel from the 4th and 5th Battalion.

In the company's war organization, Dr. Nørby was head of the Field Hospital's Blood Center A.

The sanitary company personnel were armed mainly with pistols and submachine guns, and had received some training in these weapons. The female personnel had also received some training, but were not armed.



*Sanitetslotte, dr. Viveke Samson, on the shooting range, March 1945.
From Source 2.*

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Sanitary lots and nurses



*The head of the sanitary lots, dr.
Elin Fog, May 1945.*



*Sanitetslotte,
Helsingør, 6 May 1945.*



*Two nurses and a sanitation lot1 ,
Tønder, summer 1945.*

All images come from Source 2.

End Like the

Brigade's other units, the field hospital was alerted at 11.45 pm on 4 May 1945. It rained during the night and after some difficulty we managed to pack up the drenched sanitary tents.

The force left Gödelöv at 9 o'clock and arrived in Helsingborg approx. four hours later. At 15:00 the Field Hospital was loaded onto the ferry *Holger Danske*, which left Helsingborg at 16:00.

In the afternoon of 6 May 1945, the company drove in its own vehicles, as well as a hired bus, towards Copenhagen, where at midnight they were accommodated at Marie Kirkeplads Skole.

A shooting incident on Jagtvej/Falkoner All delayed the march somewhat. One projectile went through the hired bus transporting nurses and sanitary lots, and another hit one of the lorries in the petrol tank, but the company itself suffered no losses.

Sources

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2. *The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-1945 - Sanitetskompagniet* by Viveke Goddard, published by The Danish Brigade Association, Copenhagen 1995, ISBN 87-90214-14-5. 3. *1½ years with the Danish Brigade* by lieutenant colonel PAF Norup (chief of staff at the Brigade), *Militær Tidsskrift* 1947, pages 271-308 and 353-406.
4. *The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-45* by Second Lieutenant P. Lyng, student at the Army Officers School, class Krogh I, 1976-80.
5. *The Brigade - The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-1945* by Knud JV Jespersen, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1993, ISBN 87-00-14924-1.
6. *Features of the history of Danish military medicine* by Hj. Thorsteinsson, published by the Defense Health Service, December 1992.
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¹ From the left you can see: nurse E. Hartnack (masseuses at the Surgical Department), nurse Dagny Andersen (Epidemiology command) and sanitary lot E. Kofoed [Car park II (Blood center C)].