

40M 11271
PROPOSED RE-ORGANISATION OF ROYAL MARINES.

MEMORANDUM by ADJUTANT-GENERAL, ROYAL MARINES.

With reference to the proposal of the First Lord at the Board Meeting on 14th December, the following alternative suggestions are put forward.

1. If it is decided that an amalgamation of the two branches of the Corps is to be effected, that separate titles and uniform are to be abolished, but a proportion of officers and men are to be trained as Land Artillery.

1. Title of the Corps to become Royal Marines, the distinctive titles of Artillery and Light Infantry being dropped.

11. Recruiting for Royal Marine Artillery to cease forthwith and all recruits to be trained at Deal.

111. Drafting R.M.A. to be gradually withdrawn from Chatham and Plymouth ships and replaced by R.M.L.I., Portsmouth Ships to be half R.M.A. and half R.M.L.I., but to include all classes of ships, and not only capital ships.

1V. R.M.A., and Portsmouth Division R.M.L.I., to be allowed to decrease by (a) Wastage, (b) transfers till combined strength is equal to the new establishment of a Division, roughly one-third of present total numbers.

V. Training. At all Divisions to be that of Infantry soldiers, with a School of Land Artillery at Portsmouth to train Officers and non-commissioned officers and any specialists required, who should be specialists in the same sense as Lieutenants (G), R.N.

VI. Officers. Officers' and Warrant Officers' lists to be amalgamated at once on the lines proposed by Committee in 1919, surplus Officers to be retired under A.F.O.1358/22, Officers to be posted in the manner now adopted in the R.M.L.I.

VII. Promotion of N.C. Officers in R.M.A., and Portsmouth Divisions to be closed until the required reduction is effected; N.C. Officers required to complete vacancies at the Chatham and Plymouth Divisions and Depot to be transferred voluntarily if possible and in equal proportions from R.M.A., and R.M.L.I., those surplus to requirements to be discharged under A.F.O.1359/22; N.C.O's lists to be then amalgamated in order of seniority and promotions made according to the usual rules.

VIII. In order to effect the necessary financial economy during "wasting" period :-

(a) The command at Deal, which is temporarily below strength, to be held by a Second Commandant till numbers become normal when he would be replaced by a Colonel Commandant.

(b) The two Colonels Commandant at the Portsmouth and R.M.A. Divisions to remain until one retires in the ordinary course being then replaced by a Second Commandant in command till the two Divisions are amalgamated.

(c) R.M.A. recruit depot at Eastney to be closed and training transferred to Deal, the staff being made surplus to requirements.

(d) Sea Service Gun Battery at Forton to be closed, and the men of both Divisions trained at Eastney; Musketry Staff at Eastney to be closed, and training of both Divisions to be carried out by R.M.L.I., at Browdown Camp.

(e) Reduction in administrative staffs to be made as numbers fall, vacancies in the staff not being filled; when numbers are normal Portsmouth Head Quarters to be closed and transferred to Eastney.

ADM 1/29279

II. Alternative Scheme, with a view to obviating the disadvantages of the First Lord's Scheme whilst securing the advantages claimed for it.

This is drawn up on the following premises :-

- (1) That one R.M. Division is to be abolished.
- (2) That separate shore training and titles of R.M.A., and R.M.L.I., must be retained.

Note It cannot produce an immediate effect, but would require at least from 12 to 18 months to develop.

The main points are that there would eventually be one Division trained as shore Artillery and two as Infantry with a common recruit depot at Deal, a musketry camp at Browdown, and a School of Music at Portsmouth, both branches being similarly trained in naval gunnery.

(i) Drafting R.M.A. to be gradually withdrawn from Chatham and Plymouth Ships, and replaced by R.M.L.I., Portsmouth ships to be manned as at present, viz., half R.M.A., and half R.M.L.I., and that all classes of ships be so treated, and not capital ships only.

(ii) R.M.A., and Portsmouth Divisions to be allowed to decrease by (a) Wastage (b) Transfers until the combined strength is equal to the new establishment, the two branches of the Corps to remain at present relative strength until this is effected.

(iii) Training Chatham and Plymouth to be continued as Infantry, Portsmouth and R.M.A., to be trained as Land Artillery.

(iv) Officers (a) Above rank of Lieutenant-Colonel to be amalgamated (b) Officers entered since 1907 to be replaced on one general list for promotion, but those now posted to R.M.A., to continue as such, new entries to be selected for Artillery from volunteers on completion of their courses and then posted to Portsmouth.

(c) Lieutenants-Colonels, Majors and Captains entered prior to 1907 to remain on separate lists, the best method of working promotion requires examination.

(v) Recruiting. All recruits to be sent to Deal and undergo preliminary training as Infantry.

(vi) Proposals for effecting financial economy during "wasting" period, as before detailed.

(Signed). H. E. BLUMBERG.

19th December, 1922.