

BOARD MINUTES.

Thursday, 18th January, 1923.

Question of abolishing at least one Division of the Royal Marines.

1565. The Board had before them a Memorandum prepared by the A.G. R.M. containing proposals for the amalgamation of the R.M.A. and the R.M.L.I. (*vide* Board Minute 1557).

It was proposed that the Corps should consist of three Divisions at Chatham, Portsmouth (Eastney), and Plymouth, with a Recruiting Depot at Deal, where all Recruits are to receive their preliminary training. The Land Service Gunnery School at Portsmouth, the Musketry Training Camp and School at Browdown, and the Royal Naval School of Music at Eastney should be retained; these should be attached to the Portsmouth Division and be under the Commandant of that Division. The Signal School and P.T. and Bayonet School to remain respectively at Chatham and Deal.

TRAINING.

All ranks should be trained as Infantry in accordance with the Army Training Manuals and in Naval Gunnery as at present, thus providing the non-substantive ratings now open to the Royal Marines.

A percentage of Officers and men should be trained in Land Gunnery, including management of Searchlights—forming a nucleus for Coast Defence, Anti-Aircraft and Medium batteries. Specialists should also be trained in Machine Gun, Signalling, and other special Ratings required by H.M. Fleet.

AMALGAMATION OF LISTS.

The General Officers' lists are already amalgamated, while those of Colonels, Colonels 2nd Commandant, and Lieutenant-Colonels should be amalgamated according to dates of promotion. Seniority on Majors' lists should be governed by date of promotion, or where two or more promotions are of the same date, by order of date of entry into the Service. If this does not produce a definite order, the remainder should be divided into batches of one R.M.A. and three R.M.L.I., arranged in order of age. Senior Captains' lists (1st September, 1914—1st September, 1916) should be amalgamated in the same manner as those of Majors, but those who have undergone examinations should be placed according to results, if possible. The lists of officers entered since 1912 should be amalgamated in the order in which they stood before separation in 1920, the senior R.M.A. Subalterns being promoted to Captains and restored to their places on the list. Probationary 2nd Lieutenants' lists should be amalgamated according to their examination order, while those of Quartermasters, Directors of Music and Warrant Officers should be governed by dates of promotion.

In certain cases possibly, anomalies will have to be regularised by arrangement.

The amalgamation should be effected gradually, as far as possible by voluntary transfer between Divisions, the N.C.O.s and men transferred to other Divisions being placed on the promotion rosters of their new Divisions in accordance with the date of seniority or date of candidature. Corporals, R.M.A., of seniority prior to February, 1918, should count seniority from the date of promotion to Bombadier.

The regimental colours should be retained and carried by the three Divisions.

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UNIFORM.

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Generally speaking the uniform of the Corps should be blue with red facings, with the badge of the Globe and Laurel. As the cloth tunic has only been re-introduced for Divisional Bands and Detachments of the Royal Yacht, it was proposed that His Majesty's pleasure should be taken for these.

Officers' mess jackets to be blue with the "mixed" badge of Globe and Laurel with Bugle over and Grenade super-imposed on Bugle, the badges of rank on lapel. For officers' and men's trousers a narrow red stripe was suggested, as the broad stripe is peculiarly an artillery distinction.

Collar badges should be Globe and Laurel. For all cap badges Globe and Laurel, Bugle and Grenade should be worn. Shoulder titles, R.M., instead of R.M.A. and R.M.L.I.

The Board agreed to the Memorandum being sent to the King for approval of the general principles as soon as possible, with additions to the Memorandum, giving a summary of the reasons for it being no longer necessary to retain the R.M.A., and bringing out the fact that a decision to the same effect had been arrived at in 1879, but had been dropped owing to a change in the Board of Admiralty.

The Board had also before them a detailed Memorandum as to the steps necessary to give effect to their decision, and approved it generally. It was suggested that the Sports Control Board might be able to make a grant to the Marines in respect of the money they had spent on the Forton Recreation Ground.