

## BARON MANNERHEIM'S DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL TROOPS OF LANCHOW

Edited by Harry Halén

Baron G. Mannerheim's journal (*AA*) contains a great deal of military intelligence concerning China in 1906–1908 and still more, of course, is found in his preliminary report to the Russian General Staff (*IIO*, 87–135). However, much relevant information was omitted in the edited journal as, for example, the present survey of the Lanchow troops. A somewhat similar survey concerning the Hsi'an-fu troops is found in the published text (*AA*, 620–623).

March 1, 1908. Lanchow.

“There are 3 battalions of infantry called *tiyi*, *erh* and *san ying* [1st, 2nd and 3rd battalion] of the *tiyi piao* [1st troop]. In each *ying* there is 1 *yingkuan* [‘battalion officer’], 1 *pangpan* [‘assistant’], 4 *shaokuan* [‘younger officers’], 4 *szuwuchang* ([‘company quartermasters’], keepers of the arms), 12 *peikuan* (here called *chaolienkuan* = kind of instruction officer paid 12 tls per month) and, in the *tiyi ying*, 1 *tulienkuan* educated in Lanchow. The division is as follows:

Table 1

Infantry	Artillery	Cavalry
1 <i>ying</i> = 4 <i>shao</i>	1 <i>ying</i> = 3 <i>shao</i>	1 <i>ch'i</i> = 4 <i>shao</i>
1 <i>shao</i> = 9 <i>pan</i>	1 <i>shao</i> = 9 <i>pan</i>	1 <i>shao</i> = 2 <i>pan</i>
1 <i>pan</i> = 13 men + 1 <i>shihchang</i> + 1 <i>wuchang</i> + 1 cook	1 <i>pan</i> = same composition as in the infantry. Of these, 3 <i>pan</i> serve at the Viceroy's yamen.	1 <i>pan</i> = 10 men + 1 <i>shihchang</i> in addition, 4 <i>huping</i> in each <i>shao</i>
1 <i>ying</i> = 440 men + 36 cooks + 8 <i>huping</i> employed by the <i>yingkuan</i> + 1 <i>yingshu</i> (clerk)	1 <i>ying</i> = 405 men + 27 cooks + 18 <i>huping</i> + 1 <i>yingshu</i> (or <i>shuszu</i> ) + 12 horses	1 <i>ch'i</i> = 96 men + 1 <i>changfang</i> , earned funds + 1 <i>shuszu</i> In each <i>pan</i> , 1 <i>mafu</i> and 1 cook paid for by the soldiers themselves.
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>Salary:</b>	<b>Salary:</b>
enl. man cat. I 3.6 tls monthly	the same as in the	enlisted man 6.9 tls
–»– cat. II. 3.3 –»–	<i>putui</i> , the horses are	<i>shihchang</i> 7.5 tls
<i>wuchang</i> 3.9 –»–	groomed by 3 soldiers	<i>changfang</i> 6.0 tls
<i>shihchang</i> 4.2 –»–	who are paid 0.5 tls	Fodder provided by the
cook 2.8 –»–	extra	Government for 2.5 tls monthly.
young soldier 2.9–2.7 –»–		If it is cheaper in the bazaar, then it is bought there.

In each branch of military service, clothing and provisions are put on everyone's own account. The officers and soldiers receive monthly 3 *tou* 3 *sheng* grain for 0.9 tls from the Fantai's store. The outer uniform is available from the Government for 1.04 tls. Ordinary soldiers are 20–30 years old and of medium height. Opium smoking occurs only in secret.

The exercise is the same for both the infantry and artillery, except days when the guns are taken out. On the 20th/I month, there are two exercise periods a day. At 7–9 a.m., marching and evolutions take place on the plain outside the *yingfangs* ('impanj'). Each *shao* is instructed mostly in groups with 1/3 *shao* under the command of their so-called *chaolienkuan*. At 3–4 p.m., new drills are practised, usually consisting of gymnastics, evolutions and rifle handling. These take place in the respective *yingfang* courtyards. Young soldiers are trained separately. There are no tactical exercises. On the 3rd, 6th, 9th, 13th, 16th, 19th, 23rd, 26th and 29th of each month, target practice should take place. Only 2 *shao* of each *ying* are shooting at a time. Everybody fires 3 shots from a distance of 300 paces using an old bolt-action rifle.

On the same days, the guns are taken out for morning exercise, during which the different gunners are trained in their respective grips. Target practice with guns is never practised, shooting with loose powder only occurs during those exercises that take place twice a year, in autumn and spring, in the presence of the Viceroy. The exercises are said to continue according to the same program during the whole year until the end of the 12th month. During the summer months, these are often replaced by various works and during the remainder of the year they are frequently unofficially cancelled.

The cavalry has no exercises at all. Its thin ranks are scattered around different posts in the vicinity and the *yingfangs* are inhabited almost solely by the *ch'ikuans*.

**Armament:** All troops possess bolt-action rifles throughout all ranks. The infantry has in its respective *shaos* Mauser rifles with a 6 cartridge magazine for all the ranks; in the artillery, Mauser rifles with 6 cartridges of model -87 [-81?] for those of the men who do not serve at the guns; in the cavalry, Mauser carbines with 6 and 1 cartridges of ? year's model. The artillery possesses 6 steel guns (sketch N°1) 1893; 6 steel guns (sketch N°2); 12 steel guns (sketch N°4) from the 12th year of the rule of the Kuanghsü emperor [1887] and two multibarreled steel mitrailleuses of Chinese manufacture dating to the 19th year of the rule of the Kuanghsü emperor [1894]. The first 24 are mountain guns, packed on 3 horses (the projectiles usually on a 4th) or pulled by one. According to some information, the first 12 should be 50 mm pieces manufactured by "Kolupo" (Krupp?), the latter 30 mm pieces manufactured by "Kolushin". According to another source, these latter 12 should be manufactured in China. The gun crew consists of 8 gunners (according to a sketch of only 7) who are not provided with rifles.

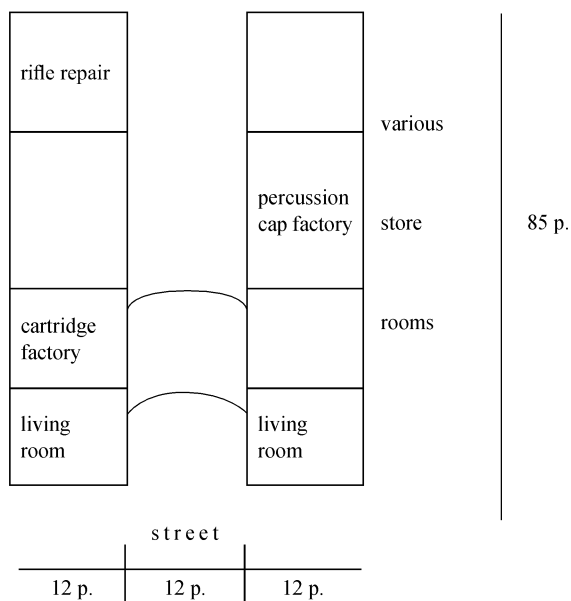
Hardly any supply carts or harnesses exist. Those found in the artillery are of inferior quality. There is no medical service for the troops. In case somebody gets ill, he is taken care of by a town physician maintained by the administration. No special troops exist who are familiar with telegraph, bridge construction, mines, fortification works or other branches of sapper services. – The time of service of the men is not limited. No reserve institution has been introduced. – Dungans are only found in the *matui* ['contingent of mounted troops, cavalry'].

There is 1 *ying* of artillery with the following officers: 1 *yingkuan*, 1 *pangpan*, 3 *shaokuan*, 3 *shih/wuchang* and 9 *peikuan* or *chaolienkuan*. – The numbers in the cavalry consist of 2 *ch'i* with 1 *ch'ikuan*, 4 *shaokuan* and 1 *hsünchang* in each of them. They are called *chungch'i* ['central banner'] of the *hsünching* and *tso ch'i* ['left banner'] of the *changpeifanchiung* troops.

In addition to the above-mentioned troops, the garrison consists of 6 *ying* (*chung*, *cheng-shu*, *tso*, *yu*, *chen* and *hu*) of the *ch'üping* under command of a *hsieht'ai*. The *tsoying*, quartered in the former Manchurian fortress, is commanded by a *ts'antien*, the rest live in the town. Regarding their consistency, they are similar to those I

saw in other cities of Kansu. Each *ying* should be divided into 6 *shao*, but there can hardly be any question of an actual division, as instead of c.500 men in each *ying*, there are 70–100 of them + dozens of not fully grown boys. Each *ying* is under the command of 14 officers. They are often remarkably more advanced in years than in their military development and education in general. Armament: muzzle-loaders and for target practice such ones with a bolt. Exercises are held only for young soldiers. The rest are called to a few exercises in the 2nd and 8th Chinese month, i.e. shortly before the great inspections arranged twice a year in all Chinese towns. On those occasions, there is target practice, except for the officers who shoot monthly.

The arsenal consisted previously of 3 departments: a workshop in the former clothing factory which nowadays has gone back to producing clothes, a store room for armament and similar things in the middle of the western half of the outer town's southern wall, and a deposit of bullets, percussion caps, powder and dynamite in the middle of the eastern half of the same wall. Nowadays, a special building has been erected in the SE part of the outer town and all machinery from the workshop in the clothing factory has been transferred there. The newly finished building, the plan of which is shown below, measures c. 85 x 36 paces.



As always in Chinese factories, a considerable part of the area is occupied by courtyards. All buildings are one-storied houses. Because the machinery is only partially assembled, I don't have a completely clear idea about what can be produced here. In the area for

manufacturing percussion caps, stand 6 machines: 3 for cutting the sheet metal and 3 for pressing it. In the space for rifle repair, stand a couple of machines, the rest are still unassembled. According to available information, the production should comprise 200,000–300,000 lead bullets and 200,000–300,000 percussion caps a month. The former are packed in boxes containing 4,000 each, the latter in paper packages 50 pieces per package.

All kinds of repairs are carried out. Ready-made rifle components are ordered from the east especially for this purpose. Even muzzle-loaders (according to information, provided with a wick) have been manufactured. Used cartridge cases are reloaded, new cartridges are not made. The machines are old; they are said to date back to the time of Tso Kung-pao.<sup>1</sup> They say that no new ones have been ordered. Thirty workers are employed here under the leadership of a supervisor from Tientsin. The machines are run by steam power. The steam engine is not yet assembled.

The powder factory is situated in the outer town close to the SE gate or, in other words, not far from the above-described new arsenal and the depository of explosives. It employs around 40 workers. There are 20 millstones powered by horses. The work goes on 11 months of the year. The production reaches 7,200 *chin* monthly. The powder is packed in boxes of 50 *chin*. One *pan* of soldiers takes care of the guard duty.

There should be 3 million bullets, 3 million percussion caps, a very large quantity of powder and a smaller quantity of dynamite in the depository of explosives. According to a piece of information, the number of artillery shells should be 600,000 units; according to another, 23,000 units of one calibre and 700 of a second, both types manufactured by Krupp. Rifle cartridges are said to number c. 1–1.5 million. According to another source, 36,000 Mannlicher and 130,000 Mauser cartridges (+ 120,000 purchased during the time of Tso?) as well as c. 1 million Remington cartridges, which are said to be unusable. The area occupied by the depository is situated in an extension of the S wall separated from the townside by a *miao* ['temple'] complex and measures c. 180x140<sup>x</sup> [<sup>x</sup>= paces].

The actual armament depository will be transferred to a building complex constructed of bricks and measuring 140x72<sup>x</sup>, situated at the E wall of the inner city. From the street, one can see only a stone wall provided with a small gate. Previously the area was occupied by a tea depository. Here the purpose is to concentrate everything necessary in the field of armament, whereas unnecessary things are left in their former place, major part of which will be occupied by the production of the clothes factory. Different pieces of information I have received concerning the contents of the depository are approximately as follows (Table 2).

I have heard nothing of new orders, but the armament depository will, in the near future, be expanded by some thousands (c. 4,000) of modern rifles, which until now have been in the hands of the recently deceased famous General Tung Fu-hsiang.”

<sup>1</sup> A Chinese General from the time of the Dungan revolt, “former celebrated Viceroy of Kansu” (AA, 532).

Table 2

Sy-ö [Hsü-erh?]	Chao	3rd informant		Interpreter of the Taot'ai	
		Old deposit:	Supplied by Tung Fu-hsiang 3 years ago [1905]:	Bought from Carlovitz 6 years ago [1902]:	
Bolt-action rifles	2–3,000	120,000 (partly unusable)	1,500 (Tso Kung-pao)	2,500	3,000 Maus. for 5 cartr.
Remington	1,000		2,000 (unusable)	1,800	c. 10 tls each.
Hotchkiss	1,500			860 for 6 cartr.	From the firm .....?
Mauser	2,000	6,800 for 1 cartr. + 8,000 fr. Tso Kung-pao's time	2,500 for 5 cartr. 120,000 cartr. (from the time of Viceroy Tso)	2,700 for 1 cartr. 1,600 Mannlichers for 5 cartr.	3 years ago [1905] [ ] Mausers à [ ] cartr., 28 tls each.
Guns:	2 so-called <i>Shenti p'ao</i> with a <i>передокъ</i> ['front wagon']	c. 30 breech-loaders 8 – » – (sketch N°5, 4 years old)	c. 120 muzzle- and breech-loaders (50 pieces of the same model as in the <i>ying-fang</i> )	2 exx. <i>Shihmen felung</i> , kind of mitrailleuse	
Tents:	370 (a quantity is made into clothes)	c. 3,000			
Kettles:	500	c. 3,000			
Lances:	1,500	large quantity (old)			
Sabres:	1,500	– » –			
Halberds:	400	– » –			

## REFERENCES

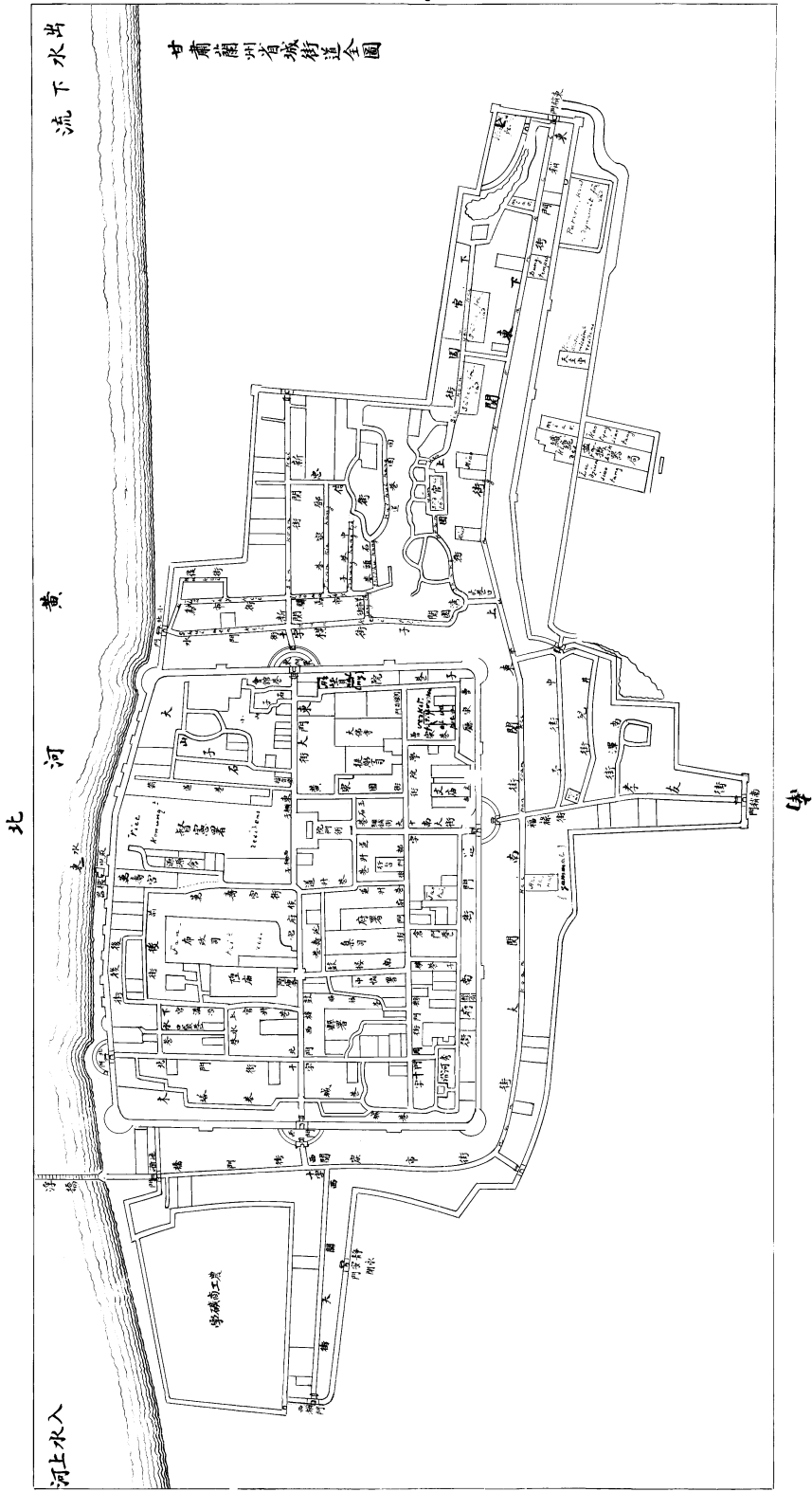
AA = C.G. Mannerheim, *Across Asia from West to East in 1906–1908*. (Travaux Éthnographiques VIII) Helsinki: Société Finno-ougrienne, 1940. (Revised edition 2008)

ПО = полковник баронъ Маннергейм, *Предварительный отчет о поездке, предпринятой по Высочайшему повелению черезъ Китайскій Туркестанъ и северныя провинціи Китая въ г. Пекинъ въ 1906–7 и 8 г.г.* (Сборникъ географическихъ, топографическихъ и статистическихъ матеріаловъ по Азін, вып. LXXXI. С.-Петербургъ: Изданіе Главнаго Управленія Генеральнаго Штаба, 1909.

## APPENDIX

Chinese map of Lanchow (next page).

東



西