COLOMBIA

GENERAL

Area ........................................ 1,195,875 sq. kilometres
Population (1921) .................. 5,855,000
Number of inhabitants per sq. kilometre .. 4.9

I.

Army.

A. SUPREME MILITARY AUTHORITY AND ITS ORGANS.

In case of war the President of the Republic assumes the supreme direction of the war and may entrust the command of the Army to the General whom he considers best qualified to exercise the supreme command.

I. MINISTRY OF WAR.

The Ministry of War consists of the following Departments:

(a) Central Department (Secretariat) : 2 sections.
(b) General War Department : Army section; recruiting section.
(c) Personnel Department : Personnel section; statistics and archives section.
(d) Administrative Department : accounting section; depots (intendance supplies); remounts section; military justice and rewards section; chaplains’ section; army medical section.
(e) Office of the Director of Warlike stores; military workshops; arms depots (general park).

The Army treasury and ammunition factory are also under the Ministry of War.

2. INSPECTORATE-GENERAL OF THE ARMY.

The Inspector-General has the rank of general in command of a division.
The Inspector-General supervises the execution of orders emanating from the Legislature, the Government or the Ministry of War. He must inspect every command, military institution and army unit at least once a year.

3. General Staff.

This consists of a Chief of the General Staff with the rank of general commanding a division, and 5 heads of departments (generals commanding brigades or colonels) and of 7 heads of sections (majors or lieutenant-colonels).

The General Staff includes the following departments:
(a) Central Department;
(b) Intelligence Department;
(c) Transport Department;
(d) Topographical Department;
(e) Historical Department.


The divisional commands are responsible for the instruction of officers and men. They direct the administrative services of the divisional troops and are charged with the maintenance of barracks, arms, etc. These commands constitute the recruiting centres of the military areas under them. A divisional command is organised in 5 sections. Section I is responsible for the direction of military training in the division and, in addition, for all work dealt with by a divisional staff, such as preparations for mobilisation, the concentration of troops, etc.

Section II deals with all questions not specifically allotted to any other section.

Section III deals with matters connected with military justice in the division.

Section IV is responsible for the inspection and direction of the administrative services of the division and everything connected with barracks, equipment, etc.

Section V deals with recruiting in the military area of the division.

B. Composition of the Army and Recruiting Areas.

The Army consists of 5 mixed divisions. These divisions are designated, organised and allotted to recruiting areas as follows:

First division: staff at Bogota.
- 2 regiments of infantry;
- 1 regiment of cavalry;
- 1 regiment of artillery;
- 1 engineer battalion;
- 1 railway battalion.
Recruiting area: The Departments of Cundinamarca and Tolima; the commissioner's districts of El Vichada and El Vaupés and the administrative district of El Meta.

Second division: Staff at Barranquilla.
3 regiments of infantry.

Recruiting area: The departments of Atlantique, Bolivar and Magdalena; the administrative district of San Andres and Providencia; the province of Uraba, a department of Antioquia and the northern part of the administrative district of Choco.

Third division: Staff at Cali.
3 regiments of infantry; 1 cavalry regiment; 1 railway battalion.

Recruiting area: The departments of Narino, Cauca, Valle and Huila and the commissioner's districts of Putumayo and Caqueta.

Fourth division: Staff at Medellin.
2 regiments of infantry.

Recruiting area: The departments of Antioquia (except the province of Uraba) and Caldas and the administrative district of Choco (except the northern part).

Fifth division: Staff at Cucuta.
2 infantry regiments.

Recruiting area: The departments of Santander, Northern Santander and Boyaca and the commissioner's district of Arauca.

C. ARMS AND SERVICES.

Infantry — The infantry consists of 12 regiments.
Cavalry — The cavalry consists of one regiment and one group.
Artillery — The artillery consists of one regiment.
Engineers — The engineers consists of one battalion.
Railway troops — Two battalions and one group.

D. RECRUITING SYSTEM.

Every Colombian citizen between the ages of 21 and 40 is liable to serve in the active army and in the reserve or militia.

The recruiting is effected by drawing lots each year. The elected men serve for three years.

Persons who have not been drawn by lot to serve with the colours pay a single tax in lieu of military service. This tax may not exceed 100 pesos and may not be less than 5 pesos according to the income of the individual. For this purpose citizens are divided into six classes.

The payment of the military tax or service with the colours for three years in the case of persons drawn by lot dispenses them from all other
service for life except in case of domestic or external disorders. In the latter case, all men between 21 and 40 years of age who form part of the national militia may be called up for active service.

The following persons are exempt from military service in all circumstances: members of the Catholic clergy and seminarists, the members of religious educational communities, disabled persons, persons who have lost limbs and persons unfit for service as a result of disease or infirmity.

Certain supporters of families are exempt from service in peace-time. Persons engaged in certain duties, young men studying for the liberal professions (up to the end of their studies) and persons whose presence in the army would be harmful to the moral of the troops are temporarily exempted from military service.

Voluntary engagements are only permitted when the number of conscripts enrolled is not sufficient to fill existing vacancies. Voluntary engagements may only take place at the times fixed for the calling up of the contingents.

E. MILITARY EDUCATION.

Staff College. — The object of this college is to form staff officers. It holds a supplementary course for the preparation of subaltern officers and officers who have not passed through the military school.

Military School. — The course lasts for three years. Students who have successfully followed the instruction given in the military school leave with the rank of Second Lieutenant.

Military School of Aviation. — This school (which is intended for the formation of pilots) was created in 1920. It is attached to the Ministry of War through the Aviation Section, which acts as a link between the Ministry and the school.

F. BUDGETARY EFFECTIVES FOR THE YEAR 1925.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.C.O.s</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporals and other ranks</td>
<td>5,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military employees</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The budgetary effectives for the year 1925 are calculated on the basis of the former composition of the army, viz. — 3 divisions, each consisting of 2 brigades and including 12 infantry regiments, 1 artillery regiment, 1 cavalry regiment, 1 cavalry group, 1 engineer battalion, 1 train battalion and 1 railway battalion. The Law of February 28th, 1925, reorganised the Colombian army on the basis of 5 divisions.
II.

Navy.

LIST OF UNITS
(1925)

Gunboat:

*Chercinto* (1896) 643 tons. Dimensions: 185 x 31 x 12 feet.

River Gunboats:

1. *Esperanza* (1897) 400 tons. Dimensions: 140 x 9 x 3 feet. Guns: 3 M.G.

2. *General Nerino* (1895)

Miscellaneous:

5 units (coastguard vessels, motor launches, etc.).

III.

Budget Expenditure on National Defence.

A. Notes on Budget Procedure.

1. The financial year coincides with the calendar year.

2. The budget is gross, and public undertakings are included in the administrative departments with which they are connected.

B. Defence Expenditure.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1923 Estimates</th>
<th>1924 Estimates</th>
<th>1925 Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of War</td>
<td>2,876</td>
<td>3,032</td>
<td>3,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deduct: Military Pensions</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,876</td>
<td>2,902</td>
<td>3,146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The appropriations for 1923 did not include military pensions, which, however, have been transferred to the Ministry of War in the budgets for 1924 and 1925. In order to render the estimates for the three years comparable the amounts of pensions have been deducted from the totals for 1924 and 1925.

The following table shows the main items of defence expenditure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1923</th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>1925</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army personnel</td>
<td>1,297</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>1,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, washing and hair-dressing</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War material</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools: personnel and material</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluvial fleet: personnel and material</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,876</td>
<td>3,032</td>
<td>3,276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Excluding military pensions.
2 Including military pensions.

The budget of the Ministry of War contains the working expenses of a munition factory.

The item "various expenses" includes appropriations for a school of aviation, amounting to 54,000 pesos in the budget for the year 1925.

The following table shows the defence expenditure for 1924 and 1925 divided into expenditure for personnel and for material:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>1925</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure for personnel (salaries and allowances)</td>
<td>1,349</td>
<td>1,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure for material</td>
<td>1,683</td>
<td>1,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,032</td>
<td>3,276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources.

Informe que en el año de 1921, presenta a las Honorables Cámaras, Legislativas el Ministro de Guerra.
Memoria del Ministerio de Guerra 1920, 1924.
Leyes expedidas por el Congresso Nacional 1919.
Leyes de Colombia 1896.
Ley 26 de 1916 orgánica del Ejército.
Decreto No. 340 de 1925 por el cual se reforma la organización del Ejército.
Presupuesto Nacional de Rentas y Ley de apropiaciones para el Año fiscal de 1º de Enero a 31 de Diciembre de 1925.
Jane’s Fighting Ships, 1925.