

## KRANZIERITZ KÁROLY

## The Birth of Honvéd Cavalry Divisions

## Honvéd lovashadosztályok születése

**Abstract**

*On the eve of the First World War, the Royal Hungarian Army cavalry were divided into two Cavalry Divisions: 5th and 11th. The Cavalry Division of Military License Plate fit into those cavalry divisions which are set up within the framework of the joint army. The army's cavalry had to go a long way to show two cavalry divisions which meet the expectations of the weapon in a joint army. In this study we will follow the development of the 5th Cavalry Division of the army, along with the Hungarian Royal Army Cavalry until 1914, the outbreak of World War II.*

*Keywords: cavalry, Cavalry Division, hussar, Royal Hungarian Army, squadron*

**Absztrakt**

*A magyar lovas az csakis huszár lehetett. A magyar-osztrák megbékélés jegyében történt 1867-es kiegyezés egyik eredménye a Magyar Királyi Honvédség felállítása. Két fegyvernemmel, gyalogsággal és lovassággal alakult meg. Utóbbi esetében nem lehetett kérdés, hogy a dragonyos, ulánus és a huszár közül melyik csapatnem fogja alkotni a honvéd lovasságot. A magyar politikai törekvéseknek köszönhetően a honvéd lovasság több fejlesztésen esett át. Ennek eredménye, hogy a túlnyomórészt magyarok alkotta császári és királyi huszárezredek szintjét érthette el a honvéd lovasság is.*

*Kulcsszavak: lovasság, lovas hadosztály, Magyar Királyi Honvédség, lovasszázad*

On the eve of the First World War, the Royal Hungarian Army cavalry were divided into two Cavalry Divisions: 5th and 11th. The Cavalry Division of Military License Plate fit into those cavalry divisions which are set up within the framework of the joint army. The army's cavalry had to go a long way to show two cavalry divisions which meet the expectations of the weapon in a joint army. In this study we will follow the development of the 5th Cavalry Division of the army, along with the Hungarian Royal Army Cavalry until 1914, the outbreak of World War II.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

The setting up of the Royal Hungarian Army was allowed by the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867. On 5th december, in 1868 law article about an armed forces XL, a military unit XLI, and a voluntary popular uprising XLII were sanctioned by Franz Josef.<sup>1</sup> The defense system of the new government was determined by these laws - with some modifications - until the dissolution of the monarchy in 1918.

The Austro-Hungarian forces - after 1868 – were characterized by threefoldness. The first line of the joint army was the common, so called imperial and royal army. The second line meant to be the Royal Hungarian Army and the Landwehr, while the third line was the two popular uprisings.

According to the XLI. law article of 1868: „In the area of the Hungarian crown the Hungarian Army will be created from 78 infantry battalion and 28 century hussars, for which Croatia-Slavonia adjust four infantry battalions and four cavalry squadrons.”<sup>2</sup> The army infantry was founded from 82 battalion, while the cavalry from 32 centuries.

Military district	Hussars squadron		
	Number	Name	Station
pesti	1st	pesti	Pest
	2nd	Pest-kunsági	Kecskemét
	3rd	Pest-csongrádi	Szeged
	4th	bácskai	Zombor
	5th	Békés-csongrádi	Mezőtúr
	6th	Csongrád-csanádi	Gyula
	7th	Békés-bihari	Nagyvárad
	8th	aradi	Arad
	9th	torontáli	Nagybecskerek
	10th	temesi	Csákov
kolozsvári	11st	háromszéki	Kézdivásárhely
	12nd	maros-széki	Marosvásárhelyi
	13rd	halasi	Kolozsvár
kassai	14th	szatmári	Nagykárolyi
	15th	hajdúsági	Nyíregyháza
	16th	észak-bihari	Debrecen
	17th	Heves-kunsági	Kassa
	18th	felvidéki	Kassa

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3&param=5362> 1868 XL. law Article,

<http://www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3&param=5363> 1868 XLI. law Article,

<http://www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3&param=5364> 1868 XLIV. law Article (Download: 1 September 2015)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3&param=5363> (Download: 1 September 2015)

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

pozsonyi	19th	hevesi	Eger
	20th	Pest-jászszági	Jászberény
	21st	nógrádi	Ipolyság
	22nd	csallóközi	Pozsony
budai	23rd	fehérvári	Veszprém
	24th	veszprémi	Veszprém
	25th	baranyai	Pécs
	26th	somogyi	Szigetvár
	27th	soproni	Kőszegi
	28th	zalai	Körmend
<b>Uhlan century</b>			
zágrábi	29th	varasdi	Varasd
	30th	zágrábi	Zágráb
	31st	szlavóniai	Verőce
	32nd	szerémi	Vukovár

1. táblázat *First status and quartering of the Honvéd Hussars setting-up in 1869.**(Source: Berkó 1928. 426–427. p.)*

The equestrian centuries and the battalions were formed at the same time, on the first of November, 1869. The set up centuries were marked with current number and they were distinguished from each other with name of the assigned land or city.<sup>3</sup>

The peacetime strength of the squadron frame was hold the following image: 1 lieutenant or captain as company commander, 1 lieutenant, warrant officer/sergeant, 4 non-commissioned officer, 28 mounted and 3 non-mounted hussars, 2 orderly, 34-35 horses.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the number of military squadron staff contained 174 soldiers. (The number of infantry century was 250 people, in case of mobilization 3-4 centuries created a battalion.)

The cavalry underwent its first major reorganization in 1871. The Kingdom of Hungary was divided into seven military district and on 1st May eight new defense squadron was set up. They were numbered from 33 to 40. The rider centuries were assigned to honvéd infantry brigade, which were also organized on 1 May. It ceased to exist in 1874, when Emperor Franz Joseph ordered the cavalry to separate from the bondage of the infantry brigade and merged into regiment, which contained four centuries. They were lead by former cavalry division commanders. The regimental commander only had the authority of training and discipline. The regiment was divided into classes of two centuries in each.<sup>5</sup>

W

<sup>3</sup> BALLA Tibor: *A magyar királyi honvéd lovasság, 1868–1914. Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 113. (2000) 578. p. (Henceforward Balla 2000.)

<sup>4</sup> SZURMAY Sándor: *A honvédség fejlődésének története 1868–1898.* Budapest, 1898. 27. p.

<sup>5</sup> BALLA 2000. 579–580. p.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

While the reorganization of the regiments were indicated by a current number from 1 to 10, the centuries within the bound of the regiments retained their old name and numbering. For example: „the first Hungarian royal army cavalry regiments hevesi 2/19 century. (The counter marked the valid number of the century in the regiment, the denominator was the old number of the century).<sup>6</sup>

In case of war, to the 5th cavalry division, 16 cavalry companies were planned, instead of the earlier 18. The remaining two cavalry companies was designed to be subordinated to the garrison of Budapest. The new departments of cavalry regiments and division headquarters began operations on 1 October 1874. The regiments were ordered to report directly to the headquarters of the district. (Their Space Station can be seen on Table 2.) The number of cavalry, later hussar regiments remained unchanged until 1914.

In 1875 the equestrian centuries designation was also changed, because the used fraction was ceased. According to the new designation, the equestrian centuries were numbered from 1 to 4. For example: „8.th Hungarian royal army cavalry regiments 3rd century”.<sup>7</sup>

Hussars regiments			
Number	Headquarters	Stations of divisional	
1st	Budapest (1874)	1st	Budapest (1874)
		2nd	Kecskemét (1874), Jászberény (1877), Kecskemét (1902), Vác (1912)
2nd	Nagyvárad (1874) Debrecen (1877)	1st	Jászberény (1874), Gyula (1877), Nagyvárad (1899), Debrecen (1912)
		2nd	Nagyvárad (1874), Debrecen (1877), Nagyvárad (1912)
3rd	Gyula (1874) Arad (1877) Szeged (1890)	1st	Gyula (1874), Arad (1877), Szeged (1912)
		2nd	Borosjenő (1874), Csákova (1877), Szeged (1890), Arad (1912)
4th	Csákova (1874) Kecskemét (1877) Szabadka (1902)	1st	Baja (1874), Szabadka (1912)
		2nd	Csákova (1874), Kecskemét (1877), Szabadka (1902), Kecskemét (1912)
5th	Kassa (1874)	1st	Kassa (1874)
		2nd	Nyíregyháza (1874)
6th	Vác (1874)	1st	Ógyalla (1874), Érsekújvár (1893),

<sup>6</sup> BERKÓ István: *A magyar királyi honvédség története 1868–1918*. M. Kir. Hadtörténelmi Levéltár, Budapest, 1928. 93. p. (Henceforward *Berkó* 1928.)

<sup>7</sup> ILLÉSFALVI Papp Mihály: *A magyar királyi honvédség fejlődése 1869–1899*. Budapest, 1899. 41. p.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

	Zalaegerszeg (1912)		Zalaegerszeg (1912)
		2nd	Vác (1874), Keszthely (1912)
7th	Veszprém (1874) Pápa (1884)	1st	Veszprém (1874), Pápa (1884)
		2nd	Kőszeg (1874), Zalaegerszeg (1889), Érsekújvár (1912)
8th	Pécs (1874)	1st	Pécs (1874)
		2nd	Körmend (1874), Keszthely (1885), Baja (1912)
9th	Marosvásárhely (1874)	1st	Marosvásárhely (1874), Szamosújvár (1894), Marosvásárhely (1912)
		2nd	Segesvár (1874), Marosvásárhely (1894), Szamosújvár (1912)
<b>Uhlán (hussar after 1882) regiment</b>			
10th	Varasd (1874)	1st	Varasd (1874)
		2nd	Vinkovce (1874), Vukovár (1876), Verőce (1885)

2. táblázat *Placing a Honvéd Hussars regiments between 1874-1914**(Source: Berkó 1928. 452. p.)*

The cavalry troops had real character after the continuous restructuring between 1875 and 1880. Its military staff remained unchanged: in war, cavalry regiment had to have 911 people and 795 horses, which contained the march company in the headquarters of the regiment.<sup>8</sup>

The cavalry soldiers were given a new name, because of the royal decree on 5 May 1880. After that number 1-9. was called hussar - and number 10 was called regiments of lancer (Ulanen).<sup>9</sup> From 1 May 1881 the regiment was divided into two military cavalry brigade:

Number of cavalry brigades (Headquarters)	Hussars regiments
1st Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Arad)	2nd Debrecen Honvéd Hussars regiment 3rd Arad Honvéd Hussars regiment 4th Csákova Honvéd Hussars regiment 5th Kassa Honvéd Hussars regiment 9th Marosvásárhely Honvéd Hussars regiment

<sup>8</sup> BERKÓ 1928. 93–94. p.<sup>9</sup> BALLA 2000. 581. p.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

Number of cavalry brigades (Headquarters)	Hussars regiments
2nd Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Budapest)	1st Budapest Honvéd Hussars regiment 6th Váci Honvéd Hussars regiment 7th Veszprémi Honvéd Hussars regiment 8th Pécs Honvéd Hussars regiment 10th Varasd Honvéd Hussars regiment

3. táblázat Honvéd Cavalry Brigades at 1881 (Own editing, Source: Rendeleti Közlöny 1881. 42. p. 1609. I. sz. körrendelet (Henceforward:RK))

The No. 10 lancer regiment of the army was transformed into a cavalry regiment in 1882. With this step the cavalry combat arm was created clearly from hussar teams.

In 1889 an enlargement took place in the cavalry. So far the existing 40 cavalries of 10 regiments proved insufficient, because at mobilization the 5th Cavalry Division would have received 24 squadrons, while only 16 infantry divisions were available for the infantry divisions. To solve this problem, the number of squadrons was increased from 4 to 6 which meant the expansion of the cavalry to 20 squadrons.<sup>10</sup> Now there was no difference between the organization of the joint army and the cavalry regiments of the Hungarian army. No. 1., 2. and 5. squadron belonged to class 1 of the regiments, while class 2 contained 3., 4. and 6. squadrons.<sup>11</sup>

The name of regiments changed in 1890 in such a way that it incorporated the master station of colonel tribe. For example: „1st Budapest Royal Honvéd Hussars”.<sup>12</sup>

On March 18, 1890 the 3<sup>rd</sup> defense cavalry brigade was set up with headquarter in Pécs. With this the training and control of cavalry was simplified.

Number of cavalry brigades (Headquarters)	Hussars regiments
1st Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Arad, from 1891 Szeged)	3rd Arad (from 1891 Szeged) Honvéd Hussars regiment 4th Kecskemét Honvéd Hussars regiment 9th Marosvásárhely Honvéd Hussars regiment

<sup>10</sup> DANCZER Alfons: *A mi hadseregünk. Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia népei fegyverben és zászlók alatt.* Budapest, 1889. 514–515. p.

<sup>11</sup> BALLA 2000. 584. p.

<sup>12</sup> BERKÓ 1928. 96. p.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

Number of cavalry brigades (Headquarters)	Hussars regiments
2nd Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Budapest)	1st Budapest Honvéd Hussars regiment 2nd Debrecen Honvéd Hussars regiment 5th Kassa Honvéd Hussars regiment 6th Váci Honvéd Hussars regiment
3rd Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Pécs)	7th Pápa Honvéd Hussars regiment 8th Pécs Honvéd Hussars regiment 10th Varasd Honvéd Hussars regiment

4. táblázat Honvéd Cavalry Brigades at 1890 (Own editing, Source: RK 1890. 116. p. 1648 eln. sz. körrendelet)

In 1893 the function of the centuries changed within the hussar classes. From then Class I consisted of no. 1-3 and Class II contained no. 4-6. hussar centuries.<sup>13</sup>

The number of the cavalry brigades continued to grow in 1897. The 4<sup>th</sup> defense cavalry brigade headquarter was set up in Debrecen. This meant new reorganization.

Number of cavalry brigades (Headquarters)	Hussars regiments
1st Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Szeged)	3rd Szeged Honvéd Hussars regiment 4th Kecskemét Honvéd Hussars regiment
2nd Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Budapest)	1st Budapest Honvéd Hussars regiment 6th Váci Honvéd Hussars regiment
3rd Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Pécs)	7th Pápa Honvéd Hussars regiment 8th Pécs Honvéd Hussars regiment 10th Varasd Honvéd Hussars regiment
4th Honvéd Cavalry Brigade (Debrecen)	2nd Debrecen Honvéd Hussars regiment 5th Kassa Honvéd Hussars regiment 9th Marosvásárhely Honvéd Hussars regiment

5. táblázat Honvéd Cavalry Brigades at 1897 (Own editing, Source: RK 1897. 129. p. 2165. eln. sz. körrendelet)

Cavalry weapon felt the development of technology too. The first military-riding machine-gun platoon was formed (2 guns) at the army cavalry on 6 October 1908.<sup>14</sup> The cavalry made it necessary to increase the firepower, because of the rapidly developing series of shooting guns. The new squad was intended to support the upcoming cavalry tasks. The

<sup>13</sup> BALLA 2000. 584. p.

<sup>14</sup> BALLA 2000. 585. p.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

monarchy's army really only experienced the need of machine guns in the first months of World War II.

Peacetime strength was made up of 3 orderly, 57 people, 57-58 horses. The squad belonged to those regiment at whom they were set up. The regimental commander was responsible-for their training, combat readiness, staff and horses.<sup>15</sup>

The highest unity of the army cavalry was represented by the brigade. The establishment of a higher unit had to be waited until the spring of 1913. Then was founded the 5th Cavalry Division, which we already mentioned several times. The Division was only organized in case of mobilization The established conditions in 1913 made it necessary to set up not just one, but two divisions. That was how the 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Division - headquarter in Budapest – was formed besides the Debrecen's 11th Cavalry Division. Their military license number followed the Cavalry Divisions of the joint army

Number of division	Cavalry Brigades	
	Number	Honvéd regiments
5th	19th	1st Budapest Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 8th Pécs Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 1st honvéd lovasgéppuskás-osztag
	23rd	6th Zalaegerszeg Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 7th Pápa Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 3rd honvéd lovasgéppuskás-osztag
11th	22nd	2nd Debrecen Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 3rd Szeged Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 2nd honvéd lovasgéppuskás-osztag
	24th	5th Kassa Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 9th Marosvásárhely Honvéd Hussars regiment (depot, 1. és 2. class) 4th honvéd lovasgéppuskás-osztag

6. táblázat *The position of the hussars regiments to Honvéd Cavalry Division in August 1914.*  
(Source: Berkó 1928. 534. p.)

The 4th and 10th hussar's squadrons were transferred to infantry regiments as Cavalry Division. They helped the infantry operation.

<sup>15</sup> RK 1908. 214. p. 6109. eln. sz. körrendelet és melléklet 1–3. p.



## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 4. szám

	Hussars regiments	
	4th (Szabadka)	10th (Varasdi)
Regimental commander	20th Honvéd Infantry Division	42nd Honvéd Infantry Division
Ist Division commander	23rd Honvéd Infantry Division	36th Commun Infantry Regiment
1st squadron		
2nd squadron		
3rd squadron	20th Honvéd Infantry Division	42nd Honvéd Infantry Division
IInd Division commander	41st Honvéd Infantry Division	7th Commun Infantry Division
4th squadron	20th Honvéd Infantry Division	42nd Honvéd Infantry Division
5th squadron	41st Honvéd Infantry Division	7th Commun Infantry Division
6th squadron		

7. táblázat *The 4th and 10th hussars regiments at Infantry Division (Own editing, Source:)*

When the World War broke out, both defense Cavalry Divisions were commanded to the Galician theatre. This was where significant opposing cavalry could be taken into consideration. However, the followed principles of the monarchy resulted in heavy losses to the cavalry in August and September 1914.

The two Cavalry Divisions also suffered major losses in soldiers and horses by the Russian machine-gun fire and firing infantry trenches. Because of the previous events, the use of the cavalry weapon had to be reconsidered rapidly by the military leaders of the monarchy. As a result, both the 5th and the 11th Cavalry Division of the army remained until the end of World War I, but only in name. In bonds the absolute majority is no longer the rider but the conducting infantry tactics.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIES

- BALLA Tibor: *A magyar királyi honvéd lovasság, 1868–1914. Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 113. (2000)
- BERKÓ István: *A magyar királyi honvédség története 1868–1918.* M. Kir. Hadtörténelmi Levéltár, Budapest, 1928.
- DANCZER Alfons: *A mi hadseregünk. Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia népei fegyverben és zászlók alatt.* Budapest, 1889
- ILLÉSFALVI Papp Mihály: *A magyar királyi honvédség fejlődése 1869–1899.* Budapest, 1899.
- SZURMAY Sándor: *A honvédség fejlődésének története 1868–1898.* Budapest, 1898.
- Rendeleti közlöny a Magyar Kir. Honvédség számára.* Szabályrendeletek. Magyar Kir. Honvédség, Budapest, 1870–1918.