

Estonian and Latvian Orders of Battle

The armies of independent Latvia and Estonia mobilised very rapidly and it is very hard to be sure about the validity of many of the numbers, which in any case are in 1919 generally only good as a “snapshot” on any one day. Part of the problem is that many men were technically in the armies but were untrained or lacked weapons, so that raw numbers are not much use. The Estonian army is only given for that part that fought the Freikorps.

North Latvian Brigade

This brigade was formed on 31 March as part of the Estonian Army. With the agreement of the Latvian Provisional Government the Estonians mobilised Latvians in the area under their control and actively sought to add to this number by encouraging Soviet Latvians to defect.

HQ of the North Latvian Brigade	Commander: 31 March 1919–15 July 1919: Colonel Jorģis Zemitāns. Deputy Commander: 1 April 1919–16 June 1919: Lt. Colonel Eduards Kalniņš. Chief of Staff: April 1919–16 June 1919: Lt. Colonel Voldemārs Ozols.
1 st Valmiera Infantry Regiment	the first to be formed in Tartu, Estonia, in mid-February. Men drawn from the mobilisation of 60 officers and nearly 1,500 men during the month filled this out fairly quickly. Commander: 18 February 1919–7 August 1919: Lt. Colonel Jūlijs Jansons. Deputy Commander: April 1919–7 August 1919: Captain Kārlis Bojārs.
2 nd Cēsis Infantry Regiment	originally the Latvian Reserve Battalion, formed in mid-April. Changed name in mid-May and soon afterwards had 400 trained and 1,000 untrained men. By mid-June this number was 40 officers, about 30 sabres, 1,400+ bayonets, 12 HMGs and 32 LMGs (many of the men were formerly in the Soviet Latvian Division). The two batteries were attached to it during the Cesis fighting. Commander: 18 May 1919–15 July 1919: Lt. Colonel Krišjānis Berķis; 15 July 1919–7 August 1919: Captain Kārlis Pencis (acting). Deputy Commander: May 1919–15 July 1919: Captain Kārlis Pencis.
3 rd Jelgava Infantry Regiment	formed in mid-June in Ruijena, from the new Reserve Battalion. A second mobilisation at the end of May and beginning of June, taking advantage of the Estonian advance in Latvian speaking areas, helped fill it out quickly and by the end of June (when it was shipped from Tallinn to Liepāja) it had 22 officers and 1,580 other ranks. Commander: 20 June 1919–12 August 1919: Lt. Colonel Oskars Dankers; 12 August 1919–25 August 1919: Captain Jānis Oskars Kalniņš.
Independant Cavalry Squadrons	a cavalry squadron was formed at the end of April and another towards the end of May. They may have been part of the infantry regiments rather than separate. 1st Squadron Commander: 25 April 1919–27 June 1919: 1st Lt. Indriķis Mārtiņš Hermanis Jurko; 27 June 1919–18 August 1919: 1st Lt. Blūms. 2nd Squadron Commander: 19 May 1919–August 1919: Captain Oto Goldfelds.
Partisan Detachment	formed 31st May 1919 from the 4th Platoon of the 2nd Cēsis Regiment. It consisted of around 120 infantry and 30 cavalry, intended for operations in the enemy’s rear, it eventually became the North-Latvian Partisan Regiment. Commander: 15 May 1919–July 1919: Captain Arturs Osvalds Aparnieks.
Reserve Battalion	Commander: 23 March 1919–18 May 1919: Lt. Colonel Krišjānis Berķis; April 1919–5 May 1919: Lt. Colonel Jānis Miglavs (acting); 5 May 1919–18 May 1919: Captain Kārlis Pencis (acting); 28 May 1919–16 June 1919: Captain Oskars Mālmanis; 16 June 1919–27 July 1919: Lt. Colonel Pauls Šmidts.
Artillery <i>Divizions</i> (i.e. Battalion)	Commander: 20 June 1919–19 July 1919: 1st Lt. Teodors Skujenieks.
1 st Valmiera Battery	commenced forming in March. Had 4 x British 18 pounders by mid-June. Commander: 11 March 1919–19 July 1919: 1st Lt. Arturs Dannenbergs.
2 nd Cēsis Battery	formed in mid-April to accompany the 2 nd Infantry Regiment but was not effective until the second half of May. Had 2 x British 47” guns by mid-



June.

Commander: April 1919–23 May 1919: 1st Lt. Teodors Skujenieks (acting);
23 May 1919–20 June 1919: 1st Lt. Teodors Skujenieks; 20 June 1919–23
September 1919: 1st Lt. Visvaldis Dūms.

3rd Rūjiena Battery

started forming in mid-June and did not receive its guns until later.

Commander: 20 June 1919–August 1919: 1st Lt. Voldemārs Johans Šēnfelds.

At the end of June the Brigade had 223 officers, 26 military officials and 9,554 other ranks.

The structure mirrored that of the Estonian army, so each regiment was three battalions of four companies, supposedly 158 men each, and sapper, foot scouts, horse scouts and signals detachments.

I would guess from these numbers that each infantry regiment was some 1,600 men at the time of the Cesis fighting, many of whom would have little training and less equipment.

Balodis Brigade

On 5 June, the Estonians believed that the Balodis Brigade was 333 officers, 360 junior officers, 1,500 bayonets, 120 sabres, 20 HMGs, 444 LMGs.

Estonian Army

First Battles for Cesis – early June

In May 1919 the Estonians had their 2nd and 3rd Divisions on their southern front, the 1st being on the Narva front. The 2nd Division was facing mainly towards Pskov, with the 3rd Division to their west facing the LatDiv. It was therefore the 3rd Division that first ran into the Landeswehr. It contained at this time the 3rd, 6th and 9th Infantry Regiments and the Tallinn Independent Squadron (attached to the 6th Regt.), being 5,200 bayonets and sabres, 120 MGs, 17 artillery pieces, 2 armoured cars and 1 train (Broad Gauge #4). The Latvian 2nd Cesis Regiment was soon added to their roster, and BG trains #2 and #5 arrived.

The 1st Red Latvian Rifle Division which had been opposing them was estimated at 7,100 bayonets and sabres, 127 MGs, 25 artillery pieces and 1 armoured train.

Second Battles for Cesis – late June.

3rd Division

3rd Regiment:

1st Battalion:

1st to 4th Companies.

2nd Battalion:

5th to 8th Companies.

3rd Battalion:

9th to 12th Companies.

Foot Scouts Detachment. *May have been attached to 2nd Battalion.*

Horse Scouts Detachment.

Tallinn Independent Squadron – 65 sabres, ? MGs. *Formerly attached to the 6th Regiment.*

3rd Battery, 3rd Arty Rgt – 2 x 6" Schneider howitzers

1st Platoon, 4th Battery, 3rd Arty Rgt – 2 x British 18 pounders

The regiment numbered about 50 officers, 1,241 bayonets, 18 sabres, 14 LMGs, 17 HMGs. It had some obsolete mortars as well.

6th Regiment:

1st Battalion:

1st Coy – 105 bayonets, 1 LMG;

2nd Coy – 114 bayonets, 2 LMGs;

3rd Coy – 114 bayonets, 1 LMG;

4th Coy – 80 bayonets, 1 LMG;

Attached 2 MG platoons from MG Company.

2nd Battalion:

5th Coy – 179 bayonets;

6th Coy – 139 bayonets, 2 LMGs;

7th Coy – 163 bayonets;



8th Coy – 167 bayonets;
Battalion MG Company – 130 men, 4 HMGs and 6 LMGs. *One platoon per company.*
3rd Battalion:
10th Coy – 92 bayonets;
11th Coy – 95 bayonets, 1 LMG;
platoon of the 12th Coy – 38 bayonets; *The rest of this company was attached to NG Train #4.*
Foot Scouts Detachment – 63 bayonets, 1 LMG;
Attached MG platoon from MG Company.

4th Battalion:
13th Coy – 44 bayonets;
14th Coy – 136 bayonets, 1 LMG;
15th Coy – 60 bayonets; *Mostly composed of Russians.*
1st Company of the Viljandi-Pärnu Pupils Battalion – 105 bayonets, 2 LMGs.
Attached MG platoon from MG Company.

Regimental MG Company – 140 men, 7 HMGs, 8 LMGs; *4 equal platoons shared out, as above.*

6th Battery, 3rd Arty Rgt – 4 x British 18 pounders; *One gun appears to have been out of order for the battle.*

1st Battery, 3rd Arty Rgt – 2 x 6" Schneider howitzers;

Sapper Detachment – 23 bayonets.

Horse Scouts Detachment – 29 sabres, 1 LMG. *Missing 17 men, detached as orderlies to the battalions.*

Signals Detachment – 43 men.

Labour Company – 273 men.

Staff Detachment – 43 men.

Commandant Detachment – 17 men.

Orchestra – 43 men.

Attached Armoured car "Vanapagan" – 2 LMGs.

Attached NG Train #4 Landing Company – 63 bayonets, 2 LMGs.

Attached Captain Plan-Dubrovsky's Latvian Cavalry Squadron – 75 sabres. Ex-Balodis Brigade.

Attached Cesis Pupils Company (Latvians) – 40 bayonets, 3 HMGs, 2 LMGs.

With 61 officers (including doctors and cadets), 1,987 bayonets, 46 sabres, 6 guns, 11 HMGs, 27 LMGs, 86 signals men and 376 rear service men this was the largest regiment in the Estonian army at the time (the numbers exclude attached troops).

9th Regiment:

1st Battalion:

1st to 4th Companies – each perhaps 80 men, 1 or 2 LMGs.

2nd Battalion:

5th Coy – 106 bayonets, 1 HMG, 1 LMG;

6th Coy – 157 bayonets 2 LMGs;

7th Coy – 116 bayonets, 2 LMGs;

8th Coy – 110 bayonets, 1 LMG.

Foot Scouts Detachment – ~60 men.

Battery – 2 x Russian 57 mm, 2 x Russian model 1895 88mm guns.

Machine Gun Company – 2 HMGs, about 6 LMGs.

Signals Detachment.

Training Company.

Labour Company.

Orchestra.

Attached Vidriži local Latvian commandant – ~50 men.

Attached 2nd Platoon, 4th Battery, 3rd Arty Rgt – 2 x British 18 pounders.

Strength in mid-June was in the region of 26 officers and 932 bayonets (perhaps 1,800 men total). This was not a top regiment, containing a lot of very young or old men, although the 6th Company, at least, was considered reasonably trained and disciplined. The artillery was worn out, lacked fire correction instruments and only the commander was a trained artilleryist. The ammunition supply was 180 – 200 bullets per rifleman, about 3,000 bullets per HMG and 1,000–1,600 bullets per LMG.

BG train #2 – 8 LMGs, 15 HMGs and 4 guns, probably 2 x 3.62mm Russian guns, one 75 mm naval gun and a 130 mm Vickers naval gun The Landing Battalion had 130 bayonets.

BG train #3 – 16 HMGs, 8 LMGs and 3 guns, probably 2 x 3.62mm Russian guns and 1 x 75mm AA from a British warship. The Landing Battalion was 171 bayonets (landing battalions took their MGs from the trains complement).

BG train "Kapten Irv" – 17 HMGs, 6 LMGs and probably 2 x 3.62mm Russian guns. The Landing Battalion was 195 bayonets.

(BG train #5 had gone to Pskov.)



2nd Division:

This division was ordered to send a few elements to assist, but failed to send them all. Only those that actually arrived are noted below.

Kuperjanov Partisan Battalion:

4 companies;
MG detachment;
Signals detachment;
Scouts detachment;

Attached 2nd Battery, 3rd Arty Regt – 2 x 6” Vickers howitzers, 2 x 7.62mm Russian guns.

This unit had been filled out with drafted men, so had lost some of its partisan character. It was around 19 officers, 395 bayonets, 6 HMGs and 10 LMGs. It had been part of the Armoured Train Division attached to the 2nd Division.

“Kalevlaste Maleva” Battalion:

4 companies;
MG detachment;
Signals detachment;
Foot Scout Detachment;

Originally formed from the “Kalev” sports society, it had been filled out with the draft. It had 316 bayonets, 7 LMGs, 6 HMGs. The 4th Company, of 98 men, was only added on about 21 June. It had been part of the Armoured Train Division attached to the 2nd Division.

Armoured cars “Estonia” and “Toonela” – each 1 HMG, 2 LMGs, 1 x 37 mm gun.
(The “Vanapagan” had 2 MGs).

1st Division:

1st Inf Regiment:

Regimental HQ and Command Detachment;
2nd Battalion;
MG Company;
Bomb Thrower Detachment. *Not mortars, but grenadiers.*

The strength sent to the southern front was 504 bayonets, 14 LMGs, 4 HMGs total.

1st Battery, 1st Artillery Regiment – 4 x British 18 pounders.

2nd Cavalry Regiment

4 horse squadrons;
1 foot squadron;
MG squadron;

Strength was 171 bayonets, 399 sabres, 19 MGs.

There were also various reserve battalions to the rear – the 3rd Division and Armoured Train Division each had three – such as the Võrumaa Defence Battalion – 272 bayonets, 3 HMGs, 4 LMGs, 4 light guns.

A B.E.2e plane was also sent, but was shot down by a sentry who had not been informed it was coming.

Notes:

The number of machine-guns given above are probably understated, since units did not count any captured weapons, so as to prevent them being taken away and given to other units.

In the later fighting around Cesis the Estonians had 11 mortars.

The Estonian Army in June 1919

The bulk of Estonian soldiers were aged between 17 and 36.

At this time the Estonians lacked many of the military essentials. Uniforms were a mixture of Russian, British and Estonian, with a fair mix of men in civilian clothing too – it was only in July that the British uniforms started to arrive in decent quantities. Decent footwear was lacking, but this was not so important in summer. Few men had cartridge pouches and knapsacks were similarly lacking, which resulted in pockets full of ammunition and carts full of belongings tying up the rear.

Rifles were of many different types, but mainly ex-Russian, with about 30% Japanese and a few German. Hand grenades



were in short supply but enough of bullets.

HMGs were mostly Russian Maxims, but there were also German Maxims and Colts. The LMGs were mostly Madsens, with some Lewises and Bergmans.

Artillery pieces were old and lacked optical equipment. Although the new British guns were coming through, it undoubtedly took some time to learn them (the ranging system was completely different on British and Russian guns). There was a shortage of ammunition caissons and the carts used as replacements were less suited to cross-country manoeuvres but no particular shortage of ammunition.

There were shortages of signals equipment, and the civilian telephone lines were used as much as possible. Maps were often in short supply, and company commanders were frequently without them.

As in all the Baltic, medical supplies were in very short supply.

Estonian Navy

In the Latvian operations:

Lennuk	Destroyer	5 x 102mm, 1 x 37mm
Wambola	Destroyer	4 x 102mm, 1 x 37mm
Lembit	Gunboat	2 x 120mm, 4 x 75mm, 1 x 37mm
Tasuja	Gunboat	1 x 130mm, 2 x 75mm
Kalev	Minesweeper	1 x 37mm
Olev	Minesweeper	1 x 37mm

