

The Training System of the Royal Hungarian Police after its Nationalisation (1920)

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Nationalisation (1919) was a decisive moment in the life of the Hungarian Police Force, after which, modelled on the Budapest police force, the unified Royal Hungarian State Police was created. After the nationalisation, the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Police Force paid special attention to the training and supply of the staff. This included the Prime Minister's decree that regulated the police positions to be filled, the system of training for police non-commissioned officers, the range of theoretical and practical knowledge to be taught, the system of training courses and the examination requirements.

Keywords: *police officer, police, Ministry of the Interior, non-commissioned officer, staff non-commissioned officer, course, training, examination*

Unified, high-standard preparation and further training of the police staff is one of the conditions of successful policing activities. Practising experts already highlighted the importance of police training in papers published in professional periodicals in the second half of the 19th century. Before the nationalisation only the Police of Budapest, the capital city and the Border Police were subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior, which exercised only professional supervision over the police forces of towns in the country. This was changed by the nationalisation, followed by the introduction of a unified system of organising and performing the training of non-commissioned and commissioned officers, which made it possible for police officers to carry out their duties according to common standards. The 1920s saw a key phase of this process, which included the development of the unified, course-based training system, the aim of which was to establish the non-commissioned and commissioned officers' staff and faculties.

A major step on this path was the forming of Budapest through the joining of Pest, Buda and Óbuda in 1873. It was implemented by a law which also subordinated the new police force of the capital to the Ministry of the Interior. 8 years later, on 11 April 1881, the Parliament passed Act XXI of 1881 on the Police of Budapest Capital City,

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laying down the legal basis for the operation of the first state police force. Several more years were needed to create the first few service instructions and police textbooks. The leadership of both the Police and the Ministry of the Interior knew well that the establishment of unified training was badly needed, in order to spread a unified approach when carrying out police duties and because the good reputation of the police force depended on the appropriate preparation of the staff. Therefore, an order of 1884 for the service, approved by the Prime Minister, already contained ideas about the training of police officers. It was decided that the duration of probationary police officers' training should be 6 months, after which only those suitable for the job were employed in the service.

The following subjects were delivered at the 6-month course:

1. General study of the Hungarian Criminal Law.
2. Study of acts, government decrees, by-laws approved by Budapest authorities and effective resolutions and measures taken by the authorities of the city that are related to policing.
3. Study of discipline regulations.
4. Regulations on the state-owned Danube bridges.
5. Detailed explanation and review of Act XXI of 1881 on the Police of Budapest Capital City.
6. The administrative districts of Budapest.
7. Detailed presentation of the topography of the capital and of its offices and public institutions. Knowledge of the capital and of important persons.
8. Guards' behaviour.
9. First aid.
10. Study of editing reports (records of evidence and drafts).²

During this period, i.e. until 1920 the police forces operating in towns were subordinated to the local governments. We know from the Regulation on the Police of the town Székesfehérvár³ that the content of the police officers' training in the other towns of Hungary was similar to that of the courses in Budapest.

The revolutions at the end of the 20th century, the consequences of the Trianon peace treaty concluding WW1 and the entry into force of the regulation on the state police,⁴ created in 1919, following the centralisation efforts of the end of the 19th century had a significant impact on the life of the Royal Hungarian Police. Special attention had already been paid to the training of the non-commissioned and commissioned officers' staff in an earlier period. From 1913 training courses for commissioned and non-commissioned police officers working outside Budapest were launched, the last one of

² *Utasítás a Budapest fővárosi rendőrség számára.* (Instruction for the Police of Budapest Capital City.) Budapest, 1884. k.n. 1–16.

³ *Székesfehérvár sz. kir. város Rendőrségének, Szolgálati és Szervezési Szabályzata.* (The Staff and Organisation Regulation of the Police of the Free Royal Town of Székesfehérvár.) Székesfehérvárott, Debreczeni István nyomda. 1909. 48.

⁴ 5047/1919. M.E. számú kormányrendelet. (Government Decree No. 5047/1919. M.E.)

which was conducted in April 1914. In the same year the professional police periodical regularly published reports and studies about the non-commissioned officers', police constables' and inspectors' training.

Looking at the education system of the Royal Hungarian Finance Guard in the same period, we can see that at first the training was conducted at the individual service locations, without unified learning material or institutional background. Then, although they opened a school for the new recruits in 1909, there was no training between 1915 and 1922.⁵ Finance guards had been waiting for nearly 60 years for the first further training course for non-commissioned officers when it was launched in 1928.⁶

After the nationalisation the types of staff and the number of positions to be filled within the Hungarian Police were specified. According to the Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 102.837/1922 B.M.⁷ the organisational structure of the Police at the time was as follows:

- a) Supreme management
- b) District police headquarters
- c) Police headquarters
- d) Police offices
- e) Offices at the edge of the border

The police staff was comprised, on the one hand, of persons authorised to and, on the other hand, of persons not entitled to wear a uniform and/or carry a weapon, divided into the following categories:

- a) Those authorised to wear a uniform and carry a weapon:
 - the faculty of *fogalmazó* (hereinafter: administrative policing) officers;
 - the faculty of inspectors;
 - guard staff (non-commissioned officers and police constables).

The number of positions filled by the above was not supposed to exceed 12,000.

The uniformed staff of the public administration officers' and inspectors' faculty were commissioned officers and their number was not supposed to exceed 1500.

- b) Those not authorised to wear a uniform or carry a weapon:
 - doctors;
 - office clerks;
 - detectives;
 - delivery men.

The number of the above staff could be a maximum of 4000 persons.

⁵ Szabó (2015–2016) 117–126.

⁶ Ibid. 121.

⁷ 102.837/1922-es B.M. r. Az 1922. VII. t.c.-nek a m. kir. államrendőrségre vonatkozó rendelkezései végrehajtása. (Decree of the Minister of the Interior No. 102.837/1922 B.M. on the implementation of the provisions of Act VII of 1922 concerning the Royal Hungarian State Police.)

Applicants were only able to become members of the administrative policing officers' and inspectors' faculties after they had met the stringent requirements for employment, attended the courses and passed the examinations prescribed by the training system.

The importance of this issue is underlined by the fact that the requirements related to filling posts in the administrative policing officers' and inspectors' faculties were laid down in Prime Ministerial decrees, whereas its implementation was stipulated by the Minister of the Interior's decrees.

According to the Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. issued in 1922⁸ someone could be confirmed in his post in the administrative policing officers' and inspectors' faculties of the police only after passing the police officials' examination for promotion to commissioned officer (hereinafter: commissioned police officer's examination). However, he could only take this exam after passing an entry test, completing a year's service on probation and a year's training course.

In those times one was admitted to the police as probationary officer if he fulfilled – apart from general conditions prescribed by the law – the conditions as follows:

- being between 21 and 30 years of age;
- single marital status;
- healthy, strong physique;
- sound financial state.

The Prime Minister's decree set stringent criteria for applicants concerning prior qualifications. To enter the administrative policing officers' faculty, one needed to have passed a state examination or have had a university degree in law or political science. The same decree prescribed secondary, vocational or cadet school education for those applying to enter the inspector's faculty.⁹

Those completing a year's service on probation took an entry exam and were tested for their theoretical, practical and general knowledge. Those who failed it were dismissed, while those passing it were sent to a year's commissioned officers' training course. The course was concluded by a commissioned officers' exam. The new commissioned officers were rated according to the results of the exam and were confirmed in their posts. Those on top of the salary table, who were eligible for appointment to e.g. chief constable or chief inspector had to pass the senior officers' exam.¹⁰

The decree also elaborated on the opportunities for entering the administrative policing officers' or inspectors' faculties in another way. Applicants from the Army,¹¹ the

⁸ 3720/1922. M. E. r. A rendőri szolgálat fogalmazói és felügyelői szakában való alkalmazáshoz szükséges kellékek és ezek joghatálya. (Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. The prerequisites of employing staff in the administrative policing officers' and inspectors' faculty of the police service and their legal effect.)

⁹ 3720/1922. M. E. r. A rendőri szolgálat fogalmazói és felügyelői szakában való alkalmazáshoz szükséges kellékek és ezek joghatálya. (Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. The prerequisites of employing staff in the administrative policing officers' and inspectors' faculty of the police service and their legal effect.) Section 3. §.

¹⁰ Ibid. Section 7.

¹¹ See 36.092/1924 B.M. r. (Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 36.092/1924 B.M.)

Gendarmerie¹² and public administration were only appointed after passing the police commissioned officers' or the senior officers' exam. Those obliged to take the senior officers' exam were offered a 6-month preparatory course. The decree specified those exempt from this exam, making allowances for public service and for active military service, and the regulations concerning those temporarily appointed before the decree was in effect.

On 27 April 1922 count Kunó Klebelsberg, the then Minister of the Interior issued his decree No. 66.898 B.M. on the measures used in the implementation of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E., concerning the assistant administrative policing officers' and assistant inspectors' service on probation. According to the provisions of this decree, the probationary assistant administrative policing officers and assistant inspectors were sworn in and had to report to the designated service location and start their service. The aim of the service on probation was that "*the probationary assistant administrative policing officers and assistant inspectors will have practical guidance on all the branches of the police service*".¹³ During the first three months of their service, the probationers got unified training at the units of the guard staff and learnt about the administrative activities of the police force. In the following 2 months they did sentry service, then, during the last month they carried out the duties of commanders of police posts, subordinate inspectors and guard staff commanders. They also had to acquire the knowledge of accountancy theory and practice during the course. During their service on probation the trainees were not allowed to conduct activities on their own and they did not have the right to use firearms.

The probationers' progress was monitored by the chief constable of the given police headquarters, who had to write an evaluation of their performance. At the end of the training year, these reports were registered on the probationers' personal records, which were then submitted to the Minister of the Interior.

After accomplishing the service on probation, the trainees completed specialised courses, a condition of being appointed to and confirmed in their post. In his decree, the Minister of the Interior defined four types of such courses for the whole country as follows:

1. Police officials' course for promotion to commissioned police officer.
2. Police officials' further training course.
3. Detectives' and detective inspectors' course.
4. Nationwide training course for the leaders of the national police force. (Author's comment: There was no provision for the implementation of this course mentioned in the Minister of the Interior's decree. The training of the leaders

¹² See 112.957/1922. VI. B.M. r. (Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 112.957/1922 B.M.) Section 6.

¹³ 66.898/1922 B.M. r. A 3720/1922. M.E. sz. rendeletnek az ideiglenes próbaszolgálatos m. kir. állami rendőrség segéd-fogalmazók, és segédfelügyelők próbaszolgálatára vonatkozólag tett intézkedések végrehajtása. (Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 66.898/1922 B.M. The implementation of provisions of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E., concerning the service on probation of the temporary assistant administrative policing officers and assistant inspectors of the Royal Hungarian Police.)

of the national police force is mentioned later in the special literature as “*further training course*”.)

The commander of the specialised courses was responsible for the organisation, delivery and funding of the courses. All the specialised courses were the responsibility of the national inspector of the Royal Hungarian State Police of special studies, whereas a director appointed by the Minister of the Interior was in charge of each particular course.¹⁴ The powers of the national inspector of the Royal Hungarian State Police for special studies, those of the commander of the specialised courses, the arrangement of the courses and the disciplinary powers of the inspector, the commander and of the director were also stipulated in this decree.¹⁵

The Commissioned Police Officers’ Course and Examination

The aim of the course was to provide professional (theoretical and practical) training for assistant administrative policing officers and assistant inspectors and to prepare them for the commissioned officers’ exam.¹⁶

To this end, the trainees were able to attend theoretical lectures and lessons for written practice, field trips to police institutions, scene of crime investigations and to do physical training.

The students had to pass an entry test before the course and attendance at lectures and lessons was compulsory. They had a course record book (mark book) and were not allowed a leave of absence during the course. They studied general and special subjects as follows:

General subjects:

1. Criminal law.
2. The Hungarian Criminal Code and other acts on crimes and minor offences.
3. The Code of Criminal Procedure and the Minister of the Interior’s Decree No. 130.000.
4. The tools of criminal investigation.
5. The entire legislation related to state policing.

¹⁴ 18.80/1923. B.M. r. Utasítás a m. kir. állami rendőrség országos szaktanfolyamainak szervezetére, az országos szaktanulmányi felügyelő hatáskörének szabályozására és a tanfolyamok fegyelmi rendtartására vonatkozólag. (Minister of the Interior’s Decree No.18.80/1923 B.M. Order concerning the organisation of the nationwide specialised courses of the Royal Hungarian State Police, the regulation of the competence of the national inspector of special studies and the disciplinary rules of the courses.)

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ 66.899/1922. B.M.r. A 3720/1922. M. E. sz rendeletnek a rendőrtisztviselői tisztí tanfolyam és rendőrtisztviselői tisztí vizsgára vonatkozó intézkedései végrehajtása. (Minister of the Interior’s Decree No. 66.899/1922 B.M. The implementation of the provisions of the Prime Minister’s Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. on the police officials’ course for promotion to commissioned officer and the police officials’ examination for promotion to commissioned officer.)

6. Legislation related to administrative policing in the jurisdiction of the Royal Hungarian Police.
7. The Criminal Code on minor offences, legislation establishing other significant minor offences.
8. The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 65.000/1909 B.M. and the administrative rules of criminal justice enforced by the police.
9. Rules concerning the organisation and powers of the state police.
10. Staff and Disciplinary Regulations of the state police.
11. The administrative regulations of the state police and the legislation on the management of funds and accountancy of state police offices.
12. Forensic medicine, psychopathology.
13. Overview of the Hungarian constitutional and public administration law.
14. Practical psychology.
15. Fire protection.
16. Public hygiene and first aid.¹⁷

Special subjects: organised according to the current curriculum.

Skill subjects: fencing, pistol shooting, swimming, (horse) riding.

In compliance with the decree, the lectures and the practical lessons had to be linked when it was possible. It was compulsory for the students to attend post-mortem examinations, too.

At the end of the commissioned police officers' course the examination was free of charge. The topics of the oral exam were based on the general subjects of the course.

The Police Officials' Further Training Course

The further training course was a supplementary part of the commissioned police officers' course. Its main aim was "*the development of higher professional education for the police and preparation for the officials' exam for promotion to commissioned officer*".¹⁸

The course was delivered in two specialisations, for administrative policing officers and for inspectors. The rules for application to the courses were dealt with in the Prime Minister's decree No. 3720/1922 M.E., whereas the instructions for their organisation and conduct were laid down in the Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 66.900 B.M.

¹⁷ 66.899/1922. B.M.r. A 3720/1922. M. E. sz rendeletnek a rendőrtisztviselői tiszti tanfolyam és rendőrtisztviselői tiszti vizsgára vonatkozó intézkedései végrehajtására. (Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 66.899/1922 B.M. The implementation of the provisions of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. on the police officials' course for promotion to commissioned officer and the police officials' examination for promotion to commissioned officer.)

¹⁸ 66.900/1922. B.M.r. A 3720/1922. M.E. sz rendeletnek a rendőrtisztviselőket továbbképző tanfolyam és a rendőrtisztviselői felső tiszti vizsgára vonatkozó intézkedései végrehajtására. (Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 66.900/1922. B.M. The implementation of the provisions of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 3720/1922 M.E. on the police officials' further training course and the police officials' examination for promotion to senior officer.)

The General Subjects of the Specialisation for Administrative Policing Officers

1. Criminal law, connected to the Hungarian Criminal Code.
2. The Code of Criminal Procedure and the Minister of the Interior's order No. 130.000.
3. The tools of criminal investigation.
4. The entire legislation related to state policing.
5. Administrative policing, related to town policing.
6. The Criminal Code on minor offences, legislation establishing other significant minor offences.
7. The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 65.000/1909 B.M. and the administrative rules of criminal justice enforced by the police.
8. Rules concerning the organisation and powers of the state police.
9. Staff and Disciplinary Regulations of the state police.
10. The regulations of the state police on administrative proceedings and the legislation on the management of funds and accountancy of state police offices.
11. Hungarian constitutional and public administration law.
12. Sociology.
13. The practical application of psychology when carrying out police duties.
14. Forensic medicine, psychopathology.
15. The structure of the Royal Hungarian Police, the Gendarmerie, the Royal Hungarian River Guard, the Customs Guard, the Finance Guard.
16. Office management.
17. Police education in practice.¹⁹

The General Subjects of the Inspectors' Specialisation

1. Criminal law, connected to the Hungarian Criminal Code.
2. The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 130.000/1899.
3. The tools of criminal investigation.
4. The entire legislation related to state policing.
5. Administrative policing, related to town policing.
6. The Criminal Code on minor offences, legislation establishing other significant minor offences.
7. The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 65.000/1909 B.M.
8. Rules concerning the organisation and powers of the state police.
9. Staff and Disciplinary Regulations of the state police.
10. The regulations of the state police on administrative proceedings and the legislation on the management of funds and accountancy of state police offices.

¹⁹ Ibid.

11. Hungarian constitutional and public administration law.
12. Presentation of weapons.
13. The structure of the Royal Hungarian Police, the Gendarmerie, the Royal Hungarian River Guard, the Customs Guard and the Finance Guard.
14. Foreign police organisations.
15. A shift leader's duties.
16. Police education in practice.²⁰

At both specialisations special lectures were delivered in accordance with the curriculum and the students had to do fencing, pistol shooting and (horse) riding as skill subjects.

The students usually took the exam in February. It was free of charge and the two specialisations were separated. The topics of the oral exam at both specialisations were based on the general subjects of the given course.

The Detectives' and Detective Inspectors' Courses

General and training requirements for detectives were stated by the Prime Minister's Decree No. 9270/1922 M.E.²¹ and its implementation was regulated by the Minister of the Interior's decrees. The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 18.881/1923 B.M.²² distinguished between the detectives' course and examination and the detective inspectors' course and examination.

The Detectives' Course and Examination

The main aim of the detectives' course was the *“professional training of temporarily appointed detectives in theory and practice and their preparation for the detectives' special exam.”*²³

Similarly to the other specialised courses, the detectives' course was supervised by the national inspector of the Royal Hungarian State Police of special studies. The details of the students' entry, the organisation and administration of the course and the study issues were defined by the Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 18.881/1923 B.M..

The general subjects of the detectives' course were as follows:

1. Substantive Criminal Law

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ A m. kir. állami rendőrségnél alkalmazott detektívektől megkivánható elméleti és gyakorlati képzettség megállapítása és ezzel kapcsolatos intézkedések. (The establishment of the academic and practical qualifications of detectives employed by the Royal Hungarian State Police and the related provisions.)

²² 9270/1922. M.E. sz. rendeletnek detektív tanfolyamra és a detektív vizsgára, detektív felügyelői tanfolyamra és detektív felügyelői vizsgára, valamint detektív főfelügyelői minősítő vizsgára vonatkozó intézkedései végrehajtása. (The implementation of the provisions of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 9270/1922 M.E., concerning the detectives' course and examination, the detective inspectors' course and examination and the detective chief inspectors' qualifying examination.)

²³ Ibid.

2. Procedural Criminal Law
3. Criminalistics
4. Minor offences and criminal justice
5. State policing
6. Organisational and Staff Regulations, with special regard to the detectives' service
7. First aid.²⁴

According to the timetable, apart from the general subjects, there were also special and practical subjects, not specified by the decree.

However, it was considered very important that the teachers should support theoretical lectures by practical examples. It was compulsory for the students of the detectives' course to attend post-mortem examinations and to practise giving first aid.

The course was followed by a detectives' special examination, which consisted of a written and a practical part. The students had to do the written test first, which was mainly focussed on the practical side of solving an investigation case.

The Detective Inspectors' Course and the Detective Inspectors' Examination

The detective inspectors' course supplemented the detectives' course. Thus, the provisions for the conducting the detectives' courses also applied to the detective inspectors' courses. According to Section 14 of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 9270/1922 M.E., a detective was able to enter a detective inspectors' course by submitting an application. The subjects delivered at the detective inspectors' course were almost the same as the general subjects of the detectives' course, except for first aid, not taught at the inspectors' course. However, at the detective inspectors' course they trained future detective inspectors to be able to control the detectives' activities. Therefore, great emphasis was laid on practice and on acquiring the necessary skills in investigation and to inspire confidence. Special attention was paid to teaching students to be able to make independent decisions quickly.

The detective inspectors' course was followed by the detective inspectors' exam, which involved a theoretical and a practical part. The examination was conducted similarly to the detectives' special examination, as stipulated by Section 18 of the Minister of the Interior's Decree No.18.881/1923 B.M.

During this period a special group of detectives was set up to gather classified information, operating in secret, in separated rooms on the 5th floor of the Ministry of the Interior. The group was able to tap 80 to 100 telephones at the same time. Also, censorship of correspondence was established to monitor the operation of extremist political groups. Detectives working in these two fields were provided special preparation.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Boda (2016) 73.

The Detective Chief Inspectors' Qualifying Examination

This exam was not preceded by a course, therefore it was not connected to studying specified subjects, either. The aim of the detective chief inspectors' qualifying examination was to “*establish whether the candidate possesses the knowledge and skills in the crime investigation service required of officials commissioned to lead larger groups of detectives and to control and supervise detectives in general, and, in certain cases and respects, even to represent the institution of the state police*”.²⁶

Although detective chief inspectors' qualifying examination was divided into a written and an oral section, the decree stated that it had to be practice-oriented.

The courses and exams of the training system presented above were also conducted in practice, from November 1922, directly after the decrees were issued.²⁷ The courses also involved a fencing training in two hours a week. The students also visited museums, the record office, correctional facilities, holding centres and the institute of forensic medicine, where they were shown a complete post-mortem examination. The success of these courses was proved by the fact that the number of the applicants exceeded that of the places available. Therefore, they ranked the applicants and only the best were allowed to enrol. The names of the students and the teachers were public; they were published in the professional journal titled *Rendőr* (Magyar *Rendőr*), Police Officer (Hungarian Police Officer). The teachers' staff included the best experts and scientists of the profession, such as, for example Imre Laky, Miklós Rédey, Valér Nagy and Henrik Dorning. They raised the level of commissioned police officers' training not only by high-standard lectures but also by writing textbooks available even today. We also know from the aforementioned professional journal that the topics of the written exam concluding the detectives' course of the first term of 1928 were as follows.²⁸

- disclosure of a gang involved in counterfeiting money and reporting it;
- a case study of a murder;
- overall investigation of shoplifting.

Deputy chief of the national police Dr Henrik Dorning, national inspector of special studies also attended the entire oral part of the examination. 13 of the 27 students were given an “excellent” mark, 11 a “good” mark and 3 a “satisfactory” mark.²⁹ The certificates were handed out during a closing ceremony, followed by a banquet.

Apart from the above courses, the leadership of the Hungarian Ministry of the Interior and of the Police also paid utmost attention to the training of police

²⁶ 9270/1922. M.E. sz. rendeletnek detektív-tanfolyamra és a detektívvizsgára, detektívfelügyelői tanfolyamra és detektívfelügyelői vizsgára, valamint detektív főfelügyelői minősítő vizsgára vonatkozó intézkedései végrehajtása. (The implementation of the provisions of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 9270/1922 M.E., concerning the detectives' course and examination, the detective inspectors' course and examination and the detective chief inspectors' qualifying examination.) Section 41.

²⁷ A rend (The Order), 1924. Issue 96. 1–2.

²⁸ *Rendőr* (The Police Officer), 1928. Issue May 5. 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

non-commissioned officers. One was able to join the Royal Hungarian Police on a voluntary basis. The employment of new staff was helped by recruiting but even so they could not fill all the posts provided by the law. The reason was probably the seasonal jobs (harvesting etc.) but, more importantly, it was the recruiting campaign for the Gendarmerie, the River Guard and the Army, going on at the same time that made recruiting for the police force less efficient.³⁰

Applicants for the guards' staff were accepted if they fulfilled the general requirements but it meant only temporary employment, which lasted for 2 years. The first 6 months were about the basic theoretical and practical training of the new staff. During this phase all the new recruits were called "probationary police officers".³¹ Those who met the requirements after the first 6 months were appointed as temporary police officers.

Without having to offer an explanation, it was possible to dismiss any police officer who proved to be unsuitable for the job in terms of behaviour, judgement or comprehension during the 2 years' service on probation. The first year of temporary employment was concluded by a police health examination to check the police officers' medical fitness. Those not dismissed were confirmed in their posts after the 2nd year and they were the potential applicants for the non-commissioned officers' courses.

After the nationalisation, the Royal Hungarian Police wanted to make sure that the staff carrying out duties thinks and acts according to the same principles. Therefore there were unified regulations³² concerning the non-commissioned officers' training, which followed the service on probation, as the police officers needed to pass a non-commissioned officers' exam to be promoted to non-commissioned officer and a staff non-commissioned officers' exam to be promoted to staff non-commissioned officer. The Minister of the Interior ordered to set up non-commissioned officers' and staff non-commissioned officers' training courses to help students succeed at these exams.³³

Non-commissioned Police Officers' Training Courses

The main aim of establishing non-commissioned officers' training courses was to "train the necessary number of police officers every year – perhaps in longer periods of time – to manage the staff of police posts and to perform office duties as commanders of the guard staff, required by the prescribed staff number and by its decrease at times".³⁴

³⁰ Órszemélyzet kiegészítése. Felvétel kellékei. Toborzás. 116.946/1922. B.M. levél a m. kir. állami rendőrség valamennyi kerületi főkapitányának. (Bringing the number of guard staff up to full strength. Tools of admittance. Recruitment. The Minister of the Interior's Letter No. 116.946/1922 for all of the district chief constables of the Royal Hungarian Police.)

³¹ 2682/1921. VI. a. B.M. r. Órszemélyzet felvétele, ideiglenes alkalmazása, kiképzése. (The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 2682/1921. Section 6. a. Admittance, temporary employment and training of the guard staff.)

³² 37.585/1923. B.M. r. A m. kir. állami rendőrség őrszemélyzetének altszjtjeitől megkívánható elméleti és gyakorlati képzettség megállapítása és azzal kapcsolatos intézkedések. (The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 37.585/1923 B.M. The establishment of the academic and practical qualifications required of the non-commissioned officers of the guard staff employed by the Royal Hungarian State Police and the related provisions.)

³³ Ibid. Section 3.

³⁴ Ibid. Section 5.

The courses involved lectures, lessons on written practice, scene of crime investigations, the presentation and practice of police measures, practising squad operations, physical training, fencing and marksmanship, which were used to achieve the above aims.

The standards of the course were raised by the fact that it was not easy to be admitted to it. Three years after being appointed as police officers, only those were able to enrol who got excellent rating and who were considered suitable for the post of non-commissioned officers. Attendance at the lectures and the practical lessons were compulsory and the students were expected to behave in a way that is worthy of a non-commissioned officer.

During the course 4–5 lessons a day were devoted to the theoretical subjects and 6–8 lessons a week to the written tasks.

The subjects of the non-commissioned officers' course were the following:

1. Basic studies in constitutional, public administration and civil law – 1 lesson a week.
2. Criminal law – 4 lessons a week.
3. Minor offences and the main rules of minor offences procedures – 4 lessons a week.
4. The tools of scene of crime investigation and procedure – 2 lessons a week.
5. Staff and Disciplinary Regulations – 4 lessons a week.
6. The special task of non-commissioned officers – 1 lesson a week.
7. Public hygiene and first aid – 1 lesson a week.
8. Economic and stock management and the regulations on salary – 1 lesson a week.
9. Regulations on weapons and their use – 1 lesson a week.
10. Arithmetic (the first four rules, operations with decimals) – 1 lesson a week.
11. Geography – 1 lesson a week.
12. History – 1 lesson a week.
13. Map-reading and plotting – 1 lesson a week.
14. Lectures on patriotic subjects (efforts to maintain a patriotic spirit, to be linked with history, occasionally with geography and constitutional law – 1 lesson a week.³⁵

The course also involved the following special and practical subjects:

1. Marksmanship – 1 afternoon a month.
2. Squad operations practice (formation and leadership of platoons and companies) – 1 afternoon a week.
3. The use of firearms and sword in closed formations – 1 afternoon a month.
4. Fencing, wrestling – 1 afternoon a month.
5. Calisthenics – every day, 15 minutes before the morning lessons.³⁶

³⁵ Ibid. Section 22.

³⁶ Ibid.

The regulations of the Royal Hungarian State Police, the issues of the Bulletin of the Ministry of the Interior and the textbook series *Rendőriskolák tananyagának tára*³⁷ (*Repository of the learning material of police schools*), as well as the official geography, history textbooks and the *Gymnastics instructions* of the Army were used at the training courses.

The teachers at the course were police officials, having the necessary expertise both in theory and in practice. Special knowledge was taught by lecturers invited from the relevant faculty. Teachers and assistant teachers checked student attendance and had colloquia before the end of the course. They also kept diaries of the students' progress to record the delivered lessons and the experience gained.

At the end of the non-commissioned officers' course the students took a written and an oral examination.³⁸ At the written test the task the students had to solve was randomly drawn. Later the oral examination followed, where the questions were based on the subjects as follows:

1. Basic studies in constitutional, public administration and civil law
2. Criminal law
3. Minor offences and the main rules of minor offences procedures
4. The tools of scene of crime investigation and procedure
5. Staff and Disciplinary Regulations
6. Public hygiene and first aid
7. Economic and stock management and the regulations on salary

The results of both exams were averaged and the performance of each candidate for non-commissioned officer was rated. Then the students of the actual year were ranked according to their final results³⁹ and the list was entered in the *Register*.

After they passed the non-commissioned officers' exam, the students attended a 3–4 weeks' practical further training.

³⁷ The following compulsory textbooks were also published in the series:

- Közjog, közigazgatásjog, magánjog általános jogszabályainak ismertetése. (The general regulations of constitutional, public administration and civil law.)
- Közjog, közigazgatásjog, magánjog vázlata. (An outline of constitutional, public administration and civil law.)
- A magyar köz-, közigazgatásjog, és magánjog tankönyve. (The textbook of Hungarian constitutional, public administration and civil law.)
- Büntetőjog tankönyve. (The textbook of criminal law.)
- Rendőri bíraskodás és a kihágások rendőriskolák számára. (Criminal justice enforced by the Police and minor offences for police schools.)
- Kihágások könyve. (The book of minor offences.)
- A szolgálati szabályzat tankönyve. (The textbook of Staff Regulations.)
- Szervezési és egyéb szabályzatok. (Organisational and other regulations.)
- A magyar királyi rendőrség szervezet és ügyvitele. (The structure and administration of the Royal Hungarian Police.)
- Elsősegély nyújtás. (First aid.)

³⁸ 37.585/1923. B.M. r. A m. kir. állami rendőrség őrsemélyzetének altszjtjeitől megkívánható elméleti és gyakorlati képzettség megállapítása és azzal kapcsolatos intézkedések. (The Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 37.585/1923 B.M. The establishment of the academic and practical qualifications required of the non-commissioned officers of the guard staff employed by the Royal Hungarian State Police and the related provisions.) Sections 27–32.

³⁹ Ibid. Section 33.

Training Course for Staff Non-commissioned Officers

Building on the training for non-commissioned officers, the Minister of the Interior's Decree No. 74.565/1923 B.M. made arrangements for the organisation and administration of the training for staff non-commissioned officers, the supervision and management of the course and the staff non-commissioned officers' exam.

The aim of the staff non-commissioned officers' course was "to provide further training for 3rd class assistant inspectors and to prepare them for the staff non-commissioned officers' examination".⁴⁰ To achieve this, apart from attending lectures and lessons of written practice, the students also visited police and other institutions, saw scene of crime investigations, had continuous physical training and carried out duties in the units of the guards' staff of the Budapest Police Headquarters as field practice.

For the staff non-commissioned officers' course the Minister of the Interior usually seconded officials of the Royal Hungarian Police as teachers and staff non-commissioned officers as assistant teachers. External experts were selected to deliver subjects requiring special expertise.

The students of the staff non-commissioned officers' course had to meet very strict requirements. Only those 3rd class assistant inspectors were admitted

- who had had at least 2 years' service in this post;
- whose latest rating had been excellent;
- who were proficient in Hungarian orthography and composition;
- who were found suitable for filling the post of chief staff non-commissioned officer.⁴¹

The duration of the course was defined by the Minister of the Interior, while the timetable was approved by the national inspector of special studies.

The general subjects of the staff non-commissioned officers' course were as follows:

1. Basic studies in constitutional, public administration and civil law
2. Substantial and procedural criminal law
3. Minor offences and minor offences procedures
4. The tools of scene of crime procedure and investigation
5. Staff, Organisation and Disciplinary Regulations
6. The special tasks of staff non-commissioned officers
7. Public hygiene and first aid
8. Economic and stock management and the regulations on salary
9. Regulations on weapons and their use
10. Arithmetic
11. The geography of Hungary
12. An overview of the history of Hungary

⁴⁰ Ibid. Section 1.

⁴¹ Ibid. Section 10.

13. Map-reading and plotting
14. Lectures on patriotic subjects (efforts to maintain a patriotic spirit, to be linked with history, constitutional law, practical employment and occasionally with geography.)⁴²

The special and practical subjects of the staff non-commissioned officers' course were:

1. Calisthenics and other physical exercises
2. Marksmanship
3. Fencing
4. Squad operations and cordon practice
5. The use of firearms and sword in closed formations.⁴³

The decree stipulated that special emphasis should be laid on written work.

Similarly to the non-commissioned officers' course, the regulations of the Royal Hungarian State Police, the issues of the Bulletin of the Ministry of the Interior and the textbook series *Rendőriskolák tananyagának tára* (*Repository of the learning material of police schools*), as well as the official geography, history textbooks and the *Gymnastics instructions* of the Army were used at the training courses.

At the end of the course the students were rated at a colloquium and the experience gained at the lectures was recorded in the diary of the students' progress. *It was compulsory for the students to take the staff non-commissioned officers' exam.* (My italics.)

At the written part of the exam the students had to solve a personalised task whose topic was closely related to the staff non-commissioned officers' practical duties. The main professional subjects of the oral exam were as follows:

1. Basic studies in constitutional, public administration and civil law
2. Substantial and procedural criminal law
3. Minor offences and minor offences procedures
4. The tools of scene of crime procedure and investigation
5. Staff, Organisation and Disciplinary Regulations
6. The special tasks of staff non-commissioned officers
7. Public hygiene and first aid
8. Economic and stock management and the regulations on salary.⁴⁴

Similarly to the non-commissioned officers' exam, after they passed the staff non-commissioned officers' exam, the examinees were ranked and the list of names was recorded in the *Register*. The application for the appointment to staff non-commissioned officer was based on this entry. A certificate of the examination was only issued for those who passed. After they were handed out this certificate, the graduates of the course took part in a squad exercise in the capital.

⁴² Ibid. Section 20.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Section 27.

Based on the above, I have established that the training of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers' staff of the Royal Hungarian State Police, introduced after the nationalisation was based on unified principles and high standards. When selecting material for and conducting the training courses, full account was taken of the practicalities and real-life needs. Knowing the police training of the last 100 years, we can establish that the decrees issued in 1922 and 1923 proved decisive and enduring, also in terms of the selection of subjects. Because of the requirements, there was practically no pathway between the categories of non-commissioned and commissioned officers. Those attending a non-commissioned officers' course and then serving as non-commissioned officers were not able to obtain a degree e.g. at a university.

The developers of the courses for non-commissioned and commissioned officers and those conducting them discerned that practice-oriented training and acquiring good policing practices were of invaluable use, an immense resource for the police at a later period of time. Therefore, professional practice was an essential part in the structure of the courses and employing teachers with practical expertise was a key element of the training.

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