

men of this Regiment were still in the recruit stage and none of them had had any training on guns. When hostilities opened there were 60 Heavy Anti-Aircraft guns in the Singapore area out of the 104 which had been authorised. These consisted of two 4.5 in., thirty-eight 3.7 in. and twenty 3 in., the majority of which were static. Every effort had, however, been made to make as many as possible mobile and to train in mobile operations. Outside Singapore Island, authority had been received for the preparation of positions for the defence of Penang and of the aerodromes at Alor Star, Sungei Patani, Kota Bharu and Kuantan, but only those at Sungei Patani had been completed when hostilities opened. Temporary positions were, however, occupied by such 3 in. guns as could be made available for defence of the Alor Star and Kota Bharu aerodromes. One battery of the Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment from Singapore, on a mobile basis, was placed under orders of the Commander, 3 Indian Corps, for expected operations in North Malaya and was located at Alor Star. There were no guns available for the defence of cities on the mainland such as Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh.

At the time of my arrival in Malaya the anti-aircraft artillery was under the orders of the Commander, Singapore Fortress. Having in view, however, the increase in the scale of anti-aircraft defence and its extension to other parts of Malaya, I decided to bring the anti-aircraft artillery directly under my own command, except for purposes of administration, and to reorganize it under the Commander, Anti-Aircraft Artillery, into two brigades, one for Singapore and one for North Malaya. This reorganization had not been completed when war broke out. Command of the Anti-Aircraft Artillery in North Malaya was delegated to the Commander, 3 Indian Corps.

39. In 1940 the Active Air Defence was strengthened by the arrival of fighter aircraft. A proportion of these was always retained at the Singapore bases for defence of the important objectives in that area, the remainder being allotted to the northern area, which appeared to be the most vulnerable to attack.

40. With the arrival in Malaya in the summer of 1941 of Group Captain Rice, who had had much experience in connection with the Air Defence of Great Britain, the task of building up a co-ordinated Air Defence scheme for Malaya was energetically pushed forward. The fighters allotted to the defence of the Singapore area were placed under the command of Group Captain Rice. This officer was also authorised, as regards the Singapore area, to co-ordinate the action of the fighters and the anti-aircraft artillery and, during hostile attacks, to issue orders direct to these two formations. A control station was established near the Kallang aerodrome.

41. As part of this Air Defence scheme an efficient Warning System was essential. An organization of civilian watchers had already been started. Efforts were now made to extend this organization and provide it with better equipment. There were two main difficulties. Firstly, there was the difficulty of finding suitable people in the less developed parts of Malaya to complete the chain of watchers. Secondly, and more important still, was the paucity of communications. The civil telephone system in Malaya consisted only of a few

trunk lines, which followed the main arteries of communication, and local lines in the populated areas. This was quite inadequate for a really efficient Warning System, as it was impossible to allot separate lines for this purpose. A plan was worked out, in conjunction with the civil authorities, for the duplication of this system and for extensions where required. A start was made with the limited amount of cable available but only small progress had been made when war broke out. There were a few radar sets available but efforts to supplement the system with wireless communication met with only partial success owing to the unreliability of wireless in the difficult climatic conditions of Malaya. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, an organization was built up which proved of great value during the subsequent operations, though it should be pointed out that it covered South Malaya and the Singapore area only, and that there was no adequate Warning System for North Malaya.

The organization of Passive Air Defence will be explained later when dealing with Civil Defence.

42. *Defence of Aerodromes.*—As a result of experience in Europe, and especially in Crete, the C.-in-C. Far East laid down that the defence of aerodromes was to take precedence, as regards A.A. weapons, over everything else except the defence of the Naval Base. A scale of Heavy and Light A.A. Guns for each aerodrome was laid down but, owing to lack of resources, it was never approached. Such guns as were available, however, were allotted for this purpose. In addition, small infantry garrisons, drawn from Malayan Volunteer units or Indian State Force units, were provided. There were also a few heavy armoured lorries specially constructed for this purpose. In no case, however, was the strength of the garrison really adequate for the defence of the aerodromes, the perimeters of which varied between 3 and 5 miles.

43. *Borneo.*—The large Island of Borneo, partly British and partly Dutch, was clearly of great strategical importance, lying as it did between the main routes linking Japan with Malaya and Sumatra on the one hand and Java and the Southern Areas on the other, and containing large supplies of oil and other raw materials. Unfortunately neither the British nor the Dutch were able to find adequate garrisons for this island.

The British portion of Borneo consisted of:—

*British North Borneo* a territory controlled by the British North Borneo Company, whose headquarters were in London. The Governor and officials of British North Borneo were in the employ of that Company.

*Labuan Island.*—A British Colony administered by a Resident.

*Brunei.*—A British Protected State with its own Sultan.

*Sarawak.*—A Malay State which had for many years been governed by members of the Brooke family. In September 1941, however, the ruling Rajah made over much of his responsibility to a Council. He then left Sarawak for a holiday and was in Australia when hostilities broke out. His efforts to return to Sarawak were unsuccessful.

There had for some time been a project to open up air facilities in British Borneo. Aerodrome sites had been selected and surveyed.