

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS, DEMANDED BY OUR FIGHTING MEN

American Library Association Needs Millions of Dollars for Reading Matter for Army and Navy

By FRANK P. STOCKBRIDGE.

THE American Library Association has been designated by the Government as the sole agency for supplying books and reading matter to our soldiers, sailors and marines on this side and overseas. In fulfilling this obligation this organization, which is composed of the three thousand principal public libraries of the United States and their fighting forces nearly four million books, of which it obtained something more than three million by solicitation from the general public, and has distributed something like ten million copies of magazines.

It has sent overseas more than a million and a quarter books. It has established on this side nearly four hundred camp libraries, forty-three of them occupying their own buildings in the larger camps, and has established branch libraries in some two hundred hospitals and Red Cross houses and nearly two thousand buildings of the Young Men's Christian Association, Knights of Columbus, Young Women's Christian Association, Salvation Army, Jewish Welfare Board and War Camp Community Service, as well as in barracks, mess halls and officers' quarters. This in addition to the installation of libraries on all ships of the navy and the cargo vessels of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, and at many naval stations.

Every transport taking American troops to France has its deck library with a "Y" or "K" of C. secretary acting as librarian; these books, as well as the fifty tons a month sent as cargo, supply the overseas service. This is under the direction of Burton E. Stevenson, the novelist, who has established a great central library in Paris and two large library centres at other points. The overseas library service as its base the branch libraries placed by Mr. Stevenson in the huts, club houses and convalescent houses of the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., K. of C., Young Women's Christian Association, Salvation Army and other organizations and soldiers' clubs—nearly a thousand of these are now installed.

The second layer in the pyramid is the special libraries of technical books purchased by the American Library Association and grouped in classified collections and installed at the headquarters of every American military unit in France, no matter how large or how small. There are special libraries on railway construction and engineering for example; special libraries on aviation and ballooning, on forestry, on cement work, on motor transport, and all the other highly technical subjects on which different detachments of the American Expeditionary Force must be experts, as well as on general military topics. The books for these special libraries, of which there are hundreds, with from fifty to 200 volumes in each collection, have been selected by the General Staff in Washington and the members of Gen. Pershing's staff overseas.

The caption of the overseas library service is the direct mail circulation of books from the Paris central library to individual soldiers. Under the franking privilege recently granted by Gen. Pershing any soldier may write to the American Library Association and have a book sent to him if it is to be sent for to England or the United States and is forwarded to him free of postage; he may keep it a month and return it also post free. Nearly a thousand book requests a day are now being filled in this way.

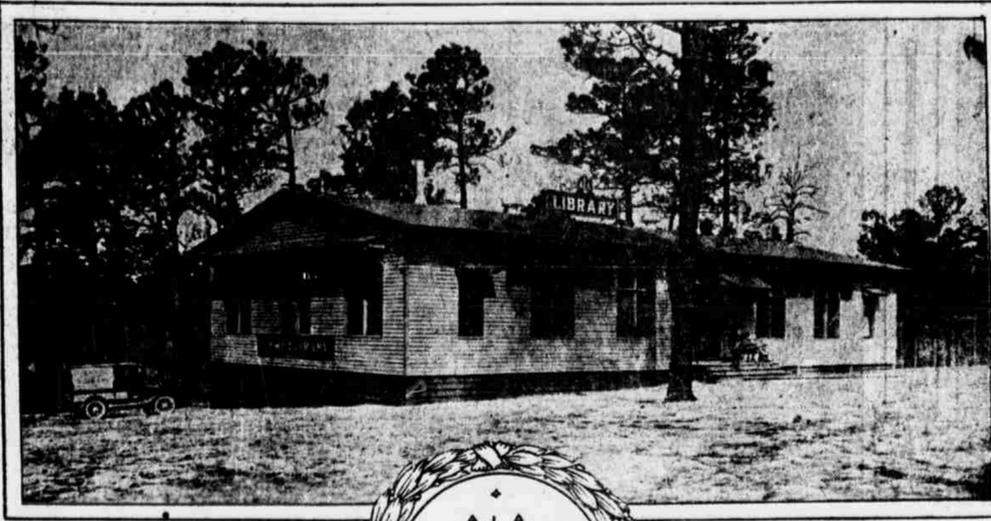
Soldiers Must Have Books.

It has been surprising even to those who anticipated a considerable demand for reading matter on the part of the American Army and Navy to discover the actual extent of the demand. It ranges all the way from the most elementary subjects to the highest scientific and technical works; in fiction from the stories of the "Deadwood Dick" and "Nick Carter" type to the classics of English literature. Soldiers to learn how to read and write the English language, and books to aid the university graduate who is working for his doctor's degree, both cases within the scope of Library War Service. Books in forty different lan-

guages have had to be supplied to meet the reading needs of our polyglot army, for the motto of Library War Service is, "Give every man the book he needs when he wants it."

From the moment a young man enlists in the army right up to his tour of duty in the trenches he is never out of contact with books and reading. Books are sent to him; men who never had the reading habit are acquiring it by the hundreds of thousands. To a surprisingly large proportion of our soldiers the free circulating library is a new and unheard of institution, and there is something almost pathetic in their delight and expressions of appreciation of the service which the American Library Association, with its hundreds of uniformed librarians in war service, stands ready at all times to offer them.

The camp library is frequently the most popular gathering place. There are no regulations and no restrictions. Men may smoke, they may talk if they like, although instinctively they recognize that it is no place for loud talking. The books are for the most part on open shelves, so the men can help



MEN READING ON PORCH OF HOSPITAL LIBRARY (NURSE and LIBRARIAN PRESENT WITH BOOK WAGON) GENERAL HOSPITAL N91—GUN HILL ROAD, N.Y.

American Library Association.

THE American soldier wants good books. He does not necessarily want goody goody books, but he wants entertaining books; books that fill in the idle hour, books that cheer, and so this organization came into the big seven because it had its work cut out and was a part of the whole. Hundreds of books have gone to the camps and still the cry is for more. The time is coming when books will be in greater demand than ever. This institution deserves its share of the fund to be raised to care for our boys abroad.

Themselves; if one wishes to take a book out to read in barracks, or in intervals of duty, the simplest kind of a card receipt is taken by the librarian. The soldiers' reading is about equally divided between recreational and educational books. In dugouts at the front, and even in the trenches, books help them keep up their nerve and get the discomforts of their immediate surroundings. In the hospitals, where the librarians are women, the little rubber wheeled cart that brings books right to the bedside of the ill and wounded men is the most welcome visitor they have. In the long periods of convalescence books are absolutely essential.

Our fighting men are reading with avidity books of history, travel, geography, biography; books about the war and its causes; books that help them master the manifold phases of their military duties. It is almost literally true that whenever an American soldier is detailed to kitchen police he looks for a book from which he can learn how better to peel potatoes.

There are many military operations, such as range finding, in which trigonometry and logarithms are of great service, and the Library War Service supplies this class of books also. Reports of camp and field librarians are full of records of men who have won promotion, many of them commissions, through the study of the hundreds of books on military science furnished by Library War Service.

"Hey fellows!"

YOUR MONEY BRINGS THE BOOK WE NEED WHEN WE WANT IT

American Library Association
United War Work Campaign—Week of Nov. 11-17, 1918

CAMP LIBRARIES ARE BUSY PLACES

THERE is nothing dormant about a camp library; it is as aggressive as an army corps—as dynamic as war itself. The library at Camp Funston—out on the bottom of the Kaw River—is typical. If you can visualize that you will have grasped the spirit and the character of any cantonment library organization.

There is a building, of course, but it does not coincide with your old idea of a library. It is merely the headquarters and centre, the heart of an elaborate circulatory system that extends at least thirteen miles in one direction and is prepared to nourish the minds of soldiers at twenty-eight major branches and more than a hundred drop points and stations in and about the cantonment zone.

It is a plain wooden structure, conforming to the general type of cantonment buildings—a big, rough shack—beautifully adapted to its job. The site is near the residential centre of the camp and convenient to the transportation line. Thirty-six steel book buildings have been built in as many camps from funds advanced by the Carnegie Corporation.

Has 300 Easy Chairs.

These buildings cost about \$10,000 each. The one at Camp Funston is 40 feet wide and 120 feet long. It contains one large room lined with book stacks which project from the walls, forming alcoves. Upon the shelves are 15,000 books, about or approximately half the number totalled by the entire camp system.

"A CORNER IN BOOKS" A.L.A. CAMP LIBRARY FUNSTON, KANSAS.

propaganda, the American association stands ready to furnish him. Inside the camp, too, are the three huts of the K. of C., one of which also is for negro soldiers. Their libraries are supplied by the American Library Association as branches of the central camp library.

Also in Camp Funston are the two hostess houses of the Y. W. C. A., one for whites, the other for negroes, each of which contains a 200 book branch of the central library. The selection of volumes in the hostess houses is calculated mainly to interest and entertain transient women visitors.

At numerous points there are smaller collections known as deposits, or stations, of perhaps only thirty or forty volumes, sometimes selected only for temporary use for a special purpose, and sometimes they comprise small reference collections on a particular subject for officers and men.

There are stations in the regimental infirmaries—thirteen altogether. There are stations and deposits in the officers' quarters, such for example as a collection of engineering books for the convenience of engineering officers; or it may be a collection of books on automobile engines and truck operation and repairing for enlisted men engaged in the study of automobile mechanics. There are often as many as fifty or more such collections scattered about the camp at one time, and these, like the branch libraries, are constantly being supplemented or shifted.

Only Part of the Work.

Many large and busy city libraries have lighter demands made upon their circulatory systems than the Camp Funston establishment; and this is only the beginning of the camp library's work.

The base hospital of Camp Funston is at Fort Riley, the famous post that is the headquarters of the 100th Central Postal Directory and a reference and reading room for officers and men. Two hundred comfortable easy chairs contribute to make the reading room one of the most popular places in camp. From early in the morning until late at night there is a constant procession of soldiers coming to read or to draw books. In the afternoon and evening generally every chair is occupied, with men sitting on the floor and standing.

Smoking is not only permitted but encouraged, providing the most noticeable difference between the main reading room of a city library and that of a camp establishment. And hats are worn. The traditional rule of silence requires no discipline to enforce.

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Demand Text Books.

And this is true not only at Funston, but at every one of the war libraries maintained and operated by the American Library Association. The demand for educational works—text books and technical books of all sorts—is astonishing.

Much Already Accomplished, but More to Be Done—Technical Works and Light Literature Both Wanted

of 30 per cent., whereas the usual city library reaches only 25 per cent. These statistics are misleading, however, as city populations include infants, invalids and illiterates.

The non-fiction books have been much more carefully selected with an eye to the needs of their prospective users than those of the city library. This was made possible because the exact class of users was known. Every branch of military activity is represented and included in the collections of non-fiction volumes.

It has astonished many army men to find how extensive is the literature on such subjects as machine guns, ordnance, ammunition, map reading and sketching, veterinary medicine, technique of aviation, radiotelegraphy and telephony, quartermasters' supply, reclamation, road engineering and chemistry in its numerous military applications.

And there are demands even more specialized than those. When a soldier asked for a copy of the "Discourses of Epictetus" it was obtained for him at once! Another request for a book on

It was a soldier engaged in camouflage painting at a base in France who asked Dr. M. Llewellyn Rayney, the Johns Hopkins librarian who organized the Library Association's overseas service. The private who asked for a book on the psychology of the color. The private asked for a book up to date book on motors and selected the one which the librarian offered him with the comment, "I did the drawings for that book; haven't you anything later?" was accommodated with a still more recent work.

Instances in which the study of special subjects has been promoted, and from the ranks and enabled them to obtain commissions through the aid of books furnished by the Library War Service are almost innumerable.

Five Reference Works Used.

A camp library is of course equipped with all the standard reference books, even more completely than the average public library, and in each of the branches there are such reference collections as a standard atlas, a good dictionary, a French dictionary, a war map and an adequate encyclopedia. But the telephone rings all day with requests for specific bits of information which covers all fields, from railroad train schedules to definitions of such words as "balustrade."

The librarian is supposed to be well acquainted not only with the outside but with the inside of all books, and the man in this position who carries to the work educational equipment less comprehensive than that of a university easily finds himself stumped lots of times every day.

The magazines subscribed for in the main libraries include all of the leading scientific and technical journals, as well as periodicals of a more popular nature. The American Library Association distributes the so-called "Burlison" magazines, and a quantity of them is always held in reserve, awaiting the frequent calls from a "Y" branch, such as "Five hundred men are going out to-night. Send some magazines to the train." Every trainload of troops moving from camp to sea-board is supplied from these sources.

Aboard Transports Too.

On the transport there is a deck library, boxes which stood on edge become crude bookcases; the librarian who travels on the transport issues books on our regular city library card system and collects them from the men before port is reached. In this way the most useful literature goes to its community. Overseas distribution is principally through branch libraries established in Red Cross cantons, Y. M. C. A. and Knights of Columbus huts, and similar agencies. Mr. Stevenson's latest report shows 350 such branches and their distributing points established since last spring.

AMERICAN FOYERS HELP FRENCH WOMEN WORKERS.

A FRENCH girl writes in her best English to a Young Women's Christian Association worker in this country:

"I don't know well your language, but I will try to tell you all what your good countrymen are doing for us. While your brave soldiers fight with ours and prove their heart, kind American ladies founded some foyers, where war women can read and spend a good time. I am only coming here since a week, but I am very happy to find here so good persons.

There remain from 12 to 2, and some times at 6, when I have a session, we can learn English, singing, and drawing. It is very pleasant. I listen the piano, I read or look at pictures about the war. The whole apartment is very nice and gay, the furniture are made of clear wood, and all seems comfortable.

"Everybody is kind to us and we feel ourselves in family. We also have our lunch and coffee, tea or chocolate. At last, we are the most happy, and I should wish of all my heart there were many foyers for all young girls which work and don't know how often spend their time between the hours of work. It is among other purposes to continue this work, more important in the readjustment and reconstruction period following the war than during the conflict itself, that the Young Women's Christian Association is aiding in the present campaign.

BRINGING BOOKS TO HOSPITALS CALLED A SERVICE OF MERCY

NOTHING less than a service of mercy is one description that has been given of the work of the American Library Association in supplying books and magazines to patients in the camp base hospital.

More and more do the men in the base hospital depend on the librarian to tie them over the long hours they must lie in bed or sit about in "bath tubs" until the day of discharge. In the surgical wards especially, where men are confined to bed weeks at a time, the visits of the hospital librarian with her fresh supply of books and magazines are eagerly awaited, and if by chance her call in a particular ward is delayed a vigorous protest is made.

Asked to "Prescribe" Books.

The value of carrying camp library service to those who are confined to the hospital is recognized by members of the hospital staff. The librarian is asked by a doctor or nurse to "prescribe" for a patient who is in need of the stimulation which can come from a good book.

On one occasion such a patient was approached by the hospital librarian, but her offer to leave a book met with only a short refusal. Nevertheless she

stepped a copy of Tarkington's *Penrod* on a shelf of the bedside table. On her next visit she was hailed from down the ward by the taciturn borrower.

"Say," he grinned, "I'd like to choke over this book. Got another one like it?"

The nurse in charge also reported a miraculous change in the man's condition and temperament.

Discoveries as to the reading taste of men in the hospital have been made by the base hospital librarians, which might well provide a scientific basis for caring for the reading needs of these men. It has been found that in cases in the first week after an operation the majority of requests are for short stories in large type. This is accounted for by the fact that this type does not tire the eye, and a man can read through a page quickly, gaining a certain satisfaction thereby. A feeling he is having lots of territory. Pictorial magazines are also popular.

As strength returns so returns the desire for heavier reading. Typical of the second stage are books containing favorite poems, the works of favorite authors and sometimes works of a moral or ethical nature.

In the final period of convalescence comes the desire for text and educa-