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 librarians, has made accessible to our 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 has 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 capstone 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 headquarters in Paris for any book he wants. It is obtained for him if it has 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.

Books to help totally illiterate 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 come within the scope of Library War Service. Books in forty different languages 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 enters the army right up to his tour of duty in the trenches he is never out of contact with books and reading. Books are contagious; 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 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 forget 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 bedsides 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 trigonometery 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.

That is really the most striking phenomenon about Library War Service, the eager, insistent demand of our soldiers and sailors—who are of course only average young Americans in uniform—for books that will help them in the work that they are doing, help them to understand better what they are fighting for, help them to succeed in the civil life to which they expect to return after the war is over. It is to meet demands of this kind for books which must be bought, because, no matter how generous the owners of private libraries may be, their book shelves do not contain these special and technical works, that the American Library Association requires the additional $3,500,000 which the President and the War Department have authorized it to ask from the public.

Even should the war end to-morrow library service must go on until the last American soldier has been returned to civil life. A part of the Government's plan is the establishment of schools of every kind and for every sort of trade and technical profession, in order better to fit our soldiers to become civilians again.

The reference and technical libraries and to a large extent the text books of this "khaki college" must be supplied by and through the American Library Association, whose distinct and definite contribution to this war is its work in helping not only to sustain the morale but to stimulate the ambition of our fighting men and help them to come back better educated than when they donned the khaki.

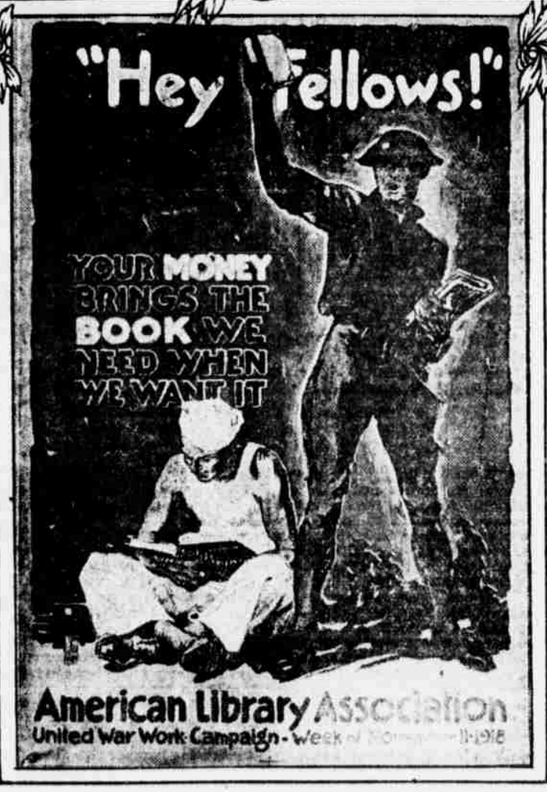
A.L.A. CAMP LIBRARY CAMP JACKSON, JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

MEN READING on PORCH of HOSPITAL LIBRARY (NURSE and LIBRARIAN PRESENT WITH BOOK WAGON) GENERAL HOSPITAL No 1—GUN HILL ROAD., N.Y.

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

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.



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, technic 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 man 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 fifteen 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 slighter 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 lies between Junction City and Funston. Here library stations are established in sixty-six of the ninety-five wards—in every ward except those reserved for contagious diseases—with an average of fifty books in each station. Circulation of books in hospitals is a part of the War Library Service that is becoming specialized under the direction of trained women librarians who are selected and assigned by the American Library Association to this exacting service.

Daily automobile delivery is made from Camp Funston library to the base hospital, so that any soldier who wants a particular book to read seldom has long to wait for it.

What assortment of books does a camp library contain? What do the men read?

Funston's 30,000 volumes are divided between fiction, non-fiction and reference books in about the same proportion as the city library. But while the calls for fiction in an ordinary library amount to 70 per cent. of the total, in camp libraries the demand for fiction is less than 50 per cent. This ratio is partly accounted for by the fact that the clientele of the camp library is almost exclusively masculine, and not only masculine but the type that is anxious for improvement—the fighting type.

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.

In camps the proportion of library users to population reaches an average municipal house cleaning and salvage was greeted with equally prompt response. It must be admitted, though, that the librarian found himself rather short of breath when he was asked for a book that would enable a Greek to teach an Italian English.

Foreign Works in Demand.

"We have books in French, German, Spanish, modern Greek, Yiddish, Norwegian, Swedish, Polish, Rumanian, Russian and Bulgarian," reports the librarian in charge, "and they are in constant circulation."

Some of these books are by native authors and others are translations from English, for it is desirable that our foreign born soldiers become familiar with English and American books. The other day a Greek boy brought a book to the librarian's desk to be changed. The librarian, not being able to read Greek, asked the boy what the book was

"Why, don't you know?" exclaimed the soldier. "It's *Sherlock Holmes*."

The greatest demand for foreign language books are from Poles, French, Spanish, Jewish, Russian and Italian soldiers. About the stiffest request the Library Association has had so far was for the *Arabian Nights* in the original Arabic. A professor in Columbia University was appealed to, and before long the homesick soldier from the East got the precious book of stories.

It is the hope and aim of the Government, in which the American Library Association is cooperating, that when our soldiers get back from over there every one of them will be speaking English fluently. There is no desire to make him forget the language he learned at his mother's knee. Above all there is no desire to wean him from his family or his neighbors. In all of the camp libraries, in this country at least, foreign language newspapers are provided.

At Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ill., there are many Syrians. One day a Syrian soldier timidly entered the camp library, not really expecting to find anything to interest him. To his delight he found a Syrian newspaper published in New York. He sat down and read it through, advertisements and all. The next day he came back with two more Syrians. The news spread through all the regiments and now, the librarian says, there is a delegation of Syrians waiting every evening to read their newspaper, which is donated to the camp by the publishers.

Thousands of Incidents.

The records of Library War Service both on this side and overseas contain literally thousands of incidents and examples illustrating the desire for knowledge on the part of the men and the value of books to them. Perhaps an idea of the variety of non-fiction literature may be best obtained by a glance at the record of a single day's non-fiction circulation in the main library building at Camp Meade on Friday, August 16:

Ballaus—Equatorial America.
Bethell—Modern Artillery in the Field.
Brown—The Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln.
Bishop—Field Artillery.
Capaune—Pagine Sorridenti.
Clough—Plutarch's Wives.
Clough—Freed of the Conquering Chief.
Davis—Notes of a War Correspondent.
Dion—Drill Regulations for Signal Troops.
Dion—Tanks, Gas, Bombing, Liquid Fire.
Earle—Sun Dials and Roses of Yesterday.
Edmund—Toaster's Handbook.
Ellis & Carey—Plattsburg Manual.
Ennis—Field Artillery Driver and Cannoneer.
Ennis—Field Service Regulations.
Foster—Encyclopedia of Games.
Freeborough & Rankin—Chess Openings.
French Meikleiohn—Essentials of Lettering.
Garofalo—Criminology.
Gill—Gas and Fuel Analysis.
Gowin—The Executive and His Control of Men.
Hammond—Gunner's Handbook for Field Artillery.
Harris—English Lessons.
Hubbard—Elsevier.
Hunters—Indexing and Filing.
Hiscox-Page—Gas, Gasolene and Oil Engines.
Hitchcock—English Composition.
Hitchcock—Infantry Drill Regulations (2).
International Library—Agency, Bailment, Tenancy.
Johnston—General Foch.
Kipling—Collected Verse.
Kimball—Elementary English (2).
Liveing—Attack.
Longman—English Grammar.
McClure—Stag's Horn Book.
McClure—Manual of Bayonet Fighting.
Munson—I Promised Spot.
Martin—The Human Body.
Mathewson—Pitching in a Pinch.
Miller—Things to Live For.
Moss—Army Paper Work.
Moss—Army Regulations.
Moss—Non-Commissioned Officer's Manual.
Oxford Book of English Verse.
Page—Modern Gasolene Automobile.
Page—Motor Cycles.
Paul—The Heart of Blackstone.
Pinero—Trelawney of the Wells.
Pintner-Paterson—A Scale of Performance Tests.
Pratt—Automobile Instructor.
Remsen—Organic Chemistry.
Roberts—Gas Engine Handbook.
Roebuck—Science and Practice of Photography.
Service—Ballads of a Cheechako.
Shaw—The Devil's Disciple.
Stahl—What a Young Man Ought to Know.
Steven—Field Telephone and Telegraphs (2).
——Story of the Great War.
Stratton—International Combustion Engines.
Swoope—Lessons in Practical Electricity.
Thorpe—Industrial Chemistry.
Thoreau—Familiar Letters.
Train—The Prisoner at the Bar.
Tschappat—Ordnance and Gunnery.
Whately—Elements of Logic.

It was a soldier engaged in camouflage painting at a base in France who asked Dr. M. Llewellyn Raney, the Johns Hopkins librarian who organized the Library Association's overseas service, for a book on the psychology of color. The private who asked for an up to date book on motors and rejected 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 won men's promotion from the ranks and enabled them to obtain commissions through the aid of books furnished by the Library War Service are almost innumerable.

Fine 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 "sabotage."

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 faculty 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 "Burleson" magazines—the kind that you stick a 1 cent stamp on without specifying the post office.

At Camp Funston the average delivery of "Burleson" magazines is more than 100 sacks a week. These are culled and sorted and distributed to the branches and stations, 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 seaboard 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 large numbers of books are sent to France without encroaching upon cargo space beyond the fifty tons a month allotted by Gen. Pershing for books.

In Paris the overseas headquarters, in the building erected for the Papal Delegate to the French Republic, are in charge of Burton E. Stevenson, known to the public as a popular novelist and compiler of books of verse, but to librarians as the man who for twenty years has made the public library at Chillicothe, Ohio, one of the most useful institutions in its community. Overseas distribution is principally through branch libraries established in Red Cross canteens, Y. M. C. A. and Knights of Columbus huts, and similar agencies. Mr. Stevenson's latest cable reports 350 such branches and distributing points established since last spring.

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 bottoms 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 points and stations in and about the cantonment zone.

It is a plain wooden structure, conforming to the general type of cantonment building—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 such library buildings have been built in as many camps from funds advanced by the Carnegie Corporation.

Has 200 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.

This building performs two functions, that of a circulating library headquarters and of a distributing station for branch libraries 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.

Inside the camp are twelve Y. M. C. A. huts, scattered about the three square miles included in the cantonment proper. Each of these, including the one for negro soldiers, is provided with a branch library, just as every Y. M. C. A. hut at every other camp and cantonment is supplied with all of its books and library equipment by the American Library Association. On the shelves of the Y. M. C. A. branches are on an average 600 volumes. These branches are gradually being enlarged.

Calls for special books are forwarded to the main library and filled there if possible. In case the book is not at hand the request is forwarded to the War Library Headquarters at Washington, or else the book is borrowed from the library of some nearby city. The rule is that whatever book a soldier wants to read, this side of Germany, he can have if it is in the library.

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 tide them over the long hours they must lie in bed or sit about in bath robes 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 often 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 slipped a copy of Tarkington's *Penrod* on a shelf of the bedsire 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 librarian 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 the type does not tire the eye and a man can read through a page quickly, gaining a certain satisfaction thereby in feeling he is covering lots of territory. Pictorial magazines are also popular.

As strength returns so returns the desire for heavier reading. Typical of this 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 educational books. The man from the machine gun company wants machine guns, the truck company corporal wants a book on automobile repairing and the artilleryman wants to brush up on algebra and geometry.

Aided by the Red Cross.

Books for the base hospital are circulated from the base hospital library, which is situated in a wing of the convalescent house of the American Red Cross. Here the librarian has her office and also living quarters. Comfortable reading quarters are at hand for patients who are well enough to walk.

The greater part of the librarian's work is to make personal visits to the hospital wards to learn what the men who are not fortunate enough to move wish to read. Books are carried along to be given out and books requested are delivered later by an orderly. A request box is placed in each ward where special requests for books can be placed.

If the book desired by a patient is not in the base hospital library a request is sent to the central camp library, which forwards the book, or if it is not in stock and is a work of non-fiction a request is forwarded to the nearest public library.

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.

"I remain from 12 to 2, and some times at 6, when I have a lesson, for 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 and pretty.

"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 are many foyers for all young girls which work and don't know how often spent 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 asks aid in the present campaign.