
Libraries and Reading in Finnish Military Hospitals during the Second World War

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ABSTRACT

The ground for library work in Finnish military hospitals during World War II was prepared before the war by three different traditions of library activity. First, professional librarians and state library authorities tried to initiate hospital library work in Finnish hospitals as an extension of municipal library services. Impulses from abroad, mainly from Great Britain through the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), were important in this initiative. Second, nurses, especially in the Red Cross Hospital in Helsinki, started to give library services as a voluntary operation in late 1930s. The first full-time hospital librarian, a volunteer, was originally a nurse. Third, the Soldiers' Homes Associations run by women volunteers organized libraries for conscript soldiers during peace time. This article describes how these traditions worked together during the Second World War. Professional librarians' attitudes toward voluntary library work in military hospitals and the interaction between librarians and patients as readers are described. Library work in civilian hospitals grew out of wartime activities.

INTRODUCTION

The demand for recreational reading for soldiers during the Second World War was organized in many ways in different armies. In times of peace, regular libraries were often found in garrisons or training centers, but the war so increased the demand for recreational books that special measures were needed. There were different solutions. One example was the special editions of books created for U.S. soldiers (see, e.g., Cole, 1984). Another was the book boxes that were circulated in the trenches of the

Finnish army. A special case was the library activities in military hospitals situated outside the actual combat zones. Almost everywhere these activities were the result of an enthusiastic voluntary engagement of civilians, mostly women. The aim of this article is to describe these services, their historical and international background, the attitudes of the professional librarians toward voluntary work in hospitals, and what happened when men who had read little in civilian life came into contact with books in the military hospital environment. Library services in military hospitals reflect interesting mixes of peace and wartime practices, with professional librarians acting as volunteers and nonprofessional volunteers acting as librarians. Some of the questions that may arise in circumstances like this are: Who makes the selection of books? Who is entitled to choose freely what he or she reads? How do professional librarians react in a situation where they have to relax what they see as their high moral and aesthetic professional standards? It also is interesting to know how and by whom library services in military hospitals were organized, what was the historical and professional context of this activity, and what happened when the war was over.

By way of historical background,¹ after having been part of the kingdom of Sweden for seven hundred years, Finland was, in a side-show of the Napoleonic wars, invaded by Tsar Alexander I and made a Grand-Duchy in the Russian Empire in 1809. After a century of cultural and economic progress, Finland gained independence after the Russian October Revolution in 1917. The beginning of independence, however, was clouded by a bloody civil war in 1918. Between the world wars there was again a period of peaceful progress until 1939, when under the terms of the the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, Finland fell into the sphere of influence of the latter. After failed negotiations about land and other matters, the Soviet Union attacked Finland. The Winter War, as it was known, lasted from November 1939 until March 1940. The Finnish forces, with great sacrifices, halted the enemy, but it is assumed that Stalin aborted the attack mainly because he feared that the Western allied powers would send troops to help Finland. Although Finland maintained its freedom, it was forced to cede a large area of land and lease a naval base to the Soviet Union.

There followed an uneasy period of armistice from March 1940 until June 1941, during which the Soviet Union put pressure on Finland in many ways. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Finland became Germany's ally, planning to take back what was lost in the Winter War. In addition to that the Finnish forces occupied large areas in Soviet Karelia. This second phase of the hostilities between Finland and the Soviet Union is called "the Continuation War" in Finland, and it lasted until September 1944, when Finland and Soviet Union again concluded an armistice. This time the area that had been ceded after the Winter War to the Soviet Union was permanently lost. In addition, Finland had to pay

large war reparations to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Finland remained free, although its fate after the armistice was not at all certain; nor was the war completely over for Finland because there followed a campaign to drive its former German allies out of Lapland, the so-called Lapland War, that lasted until spring 1945.

FINNISH HOSPITAL LIBRARIES: BACKGROUND

Library services in Finnish military hospitals during the Second World War were based on various peace-time initiatives and traditions. There had been books and even organized book collections in civilian hospitals long before the war. These modest libraries, often consisting of books left by patients and increased by donations, were taken care of by nurses or by the patients themselves. During the 1930s more systematic library work started to appear in civilian hospitals in Finland, reflecting to an extent overseas influences, especially from Great Britain where the provision of library service to hospitals had become an accepted part of librarianship during the First World War (Sturt & Going, 1973, pp. 21–66). After the war British enthusiasts were active in spreading the gospel of hospital librarianship. In 1932, for example, the British hospital library activists persuaded the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) to arrange an inquiry on the status of hospital libraries around the world. In Finland the information was gathered by the Finnish Board of Medicine. The data revealed a poor and disorganized situation, and a civil servant, Ms. Kyllikki Nohrström, from the State Library Bureau started to look into how it might be improved (Nohrström, 1934).

British hospital librarianship at that time represented a model based on voluntary work, but the Finnish library authorities preferred a Swedish and Danish model, where hospital libraries were part of the municipal library system. The problem in Finland, however, was that municipalities were not eager to finance this kind of activity and the Library Law of 1928 organizing state support for municipal library services did not cover hospital libraries. Even though the development of professional hospital library work was slow as a result of the lack of financial resources, genuine interest and even some concrete projects in the field emerged just before the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1938 the Finnish Library Association assumed the role of coordinator of the different interests in hospital librarianship. It organized meetings, disseminated information, and addressed a circular to city and municipal councils stressing the importance of hospital libraries (Sairaalain kirjastokysymys, 1938). The circular also was published in the national library journal (*Kansanvalistus ja Kirjastolehti*) side by side with Kyllikki Nohrström's article about the principles of hospital librarianship.

Nohrström argued for hospital libraries on the basis of the need for universality of library services: "The maintenance of libraries with public funds is based on the belief that it is the society's task to secure for each

of its members the opportunity to get books, which can help one to grow spiritually and make progress in one's life tasks. We must not neglect those who have to spend a shorter or a longer time apart from the rest of the world deprived of the possibility to get hold of books themselves. Hospitals' patients are among them" (Nohrström, 1939, p. 181).

The principle of universality, later to become one of the cornerstones of the ideology of the welfare state, had long been among the basic principles of public librarianship in Finland. It continued to direct the struggle of professional librarians to include in the sphere of public library activities every group in society, including people in institutions such as hospitals and prisons. The wave of expansion of library services did not stop in Finland until the 1990s, when the limits of the welfare state were reached (Mäkinen, 2001).

NURSES AS LIBRARIANS

Because professional library organizations were slow to introduce library work into hospitals, the voluntary, philanthropic model took hold in the form of the work of nurses. Even this had a British connection. In the early 1920s some Finnish nurses received part of their education in England, where they adopted a broad social view of human health. After education of nurses in Finland was formalized, the international influences continued, especially through the Red Cross. The chair of the Finnish Red Cross was Marshal Mannerheim, known for his anglophile interests. Many of the leading Red Cross Finnish nurses came from the Swedish-speaking upper class. They tended to know a number of languages, and the international exchange of ideas was natural for them. The Finnish Red Cross established a hospital in Helsinki in 1932. Its speciality was to serve patients who suffered from wounds and fractures, typical traumas of wartime. The planning of the hospital was guided by the fact that it some day could serve as a military hospital but also with the conviction that patients had to be taken care of in a broad social context, even involving the time after they left the hospital (Rosén, 1977, p. 316). Reading as recreation and as a way of acquiring information fit well into this concept.

The chief nurse of the Red Cross Hospital, Berrit Kihlman, personally organized the program of lending books to patients from a hospital library. In 1937 she asked Else Branders, a trained nurse, to become a full-time volunteer hospital librarian, the first in Finland. Branders (1901–97) came from a well-to-do family and could afford to engage in voluntary work. She even donated books to the library and had a specially designed book trolley constructed. She continued her work until she was nearly eighty years old. Both Kihlman and Branders belonged to the internationally minded, Swedish-speaking Finnish upper middle class (Mustelin, 2001, pp. 203–13).

Branders became internationally active in the hospital library movement. As a corresponding member of the International Guild of Hospital

Librarians, she was in touch with British specialists in the field, such as Marjorie Roberts. She also attended international hospital library conferences, sometimes with Berrit Kihlman. Branders introduced ideas and reported international activities in Finnish nursing journals. She acted as an informal representative of the Finnish library community in the international hospital library community. She participated in the first negotiations concerning the future of hospital libraries in Finland organized by the Finnish National Library Association (*Suomen Kirjastoseura*), the State Library Bureau, and other interested parties in the late 1930s. She was, however, not ready to let herself become part of any official library organization. During her later years she categorically refused to become part of the Helsinki municipal library system. She worked as a volunteer until her retirement. After she died in 1997 at the age of ninety-six, the family fortune was bequeathed to the Swedish-speaking university Åbo Akademi in Turku (Mustelin, 2001).

SOLDIERS' HOMES

Another line of development that anticipated library work in military hospitals came from voluntary organizations associated with the Finnish army. The "Soldiers' Home Association" was a voluntary organization that, among other services, provided libraries for soldiers. Soldiers' homes were facilities consisting of one or more rooms in the garrisons and offering recreational services, coffee and doughnuts, newspapers, music, films, and libraries for soldiers.² Though there had been soldiers' homes in Sweden and Denmark for decades, the Finnish idea of soldiers' homes came from the Finnish soldiers, "the Rangers" (*jääkärit*), who had served in the German army during the First World War in order to learn warfare and to prepare for an armed uprising against the Russian hegemony in Finland (Lahtero, 1974, pp. 9–20). They returned to Finland in the winter of 1917–18 to take part in the Finnish Civil War on the side of the government and against leftist rebels. In the coming decades the Rangers formed the backbone of the Finnish army.

The "Soldatenheim" (in Swedish *soldathem*, in Finnish *sotilaskodit*) in the imperial German army were a widespread activity run predominantly by Christian organizations. During the First World War there were over 1,000 soldiers' homes in the German army. The soldiers' home activists in Finland were religiously minded women who cooperated closely with army chaplains, but the organizations maintaining the homes and the homes themselves did not bear a distinct religious character. The first soldiers' home and the local voluntary association running it had been established in 1918 during the civil war. A national association for the soldiers' homes movement was established in 1921. Besides libraries in the soldiers' homes, there also were other kinds of libraries for the soldiers such as "garrison libraries" that were run by noncommissioned officers as part of their duties. Apparently, there was no cooperation between the soldiers' homes libraries

and the garrison libraries. None of these libraries was part of the public library system supervised by the State Library Bureau, and they did not send information or statistics to the Library Bureau.

Thus, on the threshold of the war, there were three groups that were in position to cooperate in running library activities in military hospitals: professional librarians, Red Cross nurses, and the associations for soldiers' homes.

THE WINTER WAR, 1939–40

A month after the outbreak of the Winter War, volunteers from the city library of the second largest Finnish city, Turku, started to visit the wounded men in the city's military hospital. This was welcomed both by the doctors and the nurses. The professional librarians worked without pay and outside their regular working hours. The early start of this work was made easier because the library of Turku had planned to initiate general hospital library service in any case and had bought a book trolley for the purpose, though its first use turned out to be in the military hospital (Heiskanen, 1940). Another example of hospital-related library service occurred in Joensuu, a town in the eastern part of the country. Here the town library organized a small library attached to the ambulance run by the Danish volunteers (Järvelin, 1962, p. 135). There was, however, no time for a more general organization of formal library services in military hospitals.

During the Winter War an important national relief organization, *Maan Turva*, organized a campaign to collect material for the war effort. Among other things books were gathered in large quantities for the men on the front and in military hospitals. The Winter War was so short and intensive that not many of the articles had time to reach the hands of soldiers, but they were useful when the hostilities resumed in the following year. A major event at the time of the renewal of the war was the organization, by the Finnish National Library Association, of a book-collecting campaign both for the military and for the 400,000 people who had to leave their homes in the areas that had to be ceded to the Soviet Union according to the terms of the armistice. These people were resettled in other parts of the country, and the public libraries in municipalities where they were settled needed more library materials to provide services to the increased population.

THE CONTINUATION WAR, 1941–44

The Winter War was so short and the battles so intensive that not much time remained for reading in the trenches; only the men who had been wounded and taken behind the front had time to read. The Continuation War was different. After an intensive offensive period with many casualties, there followed a two-and-a-half-year period of trench warfare, in which there was nothing much to do other than wait in the trenches or behind the front. In these circumstances there was plenty of time for reading. Libraries and

book provision for the men on the front became important. The army unit for internal propaganda circulated book boxes in the trenches (Salminen, 1976, p. 142). By 1942 there were over 2,000 libraries of different types and sizes in the Finnish army (Raunio, 1994, p. 254).

As was the case during the Winter War, use of public libraries declined because of mobilization, evacuations, bombings, and other war events. This freed up professional librarians in some cities to work in the military hospitals during what had become irregular working hours (e.g., in Turku, Jyväskylä, and Vaasa). Others did this work on their own time, as in Tampere and Helsinki. In the town of Hanko the librarian had started to provide library service in the local civilian hospital even before the war. When Hanko was leased to the Soviet Union as a naval base after the Winter War and the Finns had to evacuate the town, she moved to Vaasa, where she immediately resumed her library work in the local military hospital during the Continuation War (Lehtikanto, 1964, p. 102).

Although some city libraries extended their services to military hospitals in the ways described above, the major part of library work and book provision for men in military hospitals was provided by volunteers, mostly women active in associations for soldiers' homes. Some help in gathering the books also came from the *Lotta Svärd* organization, as well as from the Red Cross. Many of the volunteers were professional librarians. While *Lotta Svärd* was another women's voluntary organization, it was more firmly integrated into the army organization than soldiers' homes. Its members also undertook military functions, such as anti-aircraft surveillance and nursing in military hospitals near the front, but they generally did not carry weapons (*Lotta Svärd*, 2006).

Hospital library work was supervised by the hospital chaplains, but they did not take part in the actual work. This was women's business. There were about seventy military hospitals located all over the country during the war, most having been converted from general hospitals, such as the Red Cross hospital in Helsinki. More formally organized library service was provided in the ten military hospitals in the capital, Helsinki, and in eleven other military hospitals and infirmaries elsewhere in the country. In the capital the local association for soldiers' homes had records showing that during the war years almost 250,000 books had been lent in the military hospitals (Groundstroem, 1980, p. 57). According to another source the Helsinki association operated in eighteen military hospitals, lending 51,000 books in 1942 and 60,000 in 1943 (Tudeer, 1960, p. 581). The four military hospitals in Tampere received book collections from the city library, whose professional staff worked off-duty in these hospitals. The circulation numbers rose from year to year. In 1941 the number of books lent in the Tampere hospitals was 7,148, in 1942 it was 9,419, and in 1943 it was 8,502. During the last year of the war, 1944, a temporary librarian was hired by the city library to take care of the growing circulation in the hospitals, and almost

Table 1. Loan Statistics of Else Branders's Library

Year	Number of Books Circulated
1938	8,500
1942	12,304
1943	11,599
1945	8,844

Note: In 1944 there were 2,300 volumes in the library (Mustelin, 2001, pp. 209, 213).

22,000 books were lent that year (Kanerva & Peltonen, 1961, pp. 148–49; see Table 1). There are no overall statistics from all parts of the country, but there must have been approximately the same amount of book loans elsewhere as in Helsinki.

Patients in military hospitals were placed in wards of ten beds. The books borrowed by one man would also circulate among the others, so the number of books read by different people was probably much higher than the loan records would indicate. We know that about 161,000 soldiers or other personnel were wounded during the Continuation War, a large proportion of whom spent some time in the military hospitals, which gives a rough picture of the potential audience for the hospital libraries (Raunio, 1994, p. 489).

Else Branders continued to serve as a voluntary library worker in the Red Cross hospital in Helsinki during the war years, and the circulation of her library grew by a third. We must remember, however, that her library was already being run in a professional manner during normal times, so the growth of lending was not spectacular during the war time; it merely followed the increasing number of patients caused by the war.

PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIANS AND WORK IN HOSPITAL LIBRARIES

How did professional librarians react to library work in military hospitals? In the official rhetoric of the authorities and professional opinion leaders, there was a tendency toward using an idealistic-patriotic jargon reflecting highly moralistic and patronizing attitudes toward the service. Some tendency toward this kind of rhetoric was apparent in the early days of war. In the national library journal, *Kansanvalistus ja Kirjastolehti*, an anonymous writer complained in January 1940 that the book-collecting campaigns brought many items such as light detective stories, worthless adventure books, and Tarzan books that were not worthy of being offered to wounded heroes. Instead of that kind of trash, according to the writer, there should be religious and highly patriotic books available for the soldiers (Eräs [pseud.], 1940, pp. 12–13).

This kind of opinion seems to have vanished totally as professional

librarians carried out their voluntary work in hospitals and gained insight into the character of soldiers, their educational background, and their reading habits. The librarians soon developed a down-to-earth attitude to the material being made available to the men and started to appreciate their personal choices. Some professional librarians were later critical of the idealistic-patriotic language and patronizing attitudes reflected in some of the early discussions of book selection criteria for hospitals. For example, Kerttu Koskenheimo, in her 1946 thesis required for the diploma in librarianship, observes:

My aim has been only to show in some examples and observations that the literature read in military hospitals is in many respects similar to experiences gained from other libraries, and that no field of human knowledge must be strange for the libraries in military hospitals. In most cases patients keep a totally healthy touch with the real life and environment, and for that reason it is rather a pointless measure, which does not show understanding for the psychology of the patients, to exclude some genres as unsuitable or as not belonging to their field of interest. (p. 12)

Contrary to “recommendations from certain circles,” the need for religious books was, according to Koskenheimo, low, partly because those who needed them got them from hospital chaplains. On the other hand, she also refuted the assumption that patients in military hospitals were not interested in books about the war. Even here she believed that there was not much difference between the war- and peace-time reading preferences (Koskenheimo, 1946).

A librarian who had taken part in the hospital library work throughout the Winter War described her experiences in a manner that seems to have become customary for professional librarians who took part in the voluntary work among the wounded soldiers (Lappalainen, 1940). There is a distinctively emotional, subjective tone in such reports that does not exist in the ordinary library reports of peace time. The same professional standards and ideals that were strictly maintained during peace time could not be maintained during the war among the wounded soldiers, a majority of whom had never visited a library after their school days or had not even read a whole book since leaving school. The librarians were aware that it was impossible to be openly didactic with men who have just escaped the jaws of death. It was difficult for librarians “to follow rigorous principles of librarianship,” as one librarian wrote about her experiences (Heiskanen, 1940, p. 42). The goal could only be to inspire the men to read, never mind what kind of books, as long as the minimum standards of decency were maintained. There were many genres of literature that would not have been accepted in a public library during normal times, such as low-quality literature like detective stories, overtly romantic or daring love stories, or books of reckless humor. The librarians often maintained that

even providing this kind of wide-ranging freedom of choice did not lead to a total degradation of taste in the military hospitals. Nonfiction reading, for example, did not disappear.

The suffering and the dangers that the men in the military hospitals had experienced led to the acceptance of the belief that they had to be treated as freely acting individuals who should be allowed to make their own choices. They had earned that right. Reading before the war was to a great extent an activity of well-to-do, educated people who could buy the books they wanted. They had more time and better circumstances to read than the majority of the people who lived in the countryside, often in houses without electricity, with no book shops in the vicinity, and with libraries, if they were available, that were small and contained mostly books that ordinary working men did not wish to read. The extraordinary circumstances of the war took these men out of their normal surroundings. Their wounds gave them the opportunity of filling the spare time that they now had with the only entertainment, apart from playing cards, that was available—reading. Reading increased in general during the war because of lack of other forms of entertainment. Book production actually increased during the war while book prices remained reasonable (Virtanen, 1958, pp. 250–52; Häggman, 2003, pp. 4–10). There was no shortage of paper in Finland because the circumstances of the war prevented the export of paper from the numerous paper mills of the country. It is not an exaggeration to say that it was the war that taught Finnish people, especially men from ordinary surroundings, to read actively.

A great obstacle for library work in military hospitals was that there was no mutually shared way to talk about books and reading. Men who had only attended primary school had not learned to talk about their reading preferences. They just said “Give me something nice (or exciting).” The librarians’ way of talking about books was too literary and their way of recommending books was too prescriptive: the men did not initially trust them. It was a learning process for the librarians. If the librarian could get one of the men to become interested in a book and he read it (or had read it before), he could then recommend the book to the others. The men trusted each others’ recommendations more than the librarian’s. On the other hand, because of their virgin state as readers, the men could act in surprising ways as when, for example, a whole room could be found reading fairy tales and asking for more (Koskenheimo, 1946).

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

As it was said earlier, the long-range goal, both of the State Library Bureau and the Finnish National Library Association, was to make hospital library work part of the municipal library system. While professional librarians worked as volunteers in military hospitals during the war, neither the Library Bureau nor the Library Association had much to do with the work.

Nevertheless, they tried to use the goodwill generated by wartime hospital library work in the period after the war as a basis for shaping hospital library activity along the lines they saw as appropriate. At the conclusion of the Winter War, the board of the Finnish National Library Association noted that paradoxically the war had a positive effect on the goal of spreading hospital library service, which had appeared as if by itself. The association concluded, however, that further actions on its part must be postponed until a more propitious time.³

In general, 1943 seems to have been the year when all eyes turned toward the coming of peace and serious library planning began. That year the Library Association commissioned a guide book for hospital library services, although it was not printed until the autumn of 1944, after the war with the Soviet Union had ended. The booklet was partially financed by the publishers whose books were recommended for hospital libraries in the list of books included in the booklet.⁴ Another source of financing came from the funds under the control of the chief chaplain of the military hospitals.⁵

Two important meetings about hospital libraries were held in 1943. In November the directors of city libraries met with the staff of the Library Bureau. One of the writers of the hospital library guide book, Mauno Kanninen, who was the director of a Helsinki city branch library, lectured about the hospital library issue at this meeting. He was, at the time, trying to develop cooperation between the Helsinki city library and one of the military hospitals, which in peace time had been part of the Helsinki city hospital system. He advocated as a universal and bold goal the integration into the municipal library system of all hospital libraries, as well as libraries in old people's homes, kindergartens, firebrigades, etc. The necessary funds could be included in the city libraries' budgets (Kaupunkien kirjastojen, 1943).

The second meeting was a December seminar organized by the State Library Bureau, in which about eighty people interested in hospital library work participated. Most of the participants came from military hospitals throughout the country. There were lectures on various aspects of hospital library work, but the atmosphere of the meeting was curiously "peaceful." The speech given by Helle Kannila, the director of the State Library Bureau, was explicitly directed at planning peace-time activities in hospital libraries. She stressed the obligation of society to satisfy the cultural needs of people who were shut within the walls of hospitals. The importance of reading among patients in military hospitals has been acknowledged, she said, and it should be recognized in civilian hospitals as well:

It may appear strange that a question like this is treated right in the middle of war. You could claim that there are so many more important issues that must be neglected in the interests of the preeminent goal. The fact is, however, that an issue like hospital librarianship during the

war becomes especially acute and it has been the war experiences that have helped to make things develop in a favorable direction. Before the [First] World War there was hardly anywhere organized library work in military hospitals, but during and after the war it was initiated in many European countries. Even in our country there is now many times more library activities in hospitals than during peace time. This expanded work is limited to war patients and invalids, and it is temporary by nature, but this does not diminish its value. The explanation for the takeoff of this work during the war is the fact that people feel a special sympathy towards our brothers who have ended up in hospitals as victims of the war and who have suffered suffer for us. . . . Civilian patients, on the other hand, are there always, though only a few people have been as keen to help them, even though it is suitable to do so. But, even if wartime library work is mainly temporary, it undoubtedly has a significance beyond the restrictions of wartime. When this work is being done in appropriate forms as is possible now, the results can be applied in normal times. At the same time, by showing their value and meaning, ground is prepared for regular, systematic library activities in hospitals. In the future it will be shown that this kind of work cannot in the long run be done with a voluntary workforce supported by occasional donations, but that an activity based on official, regular investment is needed. It seems that it is important now, when this form of library activity is being experimented with through more extensive forms than before, to come together to negotiate issues concerned with thinking about the future.⁶

Three librarians spoke about their work in military hospitals. It was noted that from the professional point of view “those patients who spend longer times in the hospital in many cases tend gradually to start reading more valuable literature. The person distributing the books can effectively support this by presenting non-fiction from various fields and other valuable books” (Sairaalakirjastotyön, 1944, p. 26). It was generally assumed that reading guidance was important because many patients did not know much about literature. On the other hand, there were warnings against being too obviously patronizing. There was a consensus that, after the war, the only way to continue the work would be to integrate it into regular library work. Society must ensure that there are enough funds for this kind of activity (Sairaalakirjastotyön, 1944; Kinos, 1944).

Because the damage and suffering caused by the war was seen as a general social problem, it often led to increasing intervention by the state and the municipalities to guarantee equality of all the citizens and to find symbolic expressions of the solidarity and democratization arising from the common experiences of the people during the war. In the case of hospital libraries, the official and professional were integrated in the same persons, such as Helle Kannila, who acted as both civil servants and representatives of the professional association. What the developments professionally should be had become apparent before the war, gained momentum during the war, and were put into practice after the war. Especially decisive were the

contacts between professional librarians and hospital personnel. A good example of how the takeover of hospital library service by the city library occurred is the case of Kivelä hospital in Helsinki. As a result of discussions between library director Mauno Kanninen and nurse H. Ahlbäck, who was in charge of the hospital, the city council created the first permanent civilian hospital library as a branch of the municipal library system with its own room in the hospital. This was inaugurated in Helsinki in January 1945 (Wirila, 1945).

Modern professional hospital librarianship in Finland, it can be concluded, grew directly from the voluntary work of librarians in military hospitals during World War II, as British hospital librarianship had grown out of the British experience during World War I. In the years after the war, Finnish hospital library service quickly spread as a normal part of library operations in most larger cities, although its adoption in smaller places came only in the 1960s.

NOTES

1. For general information on Finnish history, see Jutikkala & Pirinen (2003) and Klinge (1990).
2. What are called soldiers' homes in Finland, Sweden, and Germany should not be confused with the soldiers' homes in the United States, which are homes for retired or wounded soldiers. The nearest equivalent to the Finnish soldiers' homes in the U.S. Army are the MWR (morale, welfare, and recreation) operations of each branch of service run by civilians. See, e.g., *MWR History* (n.d.).
3. Minutes of the Board of the Finnish Library Association, April 25, 1940, Office of the Finnish Library Association, Helsinki, Finland.
4. Minutes of the Board of the Finnish Library Association, November 26, 1943.
5. Minutes of the Board of the Finnish Library Association, December 10, 1943.
6. *Sairaalakirjastojen neuvottelupäivät* [Seminar on hospital libraries], papers of the State Library Bureau [Valtion Kirjastotoimiston arkisto], National Archives of Finland [Kansallisarkisto], Helsinki, Finland.

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