

Foreign volunteers in Finland During Winter War 1939 - 1940



Volunteers in Winter War

- ^λ At the beginning of Winter War 30th November 1939 political situation in Europe was difficult.
 - Germany and Soviet Union had conquered Poland.
 - French and Great Britain had so called "phony war" with Germany in 1939–1940.
- ^λ Despite compassion towards Finland no nation in Europe was ready to send parts of their armies to help Finland.

Where to?

- ^λ It was to expect that only untrained and unexperienced foreigners would arrive.
- Commander-in-chief Marshal Mannerheim thought that it would be best to send volunteers to home front in order to free Finnish men to front lines.

Scandinavian volunteers?

- λ Even though there had been negotiations about military alliance/defence pact between Scandinavian countries official response to question of volunteers was reluctant.
 - Fear was that Norway, Denmark and Sweden would have to join the war.
- λ Sweden was most agreeing to send volunteers, Denmark and Norway were less agreeing.
- λ Norway and Denmark had very passive cabinets.
 - Sending help had to be as secret as possible in case Soviet Union or Germany would get provoked.
 - Some already opened enlistning offices were closed in Denmark.

Volunteers in Winter War

- ^λ Finns were especially interested in Polish refugees.
- ^λ Hungary, France, Italy, Great Britain and United States were also essential areas of enlisting volunteers.
 - General O. Enckell was sent to Great Britain and France to discuss the matter of volunteers and material aid.
 - Professor E. Lönnroth was sent to Hungary
 - Italy was very willing to help Finland
 - ^λ Country sent mostly material help.
 - ^λ France and Great Britain approved enlisting volunteers.

Volunteers in Winter War

- λ Volunteers were already discussed in November 1939
- λ Negotiations were held in both sides during December and January.
- λ At the end of December embassies were given order that only trained Scandinavian, British, French, Italian, Hungarian, Spanish, Polish and American volunteers should be accepted.
 - Volunteers had to had officers, equipment and weapons of their own.
 - "Russian, Germans should not be taken"

Volunteers in Winter War

- λ As the war continued the volunteers became the only way to replace Finnish casualties.
 - At the end of January all the help Finland could get was accepted.
- λ To this point the case of volunteers was handled in a disconnected way, but now a centralized office was needed.
- λ On 5th of March 1940 the Volunteer Office of Headquarters (Päämajan Vapaaehtoistoimisto) was established.
 - Minister Söderhjelm, colonel-leutenant Aminoff and Olenius as the representative of Defence Ministry were appointed to the office.

Volunteers in Winter War

- λ Receiving and training of volunteers became the task of homefront troops staff in 8th of December 1939.
 - Receipt Office was found in Tornio.
 - Office worked in several ways.
- λ Forming of units out of volunteers was supposed to happen in the valley of rivers Tornio and Kemi.
 - General H. Ignatius was ordered to receive the men.



Volunteers in Winter War

- λ The stationing of a volunteer depended essentially on his training.
 - Wishes about the branch of service were tried to take in consideration, but changes had to be made.
- λ Even though the mission was to take in trained men, this objective had to be bargained.
 - Training camps for the volunteers had to be established.

OSASTO SISU



- ^ At the end of January the preparations for units and training of volunteers were ready.
- ^ In the boot camp of Lapua the different volunteers were supposed to form Unit Sisu (Osasto Sisu), "a foreign unit"
 - The letters DE in the units badge ment the French words *Detachment etranger*, a foreign unit.
 - 26 golden rings represented the different nationalities in this unit.

OSASTO SISU



- λ Osasto Sisu was created in 8.1.1940 when its commander Bertil Nordlund arrived to Lapua.
 - Norldund had been the military attaché in Stockholm Embassy
 - Spoke five languages fluently.
- λ Waiting him were eight volunteers.
- λ His mission was to organize the volunteers into platoons, companies, battalions and brigades according to the date of arrival.
- λ Troops were stationed into old Russian barracks.

OSASTO SISU



^λ Osasto Sisu was multilingual

- In 1st company (international company) Finnish was the language of daily communication and orders were given in German or French (Company was at it's largest 155 men strong)
- The Hungarian Company used Hungarian (341 men)
- British Company used England (largest strenght 158 men, 227 men in books)
- Numbers are missing the sick, lost etc.

Volunteers by nationality

- λ Traffic/physical connections and the political situations (relationship with Germany and Soviet Union) affected the number of volunteers and their access to Finland.
- λ Scandinavians and those Finnish Americans who departed early were the first to arrive.
- λ A Dutch volunteer from Jakarta was probably the one who took the longest journey to take part in Winter War.
- λ Among the volunteers were also Latvians, Lithuanians, one from Luxemburg, one from Portugal and many other nationalities.
 - Last volunteers arrived at the end of March 1940.
 - In 27th of March the unit was 717 men in strength.

Hungarians



- ^λ Number of volunteers was exceptionally large in Hungary.
 - At the beginning of May 1940 about 25 000 volunteers were registered.
- ^λ Also in Hungary the relationship with Soviet Union forced the enlistling to work in secrecy.
 - Enlistning office in Budabest was closed and transferred to countryside.
 - Germany forbade the passage through its area on 11th of January and the transporting of volunteers was hindered.

Hungarians

- λ Largest group of Hungarians arrived to Osasto Sisu in 3th of March through London, Bergen and Tornio and raised the units strenght to 500 men.
- λ 18 officers, 10 NCO:s (non-comissioned officers) and 341 men/privates.
 - According to *Talvisodan historia* the strenght was 24 officers, 52 NCO:S and 265 men.
- λ As an exception to other volunteers the Hungarians were well trained and equipped.
 - Only the absence of weapons and skis prevented immediate transfer to frontlines.



Swedish

- ^ The most important group of volunteers were the Swedish.
- ^ They were the only group of volunteers that received a wide responsibility on frontlines.
- ^ Their use for war propaganda was great, which is the reason why Swedish volunteers were usually photographed during the war.

Swedish volunteers

- λ The Government of Sweden was afraid that the volunteers would drag the country into the war.
 - The regular officers were permitted to resign from army during their stay in Finland.
- λ At first the quota was 5 000 volunteers, but the government promised to raise it in case of necessity.
- λ Sencoring the propaganda of recruiting volunteers impeded the work.
- λ On the other hand volunteers were a safe way for government to conduct the efforts of the pro-joint defence supporters
- λ In February of 1940 Sweden refused to send the volunteers as a ready to use unit, similar to Condor Legion in Spanish Civil War.

Swedish volunteers in training

- ^ Swedish volunteers were trained in Tornio and Kemi.
- ^ Norwegian volunteers were stationed in Swedish troops.
 - Norwegian volunteers lacked the professional staff.



Swedish in combat

- ^ First units to take part in combat were the Air Force, when on 12.1.1940 Lentolaivue F 29 (Air Squadron F 29) attacked the enemy in Märkäjärvi.
- ^ The Swedish AA-units (Anti-Air Artillery) took responsibility of air defence in Northern Finland.



Swedish in combat

- ^λ Svenska Frivilligkåren (SFK) took the front from Lappi Group on 28.2.1940
 - Group was commanded by a veteran of Finnish Civil War of 1918, General Ernst Linder.

Swedish in combat

- ^λ Volunteers were established into a fighting group Stridsgruppen Svenska Frivilligkåren (Ts.R SFK).
 - Commander was lieutenant-colonel Magnus Dyrssen, who also commanded the I Battallion.



Swedish in combat

- λ Unit had two battalions.
 - Each battalion had five companies with supportin units and artillery
 - Strenght 2500 men
- λ Swedish were combined with local Finnish units, which formed Group Willamo under Linders command.



Swedish in combat

- λ Märkijärvi in Salla was a quiet front after January.
- λ Swedish forces still suffered casualties, for example the commander of the fighting group, colonel-leutenant Dyrssen died in artillery fire while examining front line 1.3.1940
 - First two Swedish volunteers died that day.
- λ At the last day of Winter War ten Swedish volunteers were killed.
- λ Total casualties: 33 killed in action, 50 wounded + frostbites.



Swedish in combat

- λ Five Finnish rifle battalions and two artillery batteries were released from Salla and sent to Gulf of Viborg, Karelian Isthmus.
- λ Swedish volunteers were also in anti-air service (some were deployed on ships) and artillery
 - Besides SFK 420 men served in different positions.



Norwegian and Danish

- λ Amongside Swedem volunteers came from Norway and Denmark.
 - Norwegians served mainly in Swedish units.
- λ Countries had unofficial competition of the number of volunteers.





Danish – Dansk Frivillig Korps

- λ Danish volunteers were trained in a boot camp in Oulu.
- λ The first volunteering Danish had arrived already in December.
- λ Swedish didn't want Danish volunteers among their troops, because they lacked winter training.
 - Danish were gathered in their own outfit.



Danish

- ^λ Danish and Swedish volunteers had many arguments.
- ^λ Danish volunteers had reserved uniforms.
 - Swedish didn't give uniforms and equipment to the volunteers because of delayed pays.
 - Danish were forced to use civilian clothing for a long time.
- ^λ Lacking equipment was delivered as time passed.
- ^λ At the beginning of January the Danish were garrisoned in Oulu with Finnish American volunteers.



Recruiting begins in Great Britain

- λ Great Britain had promised to the League of Nations, that it would help Finland to repel the attack.
- λ Harold Gibson, who worked in the War Cabinets secretariat, suggested to Lord Halifax the gathering of a volunteer force 1000 men strong
 - War Cabinet decided, that the Great Britain couldn't gather the troops.
 - Instead a separate Finnish Aid Bureau was found in January 1940
- λ Two tasks:
 - Taking care of the aid send to Finland
 - Recruiting volunteers

Recruiting begins in Great Britain

- λ Finnish Government welcomed even a small unit, because their positive effect to civilians was good.
 - At the same time the unit was an example to neutral countries like the United States.
- λ Harold Gibson established and directed the bureau.
- λ Committee to Aid Finland was found in 26.1.1940 to direct the aiding.
 - In the committee there were for example Gibson himself, industrialist Gösta Serlachius, the kings private doctor lord Dawson of Penn and the Secretary of State for India, L. S. Amery.

London, Thorney House, Smith Square

λ Finnish Aid Bureau was stationed in Thorney House



His Majestys permission

- ^λ A law from the year 1870 forbade British citizens to enlist into foreign armies.
 - It was allowed to get immunity to the law, and George VI gave his permission 8.2.1940
- ^λ Those willing to become soldier were taken into service and each pledged loyalty to Finland in the precence of the Finnish representative, emissary Georg Gripenberg.

Enlisting volunteers

- ^λ The parliament declared that the British were allowed to go to Finland as volunteers.
 - 27 years old men were permitted to leave the country.
- ^λ Finland's embassy in London received 2000–3000 applications in few weeks after the declaration
 - As the committee had its second meeting in 30.1. best 300 out of the applicants were chosen as volunteers.
 - The first interviews for the chosen were declared to be held in 7.2.
 - Among the first volunteers were many Scottish and Irish, so branch offices were planned to be established in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dublin.
 - ^λ Only Glasgow's office was found.

Enlisting volunteers

- ^λ Volunteering men had to give information asked in application form and get two referees.
- ^λ According to this information some were asked for interviewing.
 - Applicants were disqualified because of age, character or existing family.
- ^λ Chosen ones were given a date for an interview and for a medical examination in Thorney House
 - Each applicant was interviewed by two members of inspection group.

Enlisting volunteers

- ^λ In the interview it was decided, if the applicant was qualified of sending to Finland.
- ^λ The interview followed by a medical examination.
- ^λ Lord Dawson had formed a group of 40 doctors for the examinations.
- ^λ Many tried to cheat in examinations.

Feeble volunteers?

- ^λ Enlisted men varied greatly in quality.
- ^λ Despite medical examinations men with lung conditions and STD:s were allowed to travel to Finland.
 - Two volunteers even had glass eyes, but "since it's the left eye, it doesn't disturb aiming a rifle"

Feeble volunteers?

- λ Finnish officials gave attention to the poor physical shape of the volunteers.
 - Examinations of the 30 men trying to get into Finnish Air Force gave similar results.
- λ It should be noted, that the British mobilization had already taken all healthy 20–28 years old men to service.
- λ According to Army Council's report out of the million applicants trying to get into British army between world wars (1919–1938)
 - 1/3 were disqualified immediately
 - λ 1/3 of these because of physical/medical/educational reason
 - 1/3 were accepted after lowering the standards

British equipment

- ^λ The chosen ones were given a uniform, which was sent to Finland with other equipment.
- ^λ Equipment included
 - Common uniform of the British Army
 - A belt, pockets for ammunition, a big and a small packbag and a gasmask.
 - Only winter equipment were gloves and winter cloaks
 - ^λ Cloaks were of excellent quality, and in Finland they were made into shirts.
- ^λ At the end of March the volunteers were given Finnish equipment.

Officers

- ^λ Kermit Roosevelt was chosen as the commander of the volunteers
 - WW I veteran (Mesopotamia/Iraq).
 - 50 years old son of Theodore Roosevelt.
 - Resigned from British army and received the rank of a major.
 - ^λ Promoted on 3.3.1940 into colonel
 - Because of feeling ill it was decided that he would leave to Finland with those departing in 16.3.
- ^λ 65 years old brigade general Sir Osmond Winter was chosen to act as the commander-in-chief.
 - He got sick on board while travelling to Finland and was sent to hospital in Tornio.

Numbers

- λ In all 228 volunteers were transferred to Finland.
- λ Youngest was 18 years old, eldest sir Winter (65)
- λ In all 979 men were ready to be shipped to Finland.
- λ 8 900 men offered their service.
- λ Enlistning ended in 15.3.1940.

Transition to Finland

- ^λ The first group, lead by captain Hugo Chandor, was supposed to include 50 men.
 - Just before departure ministry of the interior and Scotland Yard denied departing from 40 men.
 - 10 men who were left moved with general Winter through the rout Edinburgh–Middlesborough–Narvik–Tornio
- ^λ Next group left on 28.2. lead by lieutenant Nurik.
- ^λ Cancellation caused a three weeks delay to the arrival of volunteers.
 - Transfer of the Hungarian volunteers was delayed.
 - Thorney House's procedures of selection were tightened.

Transition to Finland

^λ Third and the largest group of British arrived to Finland after the war.

– Information about the ceasefire was received when the group was moving to Bergen.

^λ Some men asked permission to return.

^λ There was still a chance that hostilities between Soviet Union and Finland would begin again.

In Finland

- λ When the officers arrived to Finland they received their uniforms and Finnish insignias.
- λ The officers had to wait for the men for a long time, and captain Chandor left to Lapua to investigate.
- λ In 15.3. Lapua's Peoples House was transformed into a barracks.
- λ Next unit, lead by lieutenant Nurik arrived to Lapua in 16.3.
 - Equipment was lost.
 - There was no food supply available.
- λ Volunteers were somewhat organized into a working head quarters.
- λ Third groups men 144 (147) were divided into head quarters and four squadrons.
 - Among the group were Belgians and French (21 men)

Civilian volunteers from Great Britain

- λ Finnish Aid Bureau assisted three civilian groups:
- λ Largest group was Friends Ambulance Unit (Quakers)
 - 56 persons
 - Arrived in two parts at the beginning of February.
 - Worked in the front north of Lake Ladoga, especially in Tohmajärvi and Leppäsyvä.
- λ After the war 31 volunteers ended up in Northern Norway through Sweden and joined the British troops fighting Germans.
 - The rest returned to Sweden, from where they were sent home through Soviet Union.

Civilian volunteers from Great Britain

- ^λ Second group was First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (F.A.N.Y), "Fannies", a volunteering first aid organization.
 - 18 nurses and 10 ambulances.
- ^λ Journey went through Newcastle and Oslo to Stockholm on 27.2., from where the unit continued to Uumaja.
 - From Uumaja to Helsinki, where part was sent to Lahti and main group to Punkaharju's hospital.
- ^λ After Germany occupied Norway the group gathered in Helsinki and was shipped away from Petsamo on a ship, that was transferring American Finnish volunteers.

Civilian volunteers from Great Britain

- ^λ Third group was a firefighting unit of eight men, gathered by movie director Charles A. Gilkison.
- ^λ Group arrived after the war, but provided valuable help in Helsinki.
 - Demobilized in 1941 with Osasto Sisus volunteers.
- ^λ Helsinki's firebrigade had for years a bright red firetruck with the text "London Fire Volunteers"
 - Germans protested this in 1942, but the car was not repainted.

Estonians

- ^λ Estonia gave air fields and other military bases to Soviet Union in 1939.
 - Air fields in Baltic area were very important to Soviet bombers.
- ^λ Situation in Estonia forbade them to help Finland in any official way.
 - Some newspapers published news about the Finnish army's victories.

Estonians

- λ Despite the pressure many Estonians tried to get across Finnish Gulf to side with Finns.
 - For example on 11.2.1940 six Estonian draftees arrived to Finland via Island of Aegna.
- λ Coast patrol received hundreds of Estonians in Finnish Archipelago.
 - National security officers interrogated the comers in case of soviet spys.
- λ Unknown quantity of comers were killed by winter conditions in the Gulf.
 - Journey took 12–16 hours and faults in ice could slow travelling.

Estonians

- λ Contributions of Estonian volunteers are hard to determine, because they were given Finnish documents.
 - Some received Polish or Nansen passports.
- λ Estonian volunteers were supposed to serve in Osasto Sisu
 - First three in 9.1.1940
 - Altogether 58 Estonians, some of whom were in Finland before the war.
 - Apparently there were hundreds of volunteers.



USA citizens and Canadians

- λ During WW II almost 500 000 Finnish-related people lived in North America.
- λ An active Rintamamiesliitto (association of the veterans of the war of 1918/Finnish war of independence) worked in USA helping in enlistning.
- λ First volunteers arrived in December on board s/s Gripsholm.

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LUETTELO AMERIKASTA KOTIMAAHAN PALAAVISTA KANSALAISISTA
M/S GRIPSHOLMILLA 9 P: NÄ JOULUKUUTA 1939.

Nimi	Syntynyt.	Kotipaikka.
Aitto, Yrjö	1/6 -97.	Oulu.
Alfthan, Tore von	1/10 -94.	Kymi, Karhula.
Annala, Eeli	21/8 -92.	Ilmajoki.
Aranto, Eino Olavi	6/2 -06.	Viipuri.
Böhm, Erik	29/1 -11.	Helsinki, Kulosaari.
Davidson, Eero	30/8 -05.	Turku.
Fotas, Eero	4/4 -16.	Great Neck L. T. New-York.
Gustafson, Herman	14/9 -99.	Helsinki.
Heikkilä, Paul	30/1 -87.	Virrat.
Hämäläinen, Robert	20/3 -93.	Viipuri.
Immonen, Yrjö	22/4 -92.	Vartiola.
Jaatinen, Kaarlo	22/12 -10.	Läskelä.
Kaksonen, Toivo	10/12 -16.	Pyhäjärvi V.L.
Kaleva, Viljo	29/3 -03.	Helsinki.
Kalliola, Erkki	5/6 -19.	Riihimäki.
Karhunaari, Väinö	3/5 -10.	Rauma.
Kivinen, Heikki	30/1 -97.	Teisko.
Kostamovaara, Matti	31/8 -04.	Kemijärvi.
Kuvaja, Toimi	21/4 -07.	Koijärvi.
Laatunen, Martti	30/1 -04.	Montreal, Kanada.
Lehto, Yrjö	19/12 -99.	Vaasa.
Liljenberg, Armas	8/9 -98.	Willistown Mass. U.S.A.
Lindblad, Einar	7/5 -93.	Montreal, Kanada.
Las, Johannes	3/4 -99.	Helsinki.
Malten, Karl	24/2 -01.	Viipuri.
Mikkola, Johannes	26/1 -06.	Vehkalahti.
Muurilainen, Armas	14/9 -17.	Kymi.
Mäkelä, John	2/2 -00.	Yli-Istaro.
Mäkelä, Tyne Maria	31/8 -00.	Teisko.
Nieminen, Akseli	2/3 -01.	Ruovesi.
Niskanen, David	31/3 -04.	Sotkamo.
Nolo, Eino	17/11 -04.	Pyhäjärvi.
Ojala, Antti	23/5 -97.	Kärkölä, Lappila as.
Orkaa, Sten-Olof	10/4 -09.	Helsinki.
Pasanen, Veikko	18/1 -03.	Pyhäsalmi.
Parkkali, Oskari	18/3 -07.	Hiitola.
Penttinen, Elssi	6/10 -07.	Ruovesi, Murola.
Penttilä, Aimo	7/10 -11.	Saunsaari.
Penttilä, Albert	23/11 -02.	New - York N.Y. U.S.A.
Pohjankukka, Allan	22/2 -09.	Kustavi.
Rahi, Alpo	22/12 -12.	Rauma.
Rahi, Salme	7/6 -12.	Rauma.
Ranckonen, Kalle	2/9 -06.	Teisko.
Riikula, Jalmari	12/4 -89.	Mouhijärvi.
Stark, Signe	11/8 -86.	Vaasa.
Stycke, Anton	23/4 -93.	Viipuri.
Suursoho, Ville	26/12 -17.	Levansaari.
Suomänen, Väinö	19/3 -01.	Juuka K.L.
Söder, Kaarlo	22/11 -01.	Vartiola.
Talsi, Toivo	24/4 -17.	Levansaari.
Tevahauta, Oiva	18/5 -10.	Turku.
Tillikainen, Flemming	18/12 -96.	Vaasa.
Tirri, Henry	24/5 -96.	Viipuri.
Unkila, Lauri	8/7 -01.	Orivesi.
Valfeldt, Hilja	24/7 -99.	Helsinki.
Valfeldt, Svante	18/6 -92.	Helsinki.
Wallenius, Kullervo	5/11 -14.	New - York.
Wilkman, Toivo	15/5 -02.	Tampere.
Vuorimies, Väinö	23/7 -03.	Voitti.

Finnish Americans

- ^λ For reasons of propaganda value the Finnish Americans were put into same unit, that was trained in Oulu.
- Men needed practical training.
 - At first the unit was called American Finnish Corps – Osasto Amerikan Suomalaiset.

Finnish Americans

- λ Among the Finnish Americans was an exceptional sort of "desertion"
 - Men ran away from shipments and boot camps to get to other infantry training centers in order to get to the front more quickly.
 - Out of these two brothers who deserted from Oulu, Kaarlo and Henrik Astikainen ,were killed in combat
 - λ Kaarlo died in Virolahti on 10.3.1940 and Henrik on 12.3.1940 in Northern Finland.
- λ In addition to Swedish and Norwegian volunteers these were the only volunteers, who fought in front lines with certainty.

Penttilä's group

- ^λ On 24.12.1939 a group of Finnish American volunteers arrived in Tornio, and the group was lead by lieutenant Albert Penttilä
 - Penttilä took contact with major-general Paavo Talvela, because Penttilä had fought in his troops in year 1918.
 - Penttilä asked if he and his men could fight under Talvela's command.
- ^λ These Finnish Americans fought in north of Lake Ladoga as a guerrilla unit.
 - Albert Penttilä was later promoted as a captain.
- ^λ One of these volunteers, private Aimo Penttilä was killed in Aittojoki.

Finnish Americans become ASL



- λ After December the first new group of Finnish American volunteers arrived to Oulu in 6th of January 1940.
 - 30 men.
- λ Amerikan-Suomalaisten Legioona, Finnish-American Legion began to form
 - Officially the name "Legion" was mentioned first time in 23.2.1940
- λ 20.1.1940 arrived 58 men
- λ Biggest group, 158 men arrived in 17.2.
 - 18.2. unit was divided into two companies.

ASL:n training and weapons



- λ Lack of trainers hindered the units military training
 - At the end of February major I. Pallari boosted the drilling.
- λ Unit lacked weapons from the beginning
 - Situation was poor until March
- λ With the help of fundraising by Suomi-Seura and USA 260 uniforms were made.
 - These were made out of black frieze, where as the rest of Finnish Army used grey frieze.
 - These were given up in February and replaced by ”Model Cajander”, a mixture of civilian and military clothing.

ASL is shipped to frontlines



- λ On 29.2. two platoons were transferred from Second Company to First.
- λ In March training and weaponry was efficient enough.
 - Especially equipment from Danish volunteers helped
- λ Men who "definitely wanted to fight immediately" were transferred into First Company.

ASL is send to front lines



- λ Legions trip to frontlines began on 9.3.1940 in Tuiras station.
 - Strenght 7 officers, 48 NCO:s and 251 men
- λ 1/3 of the men in First Company had previous war experience from various conflicts.
- λ Trip through Finland on railways took few days.
- λ Company arrived to Jääski near the front in Careliuan Isthmus on 12.3. and readied itself to be sent to front lines in the morning of 13.3.

ASL in front lines



- λ At 6.50 AM the company was ordered to take its place in front lines.
- λ During the briefing it was announced that a peace treaty was signed.
- λ During the withdrawal ASL was one of the last units that retreated to the new border.

ASL



- λ In March about one thousand Finnish Americans were waiting to be shipped to Finland.
 - If the Legion could have been formed as planned, it would have been a very strong unit.
- λ In case of a new war the unit was planned to be used in enlisting new Finnish Americans.

Number of volunteers

- ^λ Quantity of volunteers is as follows:
 - 8680 Swedish
 - 1010 Danish
 - 695 Norwegians
 - 372 Finnish Americans (USA + Canada)
 - 346 Hungarians
 - 350 from Eastern Carelia and Ingria
- ^λ When the war ended in 13.3.1940 the total number of volunteers was 11 663
 - Also British volunteers (227), numbers don't include the prisoners of war who were trained to fight against Sovien Union.
- ^λ Three without a nationality.
- ^λ Only Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish Americans managed to get to frontlines during the war.
 - Rest were still in training.

Importance of volunteers

- λ If the war would have lasted longer, the volunteers would have had a greater significance.
- λ It should be noted, that even though the attitudes of governments towards military support was negative or dismissive, the people were usually enthusiastic for Finland
- λ Many times officials or other parties helped Finland and the volunteers.
 - Germanys objections and refusal to let volunteers and materials pass through it obstructed the help from getting to Finland.

Aftermath: Interim Peace 1940–1941

- ^λ Many volunteers were stuck in Finland unable to get back home after Germany conquered Norway.
- ^λ The Finns helped the volunteers as much as they could and causes of complaints were usually quickly fixed.
- ^λ Finns were especially interested in Estonian volunteers, who were supposed to have a great role in creating independent Estonia.

Thank you!

^λ Few discussion ideas:

- How to study the Estonians, whose documentation was falsified, later probably destroyed?
- Finnish Americans: how many were actual immigrants and how many were for example sailors?
- Finnish Americans (500 000 at that time) as a base for larger enlistning of volunteers after the war.

Sources of photos and pictures

- λ Photos of volunteers: SA-kuva (www.sa-kuva.fi).
- λ Documents: Common history, University of Turku (Yleisen historian arkisto, Turun yliopisto)
- λ Flags and map of Finland: Wikipedia.org
- λ Map and picture of Thorney House: Googlemaps
- λ Insignias and medals: *Kaliberi* 1/2001 & 2/2001
- λ ASL insignia: Sotamuseo/Riku Kauhanen