

## L.63

### PHARMACISTS SERVING UNDER WAR CONDITIONS IN NORTHERN NORWAY

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Finnmark is the northernmost county in Norway, located above the Arctic Circle. Like the rest of Norway it was occupied by German forces in 1940. When Germany attacked Russia in 1941, Finnmark became part of an important war zone. Three small towns, Kirkenes, Vadsö, and Vardö, situated in short distances from Russia, went through a great number of attacks by Russian planes.

Each of the towns had one pharmacy, but there was a shortage of trained pharmacists. In 1940 the government issued a decree about duty to serve for medical personnel. In accordance with this two recently graduated male pharmacists were ordered to work at Kirkenes and Vadsö from January 1944. This report is mostly based on their written accounts.

The Germans had fortified Kirkenes, which made it an important target. The pharmacy was destroyed three times. During the heavy fighting in October 1944, about 3000 persons took shelter in a pit gallery, and the pharmacy moved into it.

On August 23, 1944, bombs destroyed great parts of Vadsö and Vardö, including the pharmacies. A few months later the pharmacies were restored in provisional premises.

The author had studied pharmacy for 3 years in 1945 when he was given temporary rights and an order to work in the pharmacy at Vardö for one year. This gave the pharmacy owner a highly needed holiday and the student an interesting year.