PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

Published by the American National Red Cross for the Relatives of American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees

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OUR PURPOSE in issuing this Bulletin is to give information, consistent with war conditions, about American prisoners of war and the methods for providing aid and comfort to them—paramount responsibilities of the American Red Cross.

We hope that anxious relatives of our men and women who are held in prison and internment camps may find in these pages the answers to many questions. We believe it is important for them to have an understanding of the international treaties which govern the treatment of prisoners of war. The limitations upon communications, imposed by war, which cause grief and anxiety, will be better understood after a perusal of these pages. We trust it will be possible to bring comfort to many through an exchange of correspondence from prisoners whereby wider knowledge of conditions in many prison camps may be obtained.

I wish to emphasize that one of the primary services of the international organization of the Red Cross is the protection of the lives and health of prisoners of war. The Red Cross, therefore, renews to you its pledge to utilize every resource to deliver to American prisoners of war the supplementary assistance in the form of food, clothing, and comfort articles upon which their health and welfare may depend.

Channels of relief for American prisoners of war in Europe are operating smoothly. Despite difficulties which at times have appeared overwhelming, the American Red Cross and the governmental agencies have continued negotiations seeking to open relief channels to our prisoners in the Far East. I assure you we will never abandon the effort to reach every prisoner of ours no matter where he may be held.

Norman H. Davis

NORMAN H. DAVIS, *Chairman,*
American Red Cross.

Editorial

The American Red Cross is receiving an increasing number of anxious inquiries concerning the treatment of American prisoners of war and the measures being taken for bringing them such aid and comfort as lie within our power under the Geneva Convention of 1929 Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Most of these inquiries concern an individual prisoner, in one specific camp or locality, but the writers have an overwhelming common interest—the well-being of our prisoners wherever they are.

The responsibility for the welfare of prisoners of war rests with the governments concerned. It is the function of the protecting Power (Switzerland, in the case of the United States) to see that the Geneva Convention is properly observed by the detaining Powers. The Prisoners of War Information Bureau in Washington, D. C., under the Provost Marshal General, is the government agency which keeps records of American prisoners of war and civilian internees, and maintains contact with their next of kin. The national Red Cross Societies, and other humanitarian organizations accepted by the belligerents under the Convention, provide the machinery for bringing relief supplies and other aid to the prisoners. It is also a task of these organizations to serve as a means of contact between the prisoners and their relatives.

We have accordingly decided to publish periodically this Bulletin in which we shall share with the families of our prisoners of war, and all those who are less directly but none the less keenly interested in their welfare, the information we gather from many sources about them, what is being done for them, and what they need. Keeping relatives of prisoners as fully informed as possible will be the primary object of this publication, which will be sent to all the next of kin as soon as their names are given to us by the proper authorities.

The Rights of Prisoners of War

When word is received that the head of a family, or a son, or a brother has been captured by the enemy, the first questions naturally asked by the relatives are: *How will he be treated? What will he need that we may be able to send him? As a prisoner, is he wholly at the mercy of the enemy?* Many other questions will inevitably occur to the family, and I am sure it will be the purpose of this Bulletin to answer them as far as possible.

A beginning may therefore be made with a brief statement of the rights of a prisoner of war—his right to receive mail and parcels; to be fed, clothed, and housed; to be given proper medical care; to be paid for such work outside the camp as he may be required to perform. Having rights, the prisoner of war has obligations, and one of these (which, however, does not apply to officers) is to perform such work of a nonmilitary character as may be assigned to him. Prisoners of war, in fact, often complain if they are not given work which helps to relieve the boredom of camp life besides providing them with pocket money.

All these rights and obligations are not left to the discretion of the detaining Power. They are covered by international treaties which have been negotiated during the last 70 years, and which culminated in the Geneva Convention of 1929 Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, which comprises 97 articles. In all, 42 nations signed and ratified, or later adhered to, this latest set of rules for the treatment of prisoners of war. The participation of the United States in the Convention was formally ratified by the Senate in 1932 and proclaimed by the President on July 4th of that year.

Provisions of the Geneva Convention

The treaty begins by declaring that prisoners must "at all times be humanely treated and protected, particularly against acts of violence, insults and public curiosity." It lists the prisoners' rights in great detail, and in careful phrases to avoid misinterpretation. To the family at home, one of the most important rights is that of the prisoner to let them know as promptly as circu stances permit that he has been ca tured; that he is well or otherwi and where he is being held. This done through the protecting Pow and the Central Agency for Prisone of War of the International R Cross Committee in Geneva, Switz land. The Central Agency has be able to notify as many as 6,000 fa lies in one day of the fate of relati of all nations taken prisoner; a being a neutral organization servi all nations alike, it furnishes the vi contact point between the pris on of war and their relatives, no mat where they are. The informati about American prisoners gathe by the protecting Power and the Ce tral Agency comes to next of kin the United States through the Pris ers of War Information Bureau, P vost Marshal General's Office, W Department, Washington, D. C.

The prisoner has the right to ceive letters as well as to send the and to receive parcels of food, bacco, comforts, clothing, and boo He has the right to legal help in si ing legal papers, if he needs it; a to a proper trial for any serious fringement of camp discipline. It the custom for all prisoners of nationality to share equally in collective shipments of relief supp sent to the camp by the Red C Society and other organizations wh look after their welfare—through I R. C. C.

According to the Convent prisoner of war camps must be healthy places, provided with wa

Prisoners of War Bulletin is se free of charge to those register as next of kin with the Office the Provost Marshal General, American Red Cross chapters, a to workers engaged in prisoner war relief.

If we have omitted the names any persons falling within the categories, they may be added the mailing list by writing to yo Red Cross chapter.

Gilbert Redfern,
Editor

eat, sanitary facilities, space for exrcise, and canteens where incidentals ay be purchased. Monthly medical spection, or oftener if necessary, s well as a camp infirmary, are prooided for. A seriously ill prisoner, or ne requiring an operation, must be dmitted at the expense of the deaining Power, to a military or civil ospital for treatment. Arrangements r exchanging seriously ill prisoners re also foreseen, with inspection ommissions of neutral doctors to be greed upon between the belligerents. Official contact between the belgerents is maintained through proecting Powers—the Government of witzerland being the protecting ower for the United States in dealgs with Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Food and Clothing Supplies

It is specified that every prisoner of ar has the right to receive the qual- y and quantity of food given to base oops of the detaining Power. No llective disciplinary measures afcting the prisoners' food are peritted. All prisoners must have eans provided for cooking supplentary rations.

Clothing, underwear, and footear, according to the treaty, must supplied to every prisoner. Any rsonal effects taken from him at e time of capture must be saved d returned to him. He must have mplete freedom of religious worip, and provisions are to be made r holding services.

Prisoners may be employed, but ot in dangerous or unhealthy work, r in any work directly connected th military operations. The use of isoners for manufacturing and nsporting arms or munitions of y kind, or for transporting material tended for combat units, is specifilly prohibited. Prisoners used for rk other than care of the camps e entitled to wages, part of which ay be given them at once and the lance held in reserve.

Officers are not required to work; t, on their request, they may do if suitable employment can be und. Noncommissioned officers are quired to do only supervisory work, less they expressly request remurative occupation.

Camp Visits and Complaints

Prisoners have the right to set up their own organizations by electing representatives for dealing with camp commandants and others interested in the care of the prisoners. These elected agents also have charge of the distribution of collective shipments sent by the Red Cross.

Visits to the camps by representatives of the protecting Power are provided for in the Geneva Convention of 1929; and the right of Delegates of the I. R. C. C. to visit camps and supervise the distribution of relief supplies is generally recognized, as is also the right of neutral representatives of relief agencies approved by the belligerents. Reports on these visits are regularly received by the governments concerned. Such reports indicate where camps fall short of the accepted standards, and usually result in prompt correction. According to latest reports, there are 63 International Red Cross Committee Delegates, of Swiss nationality, scattered over the world according to need. These delegates' reports upon their visits to prison camps are generally published in the monthly "Revue" of the I. R. C. C.

The elected camp leader (usually the ranking officer in an officers' camp) is known as the "Homme de Confiance"—trusted man. Any prisoner has the right to bring grievances to the attention of the trusted man, who has in turn the right to discuss these in private with the representatives of the protecting Power when they visit the camp. With no enemy officials present, the conversation can be free and explicit. Any legitimate grievances are promptly reported to the camp commander; and, in this connection, it should be remembered that Article 84 requires that a copy of the Convention, in the language of the prisoners held there, be posted in each camp.

The carrying out of the provisions for sending in parcels and relief to camps, and for exchanging information between prisoners of nations at war and their own countries, is now a tremendous task requiring a large force. In Switzerland there are between 5,000 and 6,000 people employed by the I. R. C. C., chiefly on that job—the majority of them working as volunteers. Its mail averages over 60,000 pieces daily; its card index of 12,000,000 cards is said to be the largest in the world. If news seems to move slowly to you, please remember the enormous amount of detail work involved and the difficulties of transportation. Many people are trying constantly to improve this humanitarian service.

Central Agency for Prisoners of War, International Red Cross, Geneva

Relief to Prisoners of War in the Far East

Ever since the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East unceasing efforts have been made by the United States Government and the American Red Cross, through the intermediary of the Government of Switzerland and the International Red Cross Committee, to devise channels for a regular flow of relief supplies to our prisoners of war and civilian internees now in Japanese camps. By comparison, the problem of reaching prisoners of war in Europe is simple.

The efforts to solve the Far Eastern relief problem have included the working out of various proposals and presenting them, through the protecting Power, to the Japanese Government or, through the International Red Cross Committee, to the Japanese Red Cross in Tokyo. The cumbersome methods, necessitated by war, of getting word to a belligerent that does not maintain the same close contact with the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva as do, for instance, the British, German, Italian, and our own Government and Red Cross have complicated the problem. From the outset, however, all those who have worked on it have been constantly trying out new ideas.

In July 1942, a Swedish ship, with a neutral crew, was chartered and loaded in one of our western ports with a large cargo of food, clothes, medicines, recreational equipment, and so forth. This was the *Kanangoora*. Loaded and ready to sail, it stayed in port until early in September, when the Japanese finally refused our request for safe conduct. So the ship was unloaded. During the time it waited, the Swiss Government and the International Red Cross Committee handled messages back and forth between the two belligerents—but all to no avail because the Japanese Government took the position that it could not guarantee safe conduct through waters in which active naval operations might take place.

A list of American prisoners of war, containing about forty names, as sent by the Japanese Government's Central Information Bureau at Tokyo to the Central Agency for Prisoners of War in Geneva.

Relief on Exchange Ships

The only method on which agreement has so far been reached for the transportation of relief supplies was by diplomatic exchange ships, which went from various United Nations ports to Lourenço Marques, in Portuguese East Africa, and there met the Japanese exchange ships. The American Red Cross was able to send 20,000 standard food parcels, 10,000 articles of clothing, $15,000 worth of toilet articles, $50,000 worth of medical supplies, 10,000 cans of tobacco, and a million cigarettes. These supplies were carried to Japan and there distributed to prisoners of war, or reshipped by the I. R. C. C. Delegate and the Japanese authorities to other areas where prisoners were held. Distributions were made in Zentsuji, Osaka, Kobe, and Shanghai; and one hundred tons of supplies eventually reached the Philippines. According to recent reports, plans were under way, and should have been carried out by now, to send supplies to ten other camps in Taiwan, Chosen, and Japan proper.

Prisoner of War Relief Activities in Occupied China

When the Japanese authorities occupied Shanghai, the American Red Cross had stocks there which consisted of large supplies of cracked wheat, flour, and rice, and over 400,000 pounds of farina and rolled oats. Part of these supplies were transferred to the I. R. C. C. Delegate and distributed by him to prisoners and internees and to organizations providing food for refugee groups. Another part of the supplies and certain medical stores of the American Red Cross were confiscated by the Japanese authorities, who later deposited some 200,000 yen (about $60,000) in payment in the Yokohama Specie Bank. The I. R. C. C. Delegate at Shanghai was authorized by the Red Cross to use this fund for relief purposes. The Delegate has been able to purchase some summer clothing (shorts, handkerchiefs, socks and caps) and some winter clothing (sweat shirts, padded jackets, and gloves) with this money. He has also been able to supply regularly a certain amount of food and toilet articles for prisoners in the Shanghai area; as well as stoves and wood, coal, for heating the barracks; sewing and washing machines; medical and dental supplies; oculist supplies and some sports equipment. The senior officer is also being given money to purchase fresh eggs and vegetables directly from hucksters who visit the camp.

When this fund was nearing exhaustion, the American Red Cross forwarded $10,000 to the Delegate through the I. R. C. C. and informed him that this account would be replenished at the end of each month upon receipt of a statement of the sums spent to meet the need of prisoners of war and civilian internees in that area. Replenishments in the amount of $10,000 are accordingly going forward.

At the time of the capture of Hong Kong, the American Red Cross representatives there were able to provide 180,000 Hong Kong dollars (about $44,000) with which to supply food, clothing, and other necessities for citizens of the United Nations held in Stanley Internment Camp. Later, the Government of the United States sent further funds to the I. R. C. C. Delegate at Hong Kong and is endeavoring to get these funds into the hands of American nationals for the purchase of supplementary food, clothing, and medical supplies. The American Red Cross has also provided the I. R. C. C. Delegate in Japan with a revolving fund of $10,000, similar to the one which has been set up at Shanghai, to be used for supplies that can be purchased locally for prisoners of war relief.

Cash Grants for Philippine Relief

Through the Swiss Minister in Tokyo, the American Red Cross has forwarded the sum of $25,000 to be spent by the Executive Committee of the Civilian Internees held at Santo Tomas, near Manila. Such expenditures must necessarily be made under the supervision of the Japanese authorities. Additional sums will be sent in this way, if our reports show that it is a successful method of providing what is needed by our interned citizens in the Philippines. It is also hoped that the Swiss Government will be able to work out a similar plan for other camps in the Islands.

The best that can be done by way of diplomatic exchange ships and cash remittances does not even begin to meet the pressing needs of our people in the Far East. These can be met adequately only by a continuous flow of supplies sent from the United States in regular shipments. The efforts of the Government and the Red Cross are therefore continuing without pause, and the Japanese authorities are being presented with plan after plan in an effort to find an effective solution of this problem. As these plans concretely develop, we will continue to inform the next of kin and those interested in the welfare of our prisoners.

Packages from Home

By Marion Hale Britten

The nearest relative of each American prisoner of war (officially listed next of kin) is sent the first news when word is received from the International Red Cross Committee that an officer or soldier in our forces has been captured by the enemy. As soon as the camp address is known, the family is told by the Prisoners of War Information Bureau of the Provost Marshal General's Office how to address letters to the prisoner; and, if parcel post facilities are available, a parcel label is then sent every 60 days. Parcels can be sent to prisoners of war and civilian internees in Europe, but not yet to those in the Far East. When shipping routes can be established (and efforts are continuously being made to arrange for them), the same label arrangement will probably be used for our prisoners there.

Since all parcels, except books, sent to prisoners of war from this country must carry official labels inside and out, only the next of kin can send such parcels unless they give the labels to someone else. Using the labels, 11-pound parcels can be sent. All the instructions about such packages—what can be sent, and how to send them—come with the label from the Prisoners of War Information Bureau. An 11-pound package seems much too small if you try to send everything listed, or everything you want your man to have. So the things must be carefully chosen to fill the limited space.

For the first package, you will surely ask, *What does he need most?* This question may seem hard to answer before you know something about his new way of living; but if you remember that the bare necessities will have been provided—either by the enemy or by the Red Cross—before your first package can arrive, you will know better what you want to send.

And please make certain that the wrapping is strong and durable. The packages travel long distances and are subject to rough handling. It is advisable that packages contain a complete inner wrapping, giving the full address exactly as it appears on the outside. Paper on which any printing, other than address information, appears must not be used on the outside or inside wrapper, or to wrap or protect any articles inside the package. The finished package must not be more than 18 inches in length and 42 inches in length and girth combined.

A War Prisoner's Needs

A prisoner is most likely to be taken with only the clothes he wears, so ample stocks of such extra things as he will want are kept by us in the I. R. C. C. warehouses in Switzerland. These are ready to send to the camp as soon as word comes that a new batch of prisoners has arrived, and that the supplies already available at the camp are insufficient. The I. R. C. C. is the first to get such word, so they have standing instructions to send along extra clothing, soap, razors, cigarettes, and other comforts, as well as food parcels, immediately. Most of the supplies required for our prisoners are furnished to the Red Cross by the Army and Navy, since our Government desires to continue its responsibility for the welfare of the armed forces, even after they are captured.

The Red Cross standard food parcels which go every week to prisoners of war are planned to contain the maximum amount of nutriment to supplement the rations supplied by the detaining Power. But you may want to look over the list of items, given in the instructions sent out by the Prisoners of War Information Bureau, and compare that with the list of items in the Red Cross parcel (given elsewhere in this Bulletin) to see if we have left out some favorite of your own particular prisoner that you can supply. Your parcel should give him the extras wherever it is

possible, over and above the bare necessities—the things that will make the difference between mere subsistence and what might be called living. It should let him know that his own family remembers what he especially likes—his favorite color in handkerchiefs or muffler or socks, or his favorite kind of pipe. If you know he likes some sort of cookies that will last the six months or so it may take the parcel to reach him, you could put those in. The Government and the Red Cross can supply the things he must have to keep him alive and well, and even reasonably comfortable; but it goes without saying that what comes from his mother and father, his wife, or his sister will tell him his own folks are thinking about him.

After you hear from him, you will probably know what to add for later parcels, each succeeding 60 days. He will perhaps ask for some slippers—strong but soft, to wear in barracks after work; some gloves—strong and warm; rubber overshoes; some games and books. Always check with the instructions from the Bureau to see that what you plan to send is not forbidden.

Special Packages of Books or Tobacco

Books and tobacco or cigarettes should not be included with other things in your regular parcel. Books should be ordered from the publisher or bookseller, and he must send them for you. The censor will forward only one 5-pound package each 30 days to any one prisoner. You must not touch the books yourself—that is the reason the bookseller sends them for you. But he will put your name on the package as the sender, so the prisoner will know from whom they came. Friends as well as relatives may send books, no special label being required.

Tobacco or cigarettes also should be ordered from a dealer and mailed direct by him. But in this case you must give the dealer the special tobacco label which will be sent you with each regular parcel label. He attaches the special label to the package of tobacco which you order and pay for and mails it for you, again with your name as sender.

Food Packaging for Prisoners of War

By William C. McDonald
Director of Packing Centers

Now that the American public has begun to feel the impact of food rationing, they are for the first time becoming food conscious. They now are feeling that which foreign populations long have felt. There are none more unfortunate than the members of the armed forces of the United States and of our Allies who, through the misfortunes of war, have become prisoners of war and now find themselves detained in these foreign areas.

The purpose of the Red Cross food packaging centers is to alleviate the unfortunate condition of these prisoners of war by sending food packages to augment the meagre rations furnished by the detaining Power. Not only does the food parcel contain highly nutritious food, but also such needed items as soap, coffee, and cigarettes.

The principles used in the operation of the food centers already have been developed to a high degree by the Canadian Red Cross for the packaging of food for prisoners of war, and these principles, with certain modifications, have been used by the American Red Cross in operating its food packaging centers.

Assembly Line Operation

The basic principle involves t assembly line process, where th is a continual movement of the fo carton while it is being filled wi the food articles. The assembly li itself consists of two roller conveyo each about 70 feet long. Adjacent each conveyor there are convenien placed supplies of the various fo articles which go into the carton, a along each conveyor line there a stationed about 30 volunteer wom workers each wearing the white-c lared blue smock with the Red Cr emblem. It is the task of these wom volunteers to put into the carton certain article in a certain pla while the carton is moving past the roller conveyor.

In general, each volunteer in t packaging center works one shift week. The shift, about two and quarter hours, consists of one ho of intensive effort; a rest period fifteen minutes, then another acti hour. In the two-hour working peri a total of more than four thousa food parcels are prepared.

The carton itself is a contain about 10 inches square and 4½ inc

Photo by Tommy Weber

Conveyor line carries Red Cross food packages to gluing machine

deep. The empty carton starts on its journey along the conveyor line and the first volunteer puts into it a one-pound packet of prunes or raisins. It proceeds further, and the next volunteer puts in a tin of liver pâte; then there is tucked into one corner a tin of soluble coffee, into another a can of corned beef. Then there are added, rapidly, a packet of sugar, a can of dried milk, a can of oleomargarine, a packet of biscuit, a can of orange concentrate, a packet of cheese, a can of salmon, several packets of cigarettes, a couple of bars of soap, and a couple of bars of chocolate.

Each of the articles going into the carton is placed in a carefully planned position, and this means solving a three-dimension jig-saw puzzle. The most completely odorless soap in a sealed container is put in, but still it is best to have it packed in the opposite corner from the chocolate. Another problem is to keep the gross weight of the finished parcel down to exactly 11 pounds, since the weight limit for parcel post packages in Europe is 11 pounds, and many packets are sent by parcel post from Geneva, in Switzerland, to their final destination in the prison camps. Also, the parcel must be so tightly packed that there will be the least possible movement of the articles during their journey across the sea. And, of course, from time to time, owing to supply problems, it is necessary to use products of a somewhat different shape or size than the ones first planned for. This makes it necessary occasionally to modify the system of packing.

Receipts Obtained for All Packages

The volunteer workers, and many others, frequently ask the question, *Does the prisoner of war really get the food package?* The answer is that he does; and one way this is verified is by putting into each food parcel a return postcard to be signed by the prisoner when he is given the parcel. On this card he adds his camp number, his own number, and other pertinent data.

After the carton has been completely filled, it goes directly into an ingenious machine which glues and seals the top and bottom at the rate of 35 finished parcels per minute. This stream of packages is conveyed to another part of the building where they are put by fours into a fiber container for export shipment. This outside container is sealed in a second gluing and sealing machine, the finished case is strapped with two bands of steel, and it is then ready to start on its journey. Every precaution is taken so that the food parcels will be suitably packed and properly protected in order that they reach the prison camps in perfect condition despite the severe handling to which they may be subjected.

At the present time the food packaging centers at Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago, operated by the American Red Cross with the aid of volunteer women workers, are producing more than 600,000 food packages a month; and the volunteers can have the satisfaction of knowing that each parcel they have filled will be opened with a hearty welcome by the prisoner of war at the other end of the line.

Prisoner of War Camps in Germany

Stalagluft III

This camp for Air Force officers and noncommissioned officers is located about ninety miles southeast of Berlin in the direction of Breslau. It was established in the spring of 1942 with the clearing of an area of about 950 by 650 feet in a pine forest near a small town. A report recently received by the American Red Cross stated that many of the camp prisoners, numbering at the time of the report more than 2,500 officers and noncoms, were still kept busy uprooting tree trunks near the huts.

The occupants of the camp at that time comprised American, British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Polish, Czech, French, Belgian, Netherlands, and Norwegian prisoners of war. They were all members of British and Dominion Air Forces except for two medical officers of the British Army, and about ten of the United States Army Air Force and the United States Navy. The number of Americans at this camp, however, has since increased. The report is based on a visit by a Delegate of the International Red Cross Committee, who inspected the camp and talked with the Senior Officer, Group Captain Massey, and with the representative

Group of American aviators await the war's end in Stalagluft III

of the noncommissioned officers, Flight Sergeant Day.

The Camp Lay-Out

The huts, made of wood, are new and well built. From four to twelve officers share a hut. For noncoms a hut, divided into two large rooms, accommodates about 80. The wooden bunks are double-deckers. Light and electric lighting are reported to be adequate, and each prisoner has at least two blankets. The sleeping mattresses are filled with wood fiber. The camp grounds provide ample space for athletic fields, and some of the prisoners have succeeded in growing flowers, tomatoes, and other vegetables in the sandy ground.

The camp is divided into four separate, though adjacent, sectors: huts and cottages of the German staff; an enclosure containing the infirmary; a hut for provisions, one for clothing and the shower unit; an enclosure containing the huts of the noncoms separated by a high fence from the officers' huts. The two classes of prisoners, therefore, have practically no contact with each other—except that between the leaders of the two groups for handling the distribution of gift packages, etc., and during athletic meets.

Heating and Cooking

One kitchen is reserved for officers and two for noncoms. They are well equipped, the meals being prepared by the prisoners under the supervision of a German staff.

As there is no main dining room, the prisoners eat in their dormitories. In each hut one or two wood-burning kitchen stoves make it possible for the prisoners to cook their own supplementary food, but the number of stoves thus available meets the needs of only a small proportion of the prisoners. The camp canteen has very few supplies because of the general lack of goods in Germany.

Clothing and Hygiene

Each prisoner has at least one uniform in serviceable condition, and one good pair of shoes. The supplies of uniforms and miscellaneous articles of clothing coming from Red Cross shipments were reported to be ample. The prisoners of war, from among their own number, do the mending in a special workshop for tailors and shoemakers.

The prisoners do their own laundry in special tanks—slanting boards on each side of long tanks of baked clay, with running water.

The infirmary is directed by a German medical noncom, assisted by a major and a captain of the British Army. It is well equipped and includes a dental room where a German military dentist treats about thirty prisoners daily. Patients suffering from gastric disturbances receive a special diet made possible by the contents of Red Cross invalid parcels.

Prisoners of war at this camp have at least one hot shower a week, and cold water is abundant; but toilet articles (razor blades, tooth brushes, combs, hair-clippers, etc.) are scarce. Whenever reports of scarcities reach Geneva, however, additional supplies are sent promptly to the camps from the Red Cross stocks held in Switzerland.

The report called attention to the fact that the drainage system was defective, and this is now in process of correction under the direction of Lt. Colonel Clark, of the American Army Air Force, who also prepared the plans.

Regular religious services were conducted, at the time of the report by Captain Robinson (Church of England) and Father Goudrey, an interned civilian priest. Intellectual activities are well organized, with a camp theater, moving pictures, orchestra, and educational courses. These activities are encouraged by the camp authorities. Furthermore, several qualified professors direct the educational courses.

Carrying 329,788 Red Cross standard food packages for United Nations prisoners of war, the FOZ DO DOURO sailed from Philadelphia for Lisbon on April 28, 1943. She made the crossing in 21 days.

Relief Supplies Shipped from the United States for Prisoners of War

From January 1, 1941, to April 30, 1943, the aggregate value of all relief supplies shipped by the American Red Cross and designated for United Nations prisoners of war in Europe and the Far East amounted to $13,761,130. This total included all transportation costs.

The supplies shipped and actually distributed to the end of April 1943 included 2,303,290 standard 11-pound food packages, 20,000 of which went to our prisoners of war in the Far East, and 2,283,290 (through the International Red Cross Committee) to European prison camps. The policy of the United States Government has been to furnish, through the American Red Cross, one food package weekly to every American prisoner of war in Europe.

Prisoners benefiting from the shipments to European camps, besides our own, included Belgian, British, French, Greek, Netherlands, Norwegian, Polish, Russian (but only in Finnish camps), and Yugoslav. The funds for such relief are provided by the respective Governments or other organizations.

Besides the standard food packages, the supplies shipped included substantial amounts of bulk foods, medicines, tobacco and cigarettes, clothing, and a wide variety of comfort and toilet articles—not only for prisoners of war but for our growing number of civilians who are still being rounded up and interned in Axis-held territories. The miscellaneous clothing supplies included such articles as mufflers and socks produced by volunteer workers at Red Cross chapters.

The standard food package now being made up and shipped by the American Red Cross contains the following items:

Biscuits, lunch, type C	8 oz. pkg.
Cheese	8 oz. pkg.
Chocolate, ration D	two 4 oz. bars
Cigarettes, pkg. 20's	4 packs
Coffee concentrate	4 oz. tin
Corned beef	12 oz. tin
Fruit, dried	15 oz. pkg.
Liver paste	6 oz. tin
Milk, whole, powdered	1 lb. tin
Oleomargarine	1 lb. tin
Orange concentrate	4 oz. tin
Pork luncheon meat	12 oz. tin
Salmon	8 oz. tin
Soap	two 2 oz. bars
Sugar	8 oz. pkg.

The *Caritas I*, operated by the International Red Cross Committee, for carrying relief supplies to prisoners of war, recently left Philadelphia (on her second voyage in this service) with more than 500,000 American Red Cross food packages, as well as other supplies, which should be unloaded at Marseille, France, early in June. This is the largest number of food packages ever carried in one shipment for prisoners of war relief.

The contents of an American Red Cross standard food package

Far Eastern Mail

The latest Japanese regulations permit each civilian internee in Japan proper to dispatch one letter per month of not over 100 words in English. Efforts are being made to obtain an increase in the number of letters which may be sent.

The number of cards or letters that can be mailed by prisoners of war in Japan or Japanese-occupied territory is determined by the authorities in each camp.

The regulations as received by cable do not cover civilian internees in camps outside Japan proper, but probably they are the same as for prisoners of war.

No information has been received concerning limitations on letters that may be received by prisoners of war and internees held by Japan; but the suggestion has been made several times that such letters should be typewritten or printed, and kept as brief as possible. This undoubtedly facilitates censoring, and allows letters to reach the prisoners more promptly. No enclosures or photographs are permitted in letters going to prisoners in Japanese hands.

Directions issued by the Prisoners of War Information Bureau should be carefully followed in sending mail to prisoners of war. Publication ARC 316, available at all Red Cross chapters, also gives full directions.

Christmas Packages

As it takes from four to six months for a food package made up at a Red Cross Food Packaging Center to reach a prisoner of war in a European camp, preparations have begun for making up a special Christmas package for American prisoners of war and civilian internees.

A list of the contents of this special package, which will be of the same size and weight as the standard food package, will be published later. They will be such, however, as to remind our prisoners of former Christmases spent under happier circumstances, and of the fact that, if we cannot have them with us in person this year, we shall be with them in spirit.

Letters FROM PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

(Editor's Note: The following letters have been furnished to the American Red Cross by relatives of prisoners of war. We shall always be pleased to receive, and publish, similar letters of general interest. If you are willing to let us publish letters you have received, please send copies to your Red Cross chapter; if you prefer, send the originals and they will copy them. The original letters will then be returned to you. If you send copies of, or extracts from, prisoners' letters, please be sure to give the date of the letter and the name of the camp.

It is important to remember that all mail coming from prisoners of war and civilian internees is censored by the detaining Power.)

Zentsuji War Prison Camp, Japan

Dear Mother . . . Wake was captured on December 23rd, 1941. We were captured and sent here to Japan. I have received very good treatment since I was captured. Once a week we go on a hike through the city and up in the hills, which is very interesting. Captain . . . got letters from his sister and one from his father and he let me read them, so I got most of the news about the home town. Tell all the family hello and that I am thinking of them and expect to be with them soon, but for them to write just in case I don't make it. We are going to get 500 books in our library in a few days and they should keep us busy until we get out of here.

P.G. 21—M.P. 3,300, Italy

Dearest Mother: How quickly the days pass; and full days they are too. I'm very busy, quite happy and very occupied. This has been turned into a permanent camp and I am among the oldest inhabitants. Living conditions have improved immensely. I have organized, with some opposition, a library, having been able to purchase some books in the town. Still the number of books is less than the number of officers, but I'm going to improve that situation shortly. I'm on the permanent staff here at the camp and manage to keep very busy indeed. It is quite like operating a school; the same interests, the same problems and much the same organization. Am afraid I've been neglecting my Italian in the face of other duties, but I'm learning to speak and understand it slowly. The camp commandant, a very nice Italian colonel, has just given us a gramophone and some records of Italian opera and symphonic music. What a treat to listen to good music again.

Civilian Internment Camp, Vittel (VOSGES), France

To the American Red Cross:

Once again, we wish to express the deep gratitude of this camp for the cotton thread we have just received from Geneva.

We cannot find words to tell you how pleased the women internees were when they were told that cotton had arrived in the camp, as this article had been lacking for a long time and naturally prevented the sewing being done in the work-rooms.

Stalagluft III, Germany

Dear Friend:

Do you know that three of your parcels arrived on Christmas Eve just in time to ensure an old fashioned Christmas day for myself and the other seven with whom I eat . . . There was a very fine Carol Service on Christmas Eve, then on the day itself we had some beer to drink (I hadn't had any for eighteen months) and the Christmas feast. After the New Year, we shall have a pantomime, "Treasure Island." I have a small part in it of making the noises off [stage] of Long John Silver's parrot . . . There are several American officers in this camp; but none of them know any of my American friends.

Stalagluft III, Germany
(From Lt. Colonel Clark, Senior American Officer)

I, myself, have profited in many ways from my misfortune. One learns above all tolerance and patience. One learns how to help others and you'd be amazed to see how unselfish most people here are. There are those who'd give the shirts off their backs. There are others who labor unceasingly for the common good. Never did I expect to see a male society composed of men from so many walks of life and so many races live so cheerfully under such trying circumstances. The adjustability of mankind to a changing environment is, I believe, one of his greatest attributes; and the ability of the Anglo-Saxon race to make the best of it is quite evident here.

(A description of Stalagluft III and of some useful work Lt. Colonel Clark is doing there, appears elsewhere in this issue. Ed.)

Ilag VII, Germany

The holidays are over. We had a number of Christmas services and entertainments and we received our first American Red Cross packages and were quite like children over them. There are eighteen in my room but we expect six more. The daily routine is as follows: We get up about 7 A. M., make our beds and clean our room. At 9:30 A. M. we have roll call in the court, and at 9 P. M. we must be in our rooms. By birth and forebears we represent some twenty three nationalities, speaking about twelve different languages. We are housed in a large block of buildings (150 or 200 years old) around two square courts. One of the internees is chosen as camp senior who deals with the Americans. The camp senior has advisers and the camp services are appointed by the camp senior, such as —postmaster, cooking staff, canteen staff, educational director, director of recreation, sanitary services, shoemakers, tailor, barbers, etc. The rooms hold from six to sixty, and each room has a room senior who is responsible for order and cleanliness. The beds are two or three deckers with mattress, spread, pillow case, two blankets and lockers for our clothes. There are tables, stools and stove. We are given a fixed amount of coal each day according to the size of the room. Each internee gets a bowl, cup, spoon, knife and fork, also one towel and an issue of soap once a month. We get one half-pound of bread a day, two cooked meals, one ounce of margarine every other day, rations of salt, sugar, jam and cheese once a week. The work of cooking and distributing the food is done by the internees.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. My brother, who was taken prisoner by the Germans in North Africa, and is now in Oflag VII B, writes that since he got to this camp they have been giving him British Red Cross food parcels. He says these are fine, but he wonders why he is not getting American parcels.

A. Your brother is now no doubt receiving the standard American Red Cross food parcels. When the North African campaign began, it had not been possible for us to build up food parcel reserves in all the camps to which American prisoners of war might be sent; but we have a reciprocal arrangement with the British Red Cross that whenever American prisoners reach a camp where the British Red Cross has a stock of parcels, the Americans can draw on them until we get in our own supplies. This arrangement, of course, operates to the benefit of British prisoners when the situation is reversed.

Q. Can I be sure that my letters will reach my husband, now an internee in the Philippines? The address given me by the Information Bureau showed that he was held at Santo Tomas.

A. Conditions are now such, unfortunately, that you cannot be sure. The Japanese Official Bureau, however, advised the I.R.C.C. of the distribution of some 230,000 letters to prisoners of war and civilian internees up to the end of 1942. Of these, 5,400 were distributed in the Philippines, and undoubtedly many of them went to Santo Tomas. Much of this mail left the United States in June 1942, by the diplomatic exchange ship, *Gripsholm*.

Q. A friend, in Stalag VIII B, has asked me to send him "thrillers." Is this permitted?

A. Yes, the ordinary type of "thriller" or fiction may be sent, but not a spy story or an escape story. The sender cannot handle the book so it must be ordered sent direct from the book store or publisher. No official label is required for such book packages, which may be sent by friends as well as by next of kin. They must be wrapped and addressed by the seller, who should enter the name and address of the buyer in the proper place as sender. No book package may weigh more than 5 lbs., and only one package may be sent to any prisoner once in thirty days. Books are carefully censored, and will be returned to you if not acceptable.

Q. May I send some of my son's books to the German prison camp where he is held?

A. No. Only new books may be sent, direct from the bookseller or publisher.

Q. My husband is a prisoner of war in Germany, now attached to a mobile working party. Does he receive a food parcel every week wherever he is, or does he have to wait till he returns to his base?

A. The present policy is to supply one food package weekly to every American prisoner of war in Europe. The parcels are forwarded regularly to working detachments from the main camps. Working detachments also receive better rations from the Germans than do prisoners of war in the base camps.

Q. Is there any assurance that the messages sent over short wave from prisoners on Taiwan are authentic?

A. All prisoners of war messages broadcast from enemy countries are picked up here by the federal radio monitor system. Records of the broadcasts are then forwarded by the Federal Communications Commission to the Prisoners of War Information Bureau at the Office of the Provost Marshal General, which forwards the messages to the next of kin. The Bureau is careful to point out that the authenticity of the message cannot be verified.

Q. Do you send prisoner of war relief packages only in Red Cross ships?

A. We send mostly in ships under neutral registry (Swiss or Portuguese). Strictly speaking, there is only one Red Cross ship at present in prisoner of war relief service. That is the Caritas I, owned and operated by a subsidiary of the International Red Cross Committee, but used by the American Red Cross.

Q. Can the Red Cross obtain information about a member of the armed forces presumed to have been taken prisoner at Corregidor whose name has not been included on the lists so far published of officially reported prisoners?

A. Lists of those taken early in 1942 are still coming gradually from Japan, via Geneva, and at any time the name of someone captured at Corregidor may appear. The Prisoners of War Information Bureau in Washington makes every effort to have the family given information before it is published. Once a man is listed, the Red Cross is usually in a position to give some information to the family concerning the camp surroundings, and what relief measures are being taken. If the family has any reason to believe that they have missed receiving an official notification of capture, the Red Cross chapter is always ready to look into the case. In this connection, the family of a man listed as missing should be sure to keep his branch of the service (Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard) informed of any change of address, so that further news may reach them promptly.

The Meaning of German Camp Terms

German camps are divided into categories according to the type of prisoners of war they contain. They are known by the following terminology:

LAGER—camp

STALAG — abbreviation for STAMMLAGER — a permanent camp for noncoms or privates, or a base camp from which labor detachments are sent out

ZWEIGLAGER—branch camp

OFLAG — abbreviation for OFFIZIERSLAGER—a permanent camp for officers

DULAG—abbreviation for DURCHGANGSLAGER—a transit camp

LUFTLAGER — abbreviation for LUFTWAFFELAGER — a camp for airmen

DULAGLUFT — abbreviation for DURCHGANGSLUFTWAFFELAGER—a transit camp for airmen

MARLAG—abbreviation for MARINELAGER—a camp for sailors

MILAG—abbreviation for MILITAERLAGER—a camp for soldiers

ILAG—abbreviation for INTERNIERTENLAGER—a civilian internment camp

A Stalag is a base camp. Many of the prisoners carried on the rolls of a base camp may actually not be quartered in it but may be living in a dependency of the base camp called an Arbeitskommando, or labor detachment. Such detachments are usually scattered over a fairly wide area, and the larger labor detachments are miniatures of the base camp in their construction and organization. The German commanders of the labor detachments are subordinate to the officer in charge of the Stalag. All the administrative work of the camp is carried on in the Stalag. The hospital forms part of the base camp.

Labor detachments vary in strength from 15 to as many as 300 prisoners for work in towns, villages, factories, mines, on roads, railroads, etc. When the strength of the detachment warrants, they are housed in special buildings or barracks near the place of work. In such cases, the individual prisoner has no direct contact with the base camp, which may be fifty or even a hundred miles away. Communication with the camp leader at the base, however, is maintained through the prisoners' representative at the head of each working detachment. It is this representative who receives from the base, and distributes among the men of his working detachment, the mail and relief supplies sent to the camps.

Swedish Red Cross Sends Writing Paper

The lack of writing paper in Germany and Italy is so great that many prisoners of war, eager to continue their studies, have been forced to use the wrappings of cigarette packages for making notes, according to a report by Mr. A. de Blonay, Secretary-General of the European Student Relief Fund.

Mr. de Blonay recently went from Geneva to Stockholm to seek increased Swedish support for student prisoners. The Swedish Red Cross responded promptly by shipping 40,000 notebooks for prisoners of war in Germany and Italy, and an additional 100,000 notebooks and 200,000 sheets of writing paper were promised for early shipment to the International Red Cross Committee for similar distribution.

(Editor's Note: Writing paper and notebooks cannot be included in next-of-kin parcels from the United States. Special paper for prisoners of war letters is provided by the German and Italian authorities.)

Change of Address

The names and addresses of the nearest relatives of American prisoners of war and civilian internees, to whom this Bulletin is sent, were furnished to the Red Cross by the Prisoners of War Information Bureau of the Provost Marshal General's Office. To enable us to keep the mailing list up to date, we must rely on our readers to advise us of any change of address. Please inform your Red Cross chapter whenever you change your address and always give the name of the prisoner as well as your own.

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