



## Aid for War Prisoners

By Tracy Strong  
General Secretary  
World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

For nearly 80 years close working relationships have existed between the Red Cross and the Young Men's Christian Association. Today both serve the millions of prisoners of war and interned civilians. Some 75 representatives of the Y. M. C. A., mostly chosen from neutral countries, visit the camps in 21 countries on both sides of the battlefronts and carry on their humane service. Their visits, like those of Delegates of the International Red Cross Committee, are highly appreciated by prisoners of war—the visits let them know that they are not forgotten. "As you in civilian clothes," said a leading Polish prisoner to a Swedish Y. M. C. A. secretary, "walk up and down these streets inside the camp where over 30,000 men are interned, the atmosphere of the camp changes. We know the outside world cares." These visits enable the secretaries to obtain a correct evaluation of the ever-changing needs, of the possibilities for program activities, of the control of supplies shipped into the camps, and help to bring the much needed encouragement to those striving to organize the daily programs to combat discouragement, monotony, and the "stagnant sea of idleness." A cable received in July said that all 23 camps in Germany where there were American prisoners of war had been visited since May 1 by War Prisoners' Aid representatives of the Y. M. C. A., and that most of them had been visited twice.

### Shipments Made Through Geneva

All materials sent from the United States by the Y. M. C. A. for its work in Europe—games, books, musical instruments, and essentials for worship—are shipped to Geneva through the American Red Cross on neutral and International Red Cross vessels. The national staff of the American Red Cross responsible for prisoners of war have rendered every possible facility to the War Prisoners' Aid in the performance of its task.

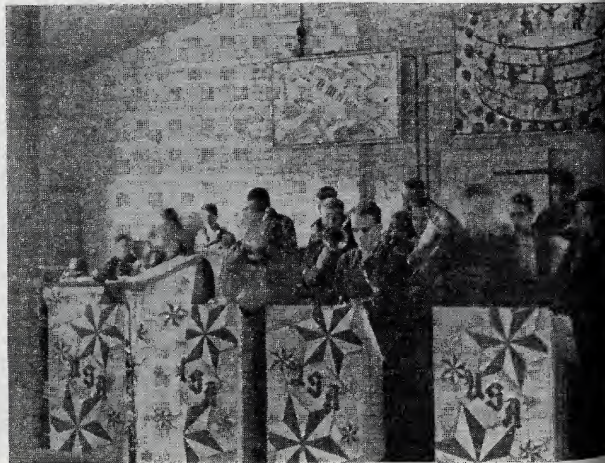
Shipments totalling approximately 13,000 cubic feet and weighing 120 tons have recently been sent to Europe on the *Caritas I*, *Marbessa*, *Kasos*, *Lugano*, and *Congo*. The approximate value of these shipments was \$250,000. A substantial shipment of recreational equipment for American

prisoners in the Far East is now going forward on the *Gripsholm*.

Among the items shipped to Europe were 20 complete band ensembles, 730 ukuleles, 750 fine harmonicas, and 42,300 phonograph records. Athletic goods included 10,700 soccer balls, 6,900 pairs of boxing gloves, 8,000 soft balls, 400 baseballs, 3,000 volley balls, 1,100 basketballs, 650 footballs, adequate supplies of extra bladders and repair kits, and 25,000 ping-pong balls. Over 40,000 new books were sent. Many used books and some used musical instruments and athletic equipment were also shipped; the estimated value of used goods was more than \$16,000. Material for the repair of books by prisoners of war was included. Eighteen thousand Bibles or Scripture portions were transported for the American Bible Society, to be distributed by the Ecumenical Chaplaincy Committee for Prisoners of War.

Many articles such as volley ball nets, baseball bats, musical instruments, rosaries, and altars are made by the prisoners themselves from basic materials supplied by the Y. M. C. A.

These shipments augment the materials which had been provided not only from the United States, but from Switzerland, Sweden, Den-



The Y. M. C. A. provided the instruments for this American band at Stalag III B.

mark, Great Britain, Canada, France, and Germany as well, through the Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross parcels. A recent statistical statement from the Berlin office of the Prisoners' Aid of the Y. M. C. A. showed that from the beginning of the service in 1939 until June 1943, the various offices of the Prisoners' Aid have sent to the camps in Germany over 900,000 books, including 100,000 religious books, 8,000 items of worship material, 1,500 theatrical requisites; 40,000 musical instruments; 150 gardening articles; 35,360 sports articles; 57,500 articles of educational and artistic supplies; over 20,000 musical instruments; 45,000 pieces of music; 1,900 articles for craftsmen; 9,000 articles for craftsmen; 100 indoor games; 429,000 office requisites; and about 56,000 miscellaneous items. These materials, however, wear out and need to be replenished every six to nine months.

### Aid in the Far East

Apart from the *Gripsholm* mentioned previously referred to, the War Prisoners' Aid Committee in Japan (a committee composed of Swedish and Swiss citizens) has been making frequent visits and the sending of books, games, musical instruments, athletic goods, garden tools, and seeds to seven camps in Japan, Shanghai, Hongkong, and of permission to transport materials to some 25 camps in other countries. China reports a similar service to German, Italian, and Japanese prisoners of war in

## Christmas Parcels

Many families have written asking if the American Red Cross will accept orders for Christmas parcels to be delivered to American prisoners of war in Europe. The Red Cross has already shipped, on behalf of the Army and Navy and the President's Relief Fund, 10,000 special Christmas parcels so that every American prisoner of war and civilian internee in Europe should receive one. It is not, therefore, necessary for prisoners' relatives to order individual parcels.

A large shipment of goods has been ordered from the Argentine and newly organized work in Kenya. The War Prisoners' Aid Committee does not search for men missing in action, nor facilitate correspondence between the prisoners and their homes, nor concern itself with the supplemental food, clothing, medical supplies, and other comforts. This aid belongs to the Red Cross societies. Occasionally, however, when the exact address of the prisoner is known, our secretaries will visit him and bring him verbal greetings from home.

The American public has generously contributed to the support of the War Prisoners' Aid, chiefly through the National War Fund. We would be glad to hear from relatives if any requests received in letters from prisoners of war which indicate the lack of equipment for studies, theatricals, games, athletics, handicrafts, and religious services. The Y. M. C. A. also stands ready at all times to help the relatives of prisoners keep better informed about the conditions under which their loved ones are living.

### Gaining Credit for Studies

It has recently become clear that many American prisoners of war would like to continue the courses of study which had been interrupted by the war, or undertake new lines of cultural or vocational study. Arrangements are now under way with the United States Armed Forces Institute which is perfecting plans for soldiers not only to study but also to have their work tested and accredited at the schools and colleges. It is expected that many of these courses, with colleges cooperating, will become available to American prisoners held in European camps.

## Notes on Prison Camps

### Stalag VII A—Germany

On account of measures recently taken by the German authorities with a view to segregating prisoners of war in separate camps according to the prisoners' nationality, it is reported that considerable changes have taken place at Stalag VII A. Most of the British prisoners formerly in this camp have been transferred, and Stalag VII A is becoming more of a transit camp for American prisoners. The latest information received showed there were about 500 Americans in this camp, and that about 3,000 had already passed through after being completely fitted out with clothing.

### Oflag 64—Germany

According to a recent cable from Geneva, the designation of Oflag XXI B, Germany, has been changed to Oflag 64.

A report to the British Red Cross from Wing Commander H. M. Day, the Senior British Officer at Oflag XXI B, stated that the number in this camp had been increased by the arrival of three batches of new prisoners of war from Dulag Luft. Almost half of them were United States Army Air Force Officers. These American officers are receiving exactly the same supplies in food, clothing, and medical comforts as British prisoners, with the standard British or Canadian food parcel being temporarily issued to them every week when there are not sufficient American Red Cross parcels available to go around. ARC parcels, of course, follow from Geneva stocks as promptly as transportation conditions permit.

The report further stated that many of these American officers, owing to their own clothes being damaged, and pending arrival of American supplies from Geneva, had been fitted out by the camp leader at Oflag XXI B (now Oflag 64) with British Air Force uniforms. They are settling down well, it continues, and "are learning fast the art of 'Kriegic' (Kriegsgefangener—prisoner of war) cooking. Amongst them are one or two 'tin bashers' who are turning out some very useful cooking utensils out of Red Cross tins."

Transfers of Americans to Oflag 64 have recently taken place from other German camps besides Dulag Luft.

A note on these transfers will appear in our next issue.

### Camp No. 59—Italy

In a report on Italian Camp No. 59 in our August issue it was stated that most of the approximately 2,000 prisoners of war in this camp were British and that the American prisoners numbered 445—comprising 77 noncommissioned officers and 368 enlisted men. A later report indicated that a substantial number of British prisoners had been transferred from No. 59 to work camps and that the number of American prisoners in Camp No. 59 had more than doubled.

As of early July (the date of the latest report) some American prisoners in No. 59 had begun to receive letters which had been addressed to them at Camp No. 66 where they were previously held.

I have received many letters from readers of this BULLETIN, and through this medium I wish to acknowledge them.

It is not possible to send individual replies, but I wish to assure all who have written to me or to the editor or other Red Cross officials that their interest, the news they have sent us of their loved ones who are prisoners of war, and the suggestions contained in their letters, have been welcome.

I regret that, due to space limitations, it may not be possible to print all prisoners' letters so kindly sent to us, but hope that you will continue to share them with the Red Cross, so that we may pass on valuable information to the next of kin of other prisoners. Also this will enable us to improve our service to prisoners of war.

It is with real pleasure that we have learned from our readers that this BULLETIN has served to give them information and a measure of comfort.

*Norman H. Davis*

Chairman  
American Red Cross

## Prisoner of War Camps in Germany—Stalag III B

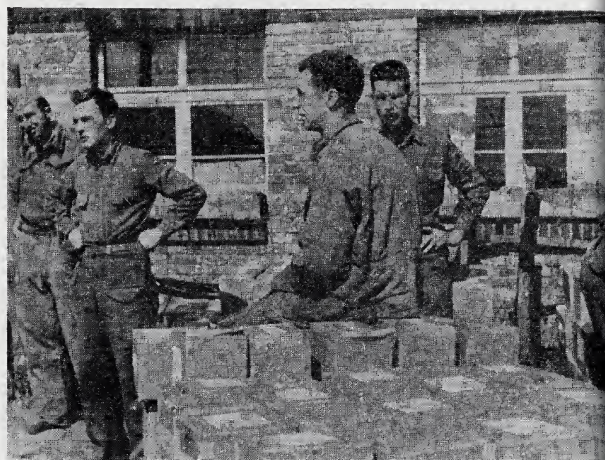
By Franklin Abbott

Extensive shipments of food packages, clothing, and comfort articles have been made during the last six months from United States Army and American Red Cross stocks in Geneva to meet the urgent needs of American prisoners of war at Stalag III B. The latest report received from the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva showed that about 2,500 American prisoners, made up almost entirely of noncommissioned officers and enlisted men captured during the Tunisian campaign, had reached Stalag III B during the first half of this year badly in need of clothing and other necessities. The clothing worn by the men was immediately disinfected on arrival at this base camp and the men have since been re-equipped. A complete assortment of sporting goods and recreational equipment also reached the camp in April and May from Y. M. C. A. stocks at Geneva.

Stalag III B, which is located at Fürstenburg, on the River Oder, not far from Berlin, is a large camp situated in a pine forest. It was reported in the latter part of 1942 that most of the prisoners there were French and Russian, plus several hundred Yugoslavs. The camp was then described as "well organized, with an excellent choir, orchestra, and educational courses." Many of these French, Russian, and Yugoslav prisoners, apparently, were moved out of Stalag III B sometime between the end of 1942 and the date of a visit made by a Delegate of the International Red Cross Committee on May 22, 1943. At that time, the latter reported, some of the prisoners there were quarantined because of cases of scarlatina. The epidemic was a mild one, however, and the few serious cases were moved to Reserve Lazaret 104, in the vicinity of Stalag III B. Despite the scarlatina epidemic, the sanitary installations at this camp were said to be "generally good," and a new infirmary was under construction. The report further stated that 160 American aviators, who had been captured in Europe, were to be transferred to Stalag Luft III from Stalag III B.

### Supplementary Food Needed

The weekly rations per prisoner, supplied by the German authorities,



Red Cross parcels packed in the U. S. A. reach American prisoners at Stalag III B.

at the time of the visit of the International Red Cross Committee's Delegate (May 22, 1943) were given as follows:

Bread	2,250	grams (about 5 lbs.)
Meat	286	" (about 10 oz.)
Vegetables	2,400	" (about 5 lbs.)
Salt	140	" (about 5 oz.)
Oleomargarine	225	" (about 8 oz.)
Potatoes	5,250	" (about 11 lbs.)
Marmalade	175	" (about 6 oz.)
Cheese	50	" (about 2 oz.)
Sugar	175	" (about 6 oz.)

The quantities supplied by the German authorities were supplemented by the Red Cross food parcels from Geneva. There were five American Army cooks working in the kitchens at the time of the visit. Labor battalions were then in process of formation for work outside the Stalag (base camp), and 711 Americans in one agricultural detachment were being paid for their labor.

Each prisoner was allowed to send two letters and three postal cards monthly. No mail had been received by the American prisoners, the report stated, except by air. The discipline at the camp, which is provided with bomb shelters, was reported to be excellent, and the general impression made on the I. R. C. C. Delegate was "favorable."

## Parcels for Russian Prisoners in Finland

The American Legation at Helsinki received the following letter, dated May 14, 1943, from representatives of Russian prisoners of war in Camp No. 73, Finland:

Dear Sirs:

Hereby we beg to give our gratitude to your Red Cross for the presents which were received by us recently.

Commander of our camp Lieutenant Saarela has done wisely. He had ordered to distribute the presents during three days and therefore we had continual pleasant

time like a Christmas. These presents have brought much joy and pleasure to the prisoners of war of our camp. We are very thankful to you and your organization of Red Cross for human participation in our dark and gloomy life.

Wishing you all our best, we remain

Yours faithfully,

(Four Signatures)

The standard Red Cross food packages, totalling nearly 25,000, received by these and other Russian prisoners of war in Finnish camps, were donated by the American Red Cross

and by Russian relief organizations in the United States, including the Tolstoy Foundation, the Ivan Koulaieff Educational Fund, and Sergei Rachmaninoff Fund. The International Red Cross Committee sent Delegates to Finland to supervise the distribution of relief supplies from the United States, and a complete accounting for the supplies received and distributed has been furnished by the I. R. C. C. The Delegates who visited the camps reported that the Finnish authorities showed the utmost cooperation in effecting a prompt and equitable distribution of the supplies.

## Suggestions for Next of Kin

Write letters regularly, but don't make them too long. The maximum recommended for Europe is two sides of one sheet. Typewriting aids censorship; and either typewriting or clear printing in capital letters is necessary for the Far East. If you haven't a typewriter, perhaps some friend or your Red Cross chapter can help you.

Wait for labels before sending packages. The Provost Marshal General's Office will send you the labels without request, as soon as a permanent address and means of transportation are available.

Unmounted pictures of people, not places, may be sent in letters, but not in packages. There should be no writing on the picture, front or back.

Don't send letters or parcels in care of the American Red Cross. Use the address given you by the Provost Marshal General.

Do look at the mailing instructions each time you make up a package, and be sure that each item packed is included in the latest list issued from the Provost Marshal General's Office.

Don't use tins, except those with push-in tops, or glass containers of any sort.

Don't send perishable materials. It takes several months for a parcel to reach the prisoner.

Pack the parcel securely and wrap in canvas or burlap. Don't use paper with printing on it to wrap the items in the package; but use excelsior or similar material to make the packing solid, so that articles will not shift when the package is tossed about on its journey.

It is preferable to order cheap editions of books, as heavy bindings may be damaged by the censors in their routine search for possible hidden messages. Heavy bindings also weigh more. Don't forget these must go direct from the bookseller, and not be handled by the sender.

Reports have been received that ordinary shoes have been cut at the sides by the censors to lessen the chance that they might be used in attempts at escape. Only slippers, therefore, should be sent. Military type shoes are provided by the United States authorities for American prisoners of war.

Don't send packages to prisoners in the Far East until you receive labels from the Provost Marshal General. The labels will be sent whenever there is a boat available for carrying packages.

Labels for two packages of tobacco, cigars, or cigarettes, and one package of miscellaneous articles are sent out for European prisoners each 60 days. Five pounds of books can also be sent, without label, each month, through a bookseller.

## Map Changes

The map showing prisoner of war camps in Europe, published in the September issue of PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN, misplaced Italian Camp No. 21. This camp should have been in the same square (C6) as Camps 59 and 78. Many changes will have taken place in Italian camps with the capture of Sicily and the subsequent invasion of the mainland, but at this writing (late September) no authoritative information on these changes is available.

The designation of the German Camp Oflag XXI B has been changed to Oflag 64, and recent reports state that the American officers who were in Oflag IX A/Z have been transferred to Oflag 64. Transfers from Oflag VII B and Oflag IX A/H to Oflag 64 have also been announced. Stalag II B should be added to the map in square F2, on the Berlin-Danzig line.

Late information received also makes necessary a few changes in the Far Eastern map published in the August issue. Readers who are keeping the map for reference purposes should strike out the camps at Koshuyu, Paracale, Malaybalay, Cuyo Island, Manamoc Island, Zamboanga, and Samal Island, and add the following: Singapore, Mytho, Tacloban, and Tagbilaran. Mytho is a town in French Indo-China near Saigon, Tacloban is on the island of Leyte in the Philippines, and Tagbilaran is on the island of Bohol in the Philippines. The key at the side of each map should also be corrected accordingly.

### Hospitalized Cases

The Delegate also visited Reserve Lazaret 104, which is described as "remarkably good and equipped." Out of 227 sick prisoners 30 were Americans, a few of whom were reported to be suffering from lung trouble. The sanitary installations were said to be satisfactory even with the dormitories crowded. Books in English had not yet reached the Lazaret, but supplies of food and clothing had been requested. Stalag III B. The prisoners were allowed to send two letters and postal cards monthly, and all of them were anxious to receive news from their families.

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

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

Gilbert Redfern,  
Editor

## RELIEF SUPPLIES

(Continued from page 1)

in the Far East, and in the most compact form. Particular emphasis was placed on food and medicines. The most essential clothing and comfort items have also been provided. Some things considered desirable, but not absolutely essential, were omitted in order to leave room for ample supplies of vital necessities.

The 140,000 Far East food packages were specially prepared by women volunteers in the Red Cross Packaging Centers at Philadelphia and New York. Late information on conditions in the Philippine camps caused important changes to be made in the package, and Army butter spread, additional canned meat, an extra can of coffee, and an additional supply of cigarettes were included. In order to have these special packages—weighing 13 pounds as compared with the 11 pounds for the standard package—in time for the *Gripsholm's* sailing, volunteers worked extra shifts and the two eastern packaging centers operated night and day.

The list of medicines, drugs, surgical instruments, and dressings, especially designed to combat diet deficiencies, malaria, and dysentery, was prepared in cooperation with the office of the Surgeon General, United States Army. Included in it are large quantities of vitamin capsules, quinine tablets, sulfa drugs, anaesthetics, and blood plasma, as well as many other essential drugs, surgical instruments, surgical dressings, and camp first aid kits.

Vitamin preparations shipped consist of 7,125,000 multivitamin capsules, 2,120,000 vitamins A and D concentrated, nicotinic acid, riboflavin, ascorbic acid, and thiamin hydrochloride. The two latter preparations are both in tablet form and in solution for injections. The multivitamin capsules alone are in sufficient quantity to provide one tablet a day for seven months for each American war prisoner or civilian internee in the Far East.

### Heavy Clothing Sent

The Army and Navy supplied sets of heavy clothing for their personnel who are in Japanese camps located in the north. Heavy clothing consists of overcoats, shoes, blankets, woolen underwear, socks, shirts, sweaters, coveralls, pajamas, caps, and gloves.

In addition, comfort articles such as shaving supplies, sewing kits, soap, toilet paper, tooth paste and brushes, shoelaces, and shoe polish for prisoners of war in all areas form part of the *Gripsholm* cargo.

Similar articles of clothing and comforts have been provided by the United States government for civilian internees. Particular thought has been given to the requirements of women and children. The consignments for them include such items as albolene, sewing kits, soap, talcum powder, dresses, children's clothing, and a variety of materials which can be used for repairing or remodeling children's and women's clothing.

Tobacco assortments contain cigarettes, pipes, and smoking tobacco. With those in the standard food packages, the entire shipment contains about 24,000,000 cigarettes.

The *Gripsholm* shipment has been made possible by the efforts and co-operation of a large number of agencies and individuals. The Office of the Surgeon General, United States Army, provided invaluable assistance not only in preparing the list of medical and surgical supplies but also in assembling and packaging them for shipment. Officers of the United States Army and Navy and officials of other government agencies helped greatly by reviewing lists of clothing and comfort articles, by experimentally packing certain items, and by supplying a large part of the goods. Many others, too numerous to mention, also did much to further the undertaking.

In addition to shipping collective relief supplies for all American prisoners, the American Red Cross acted as next of kin in sending more than 3,000 special parcels individually addressed to those prisoners who had no officially listed next of kin or whose next of kin live outside the United States.

### Planned Packing and Distribution

Two problems which presented themselves when plans for the shipment were being studied were, first, the necessity of cramming all available cargo space on the *Gripsholm* with all the articles of primary importance, and second, that the packing be done in such a manner that the limited organization of the I. R. C. C. in the Far East could readily supervise the distribution to each camp where there are American prisoners of war or civilian internees.

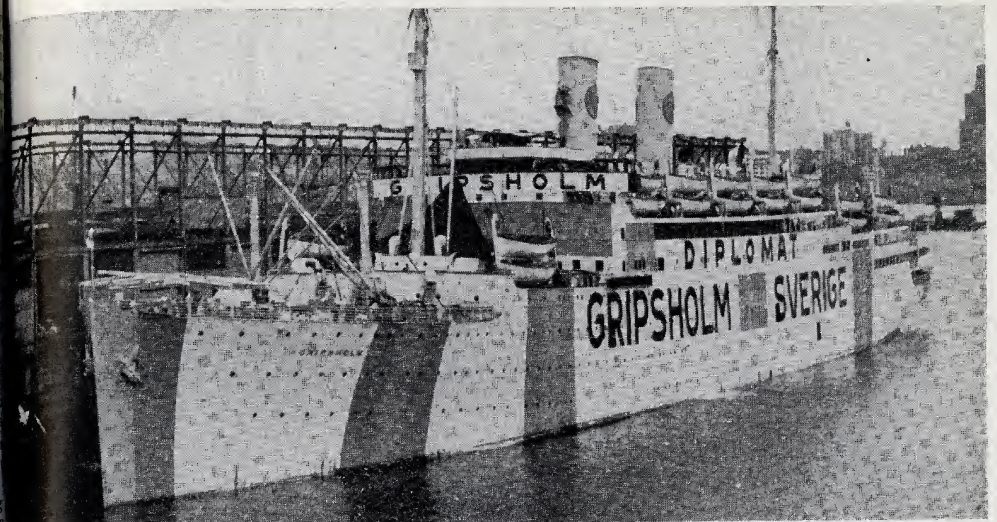
It was decided that development of a small number of standard packages, each to contain an assortment of articles sufficient for a specified number of men, afforded the best solution to both problems. For some time this method has been followed in sending food to American prisoners in Europe. Standard food packages are packed four to the container, have been scientifically designed to supplement the basic rations provided by the Detaining Powers. A standard package contains powdered milk, liver paste, clotted milk, tinned meat, salmon, prunes, orange concentrate, biscuits, chocolate, sugar, soluble coffee, soap, and toilet articles. As already explained, the contents of the standard package were revised in order to meet the special needs of prisoners in the Far East.

For this *Gripsholm* shipment it was found best to use fifteen standard containers, each of a size and weight to permit easy handling aboard ship. Case I is the standard food package; cases II, III, IV and VI contain medical supplies; case V has tropical clothing; case VII has heavy clothing for men; case VIII has assortments of clothing and comforts for women and children; case IX contains overcoats; case X contains shoes; case XI contains shoe-repair kits; case XII contains men's clothing; and case XIII, tobacco.

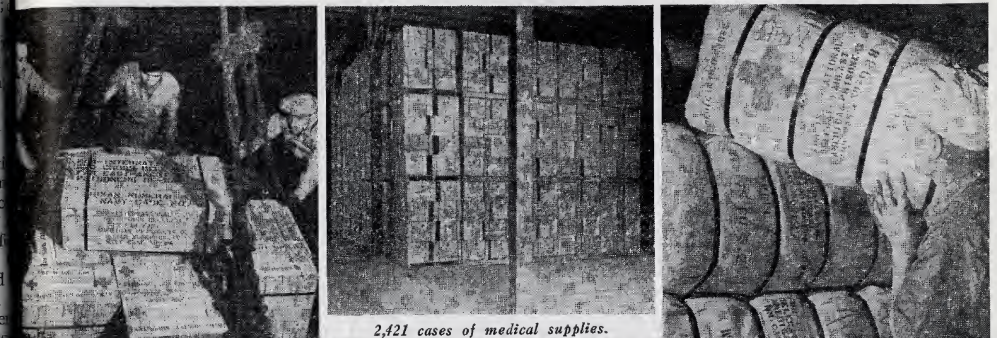
Assortments of clothing provide a variety of sizes so that, if a camp contains a hundred men in Japan, each man will have the right clothes to fit him. It is hoped that the method evolved here will go far towards assuring even complete distribution of all essential requirements to each and every man so that oversupplies of one item and undersupplies of another will be avoided.

Cabled descriptions of the *Gripsholm's* valuable cargo have been sent to Dr. Paravicini in Tokyo so that the International Red Cross Committee may make plans for delivery of the supplies to the camps before the shipment actually reaches Japan. In fact, everything possible has been done at this end to simplify the work in the Far East, and it is hoped that a reasonably prompt transfer of the goods to the prisoners of war and civilian internees throughout the area will be effected. If no great delays are experienced, our men in the camps should receive the food and clothing by Christmas.

## Cargo for the Gripsholm



The *Gripsholm* loading.



2,421 cases of medical supplies.



Red Cross volunteers substitute for next of kin.

Supplies ready to be swung aboard.

Bales of clothing.

## Letters FROM PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

(Note: The following letters have been furnished to the American Red Cross by relatives. It is important to remember that all mail coming from prisoners of war and civilian internees is censored by the detaining Power.)

Stalag Luft III  
July 5, 1943

Dear Jackson:

Yesterday I witnessed the most spontaneous celebration of the Fourth in my life. It was safe but not too sane on the boys' part. Some of the men had brewed cider out of Red Cross raisins and sugar. You can visualize the fermenting effects! We woke the British up early in the morning with a tailor made Paul Revere, "horse," and parade. All yelling, "The Redcoats are coming!" and similar phraseology. The majors and colonels were ducked in the firepool. Even the British were in the swing of things before noon. Yet, all of us would give up all the horseplay for a day at home with our loved ones. Through misfortunes and all hell, no one can yet beat the American for his gifted sense of humor. We had planted some seeds in our home made garden in April and now a few things are beginning to show. I promise that we shall have a swell time together this New Year's Eve.

Stalag VII A  
April 22, 1943.

Dear Folks:

Hope you have not been worrying too much as I am safe and well. Am receiving very good treatment but miss being with you terribly. If you send me any packages, get in touch with the Red Cross to see what is best to send. Also, if you will, please donate one of my allotment checks to the Red Cross as they are really doing a great job.

(In a letter from Eugene, Oregon, transmitting the above, the prisoner's father wrote: "I shall deliver the next allotment check of \$25 to the local chapter of the Red Cross, as my son directs.")

Stalag Luft III  
May 11, 1943

Dearest Ma and Dad:

I hope you received my last 2 correspondences and that my much needed clothes will soon be on the way. If you haven't already mailed it, put in a pair of sun-glasses and sev-

eral bars of chocolate. I have moved out of the room with Barnes and 4 of us have set up housekeeping for ourselves in a new room. Each room does its own cooking on a communal stove with pots. I was selected cook because of my past experience on boats. It's quite a test of ingenuity thinking up different ways of cooking things. As well as doing the cooking, I'm attending 2 classes and teaching one, so my time is well taken. I hope you will give my address to all my friends and tell them not to expect to hear from me, but all letters will be greatly appreciated.

Camp P.G. 59, PM 3300, Italy  
May 4, 1943

Dear Dad:

This leaves me feeling fine. I received an American Red Cross food parcel and cigarettes today and, boy, did I enjoy them! I haven't received any mail yet, but I would sure love to hear from you soon. Well, maybe I will see you before long for it looks like everything is going fine now. It can end any day now for me. Hope you are well and doing good. Tell everyone hello, and that I'll be back some day. I guess I can call myself a lucky boy. I've had some dangerous escapes.

Branch Camp No. 2, Tokyo  
December 22, 1942

Dear Mother and Dad:

I am well and safe in Japan. My health is as usual. I have had no news of the family since last November, 1941. How are you and the family, especially you and dad, getting along? Remember me to all.

(Cards similar to the above dated Tokyo, Osaka, Zentsuji, the Philippines, and other places, have recently reached us from many families of American prisoners of war. Ed.)

The following letter from Stalag Luft III was written on July 8, 1943, and received by the prisoner's family at Pasadena, Calif., on August 9, The letter acknowledged one from Pasadena written on May 24:

If I write letters in which I sound rather low you must overlook them. I sometimes write when I'm in a certain mood and then after I have sent the letter off, I wish I had waited. If I sound as if I am worrying about small things, remember that in here it's the things that you think are small, that are big to us. Things that never both-

ered you before you begin to think about. The big things you push out of your life. Your future is uncertain thing "x" distance away. It's easy for you to say study, and do, some more than others, but cannot imagine the mental strain have. Picture a man who is sentenced to an indefinite term. However, know I'm a better man now than when I was shot down and I will still better when I get out.

Stalag Luft III  
May 12, 1943

Dearest Mother:

It's very true that there's nothing new in a prisoner's camp and very easy to imagine that each day is exactly like the last and, to a certain extent, this is true. On the other hand (according to the person) the things that invariably crop up during the day can change it so as to make seem entirely different and, as such, to pass quickly. Hence, when I that time passes rather quickly don't say it altogether to comfort you, but as a matter of actual fact. At present I'm engrossed in two courses—French and the History of English Literature. At the completion of the latter I plan to study journalism with an eye to future use. I've gone rather "high brow" in my reading and at present reading Tolstoy's famous "War and Peace," a very enlightening and interesting piece of literature.

(The following letter was sent to an American captain in North Africa on July 1, 1943, to the family in California of an American prisoner of war in Germany.)

To the folks:

Perhaps this is peculiar, but I'm writing for a German sergeant prisoner of war in camp here in Africa. He gave me a list of names to whom I should write and let them know that Charlie is all right and feeling fine and is in German PW camp at Frankfurt, Germany, and sends love to all. This German sergeant seems pretty reliable as he was interpreted at the PW camp at Frankfurt and sent here to Africa because he helped these American officers have a beer and party by smuggling in one barrel of beer and five kegs of sterilizing fluid instead of usual six kegs of said fluid which they received daily. He and other American officers and German guards were caught and he was sent to Africa where he was captured.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A friend and I have received almost identical cards from our sons who are prisoners of war in Branch Camp No. 2, Tokyo, and in the Osaka prisoners of war camp. Why did they send cards instead of letters?

The probable explanation is that, on reaching the prison camp, each prisoner is given a "card of advice" or "capture card" by the Detaining Power. On this standard card; which bears the number or postal address of the camp, he is permitted to write his name, rank, and condition of health, and to address it to his family. As postal communications permit, these cards are forwarded as rapidly as possible.

My son, now in Oflag 64, Germany, has asked me to send him a blanket. I find it impossible, however, to pack a single, medium weight blanket within the measurement permitted for next-of-kin packages. What shall I do?

A shipment of blankets from United States Army stocks in the International Committee's warehouses, sufficient to meet the needs of American prisoners in Oflag 64, was recently made from Geneva. Your son will doubtless receive one of these blankets before the cold weather sets in.

A French prisoner of war held by Germany, whose family I knew before the war, has sent me a blue label and asked that I try to send him a food package. What may I send?

Since you are not a relative of this war prisoner, it is impossible for you to send him a package. The regulations of June 10 (published in our July issue) provide that only relatives nearer than first cousin may send packages from this country to prisoners of war other than those of British, Canadian, New Zealand, and American nationality. If this prisoner's family lives in the United States, they could take the blue label to their Red Cross chapter and order a standard food parcel sent him. The cost of the parcel is \$3.50 delivered.

Q. I notice that saccharine does not appear on the list sent me by the Provost Marshal General's Office for inclusion in parcels to my son in an Italian prison camp. I see no reason why it might not be sent in tablet form, since vitamin tablets may be sent. Another thing that would be useful is iodine crystals, since the liquid usually comes in glass which is forbidden. Any reason why not?

A. Your suggestions about saccharine and iodine crystals have been taken up with the government agency in charge of the preparation of the lists; but it seems likely that these were omitted, along with other medicinal items, because of the need for caution in their use. Saccharine is available in Europe and the American Red Cross office in Geneva is provided with funds to meet all such special demands.

As for the iodine, we hope that our medicine kits (a description of which appeared in the August issue) will take care of the need.

These kits are being sent to all the camps where Americans are held. One kit is intended to meet the first aid needs of 100 men for thirty days.

Q. Can I send chewing gum to my cousin in a German prison camp?

A. Chewing gum can be sent in next-of-kin parcels for which labels are issued each 60 days to the prisoner's next of kin. If you are not officially listed as your cousin's next of kin, perhaps the person who is so listed will let you put in some chewing gum. But don't write your name (or anything else) on it. You can tell him in a letter how you are sending it.

Q. I heard from a friend that my fiancé is in a European prison camp, and I would like to write or send him something, but I don't know his family, and haven't his address. How can I get it?

A. If you have any way of learning his family's address, it would be best to write to them for the prison camp address of your

fiancé. This is particularly true since in order to send him anything (except letters and books) it would have to be included in parcels sent him by his next of kin.

Q. My son has asked whether, since the United States entered the war, any arrangements have been made to transfer American aviators who had enlisted with British and Canadian forces, and who are now prisoners of war, to United States forces. With a few American friends he is now in a camp for British prisoners of war in Germany, and they would like to be transferred so they might be sent to a camp for Americans.

A. Certain groups of Americans in the British forces have been transferred to the American Army, but not any prisoners of war who had been captured while serving in the British forces. An officer of the War Department states that one reason for this is the difficulty that would be occasioned in taking the oath and also in undergoing medical examinations by accredited officers.

Q. Who pays for the relief supplies which the Red Cross delivers to prisoners of war?

A. The Red Cross food packages delivered to American prisoners of war are paid for by the Army and Navy. Clothing and toilet items are also provided by the branch of the Service to which the prisoner belongs. Medical and miscellaneous supplies are furnished by the Red Cross; and the Y.M.C.A. provides recreational equipment, books, etc.

The food packages, medicines, and clothing delivered through the American Red Cross to prisoners of war in Europe (other than American) are paid for by the governments-in-exile and various relief organizations, including the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, the Queen Wilhelmina Fund, the Polish American Council, the Greek War Relief, Russian relief organizations, and the United Yugoslav Relief Fund.

The British and Dominion Red Cross Societies provide for the needs of all British prisoners of war, and also contribute towards the relief of other Axis-held prisoners.

## The Camp Spokesman

By Marion Hale Britten

The camp spokesman, or man of confidence, elected by the prisoners of war in each well-organized camp, has become a very important person to the prisoners, and also to the governments and Red Cross societies interested in their care. The spokesman in any camp other than those for officers is elected by the prisoners themselves; for the officers he is the ranking officer held in the camp. Where prisoners of more than one nationality are held in one camp, each group customarily elects its own spokesman, although one of them may be considered the senior. In large camps, there may be assistants with special duties such as translating or distribution of mail.

The Geneva Prisoners of War Convention of 1929 provides that "in every place where there are prisoners of war, they shall be allowed to appoint agents entrusted with representing them directly with military authorities and protecting Powers"; and that their relations with the authorities "shall not be limited." However, the duties of the spokesmen as defined in the Convention have been considerably extended in practice during the present war. The International Red Cross Committee is kept informed about these duties from three principal sources:

- (1) Correspondence directly between the camp spokesman and the Committee's offices in Geneva;
- (2) Reports from Delegates of the Committee on their visits to the camps; and
- (3) Announcements, notices, and general information given, always in much detail, by the camp newspapers.

These liaison men are responsible for the reception and equitable distribution of standard parcels and bulk relief supplies among the prisoners in each camp, exactly according to the instructions given by the donors; and they send reports to Geneva, together with all the required receipts, vouchers, assignment notes, and so forth.

### Advising Prisoners

The spokesmen also give attention to the personal requirements of many prisoners with petitions, complaints,

questions, or special needs to fill. The prisoners ask their elected representative to act on their behalf in all sorts of official dealings with the authorities of the Detaining Power and with those of their own country. He is consulted about requests for subsidies and for transfers of pay, about postal correspondence, about changes of employment or exemptions.

Camp spokesmen in German camps may and do correspond freely with the International Red Cross Committee. For official purposes, they are not limited by the usual restrictions on correspondence. Their mail service is reported to take about three weeks; and in addition they may telegraph when necessary. In Italy, correspondence with Geneva is not restricted, but it takes longer, and telegrams are not permitted.

Many different problems are constantly arising: a soldier, whose relatives are in occupied territory, will be waiting for news; another wishes to get a copy of some of his official papers which he has lost since he was captured; and yet another has asked for particulars about the fate of one of his comrades. The multiplicity of questions has compelled the spokesmen of many camps to enlist the services of assistants, secretaries, and even accountants, and to try to provide suitable offices where men can be interviewed. Matters among his many problems are claims to pensions, founding libraries, formation of orchestras, encouragement of amateur theatricals, placing of art exhibitions, subscriptions to funds, and so on.

In many instances, the headquarters of the camp spokesman has attached to it a Lost Property Office. Books will occasionally slip out of tunic pockets; and sometimes owners have to be found for photographs from home which have been separated from the letters in which they came. To give publicity to news of general interest, the spokesman makes arrangements for a bulletin board and the posting of public notices. He also enlists the assistance of the camp news sheet in which he is able both to publish notices and give advice.

### Distribution of Supplies

The distribution of foodstuffs in

the camp is by no means a simple problem. In some camps the concentration of prisoners under the command amounts to thousands, and even tens of thousands. Many camps, moreover, are sub-divided into many parties scattered over the neighboring countryside. The spokesman, therefore, to keep an eye on everything so as to ensure a fair distribution of relief among his grades in all camps; those who are labor detachments; those who are hospitalized—the latter often at a considerable distance and among groups of other nationalities. Precautions must also be taken in the distribution of perishable foodstuffs which may not be available in quantities sufficient to supply everyone. A roster is kept so that every detachment gets its share in turn as supplies and parcels arrive and so that there is kept on hand a supply of emergency.

Owing to the great number of subsidiary working parties, it is often found necessary to put a delegate in charge of each of them. Thus the camp spokesman has become in many instances the manager of a large office directing a whole group of assistants and representatives, and is able to extend his activities to outlying sections of the camp.

In many civilian internment camps, where conditions are similar to those of military camps, civilian camp spokesmen have been taken up duty in terms of the Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. In the internment camps set aside for women, women spokesmen have been elected. In these prisoner of war and civilian internment activities, the International Red Cross Committee has had occasion frequently to acknowledge the appreciation of the sense of duty and the ready understanding which, under the most varied and difficult circumstances, these men and women have displayed in their efforts to aid in the promotion of harmony, order and justice in the camps.

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## New Packaging Center Opened in St. Louis

On Monday, August 2, operations started in the fourth center for the packaging of food for prisoners of war. The new center is located in a two-story building in St. Louis, Mo., which has been leased to the American National Red Cross by the International Shoe Company on terms very advantageous to the Red Cross, which represent a substantial good-will offering by the International Shoe Company.

The building is a fireproof structure admirably adapted for use as a packaging center both from the standpoint of the women volunteer workers who are engaged in making the packages and from that of warehousing the bulk supplies prior to packing. The selection and arrangement of machinery and equipment have been made in accordance with the method which has proved most successful in the other packaging centers of the American National Red Cross at Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York. The St. Louis center has a capacity of 2,250 food packages an hour.

The women's volunteer organization is under the chairmanship of Mrs. Oscar Lamy. From the first day of operation there has been an ample supply of enthusiastic volunteers, notwithstanding the hot weather prevailing in St. Louis at the time of starting the plant.

The adaptation of the building to use as a packaging center, and the installation of the machinery, have been under the charge of Mr. W. G. Sawyer, who had previously inaugurated the plant in Chicago.

## Relief to Far East via Russia

With the help of the U. S. S. R., arrangements have been made for the first shipment from a West Coast port of relief supplies for American and Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Far East. This first shipment of relief supplies through the Pacific, it was announced on September 15, would be moving soon and would be followed by others, according to present plans.

On its ships from West Coast ports to Vladivostok, the U. S. S. R. has allocated 1,500 tons of shipping space each month through the American Red Cross. These relief supplies, it is now planned, will be reshipped from Vladivostok for distribution in all Far Eastern points where American and Allied civilians and military personnel are held in prison camps.

Large quantities of supplies have been rushed from American Red Cross packaging centers in St. Louis and Chicago to the West Coast for the first loading.

## Vatican Message Service

Having the status of an independent neutral state, with representatives throughout the world, the Vatican City has facilities for handling communications across enemy lines. These communications facilities are available in the United States for a message service between prisoners of war (including civilian internees) and their relatives here.

In the operation of this Vatican communications service, standard forms allowing for 25-word messages by mail are used and cleared, both incoming and outgoing, with the Office of Censorship. They are handled locally in the United States through units of the Roman Catholic Church.

## Next-of-Kin Packages

The next of kin of American prisoners of war and civilian internees frequently order from Red Cross chapters the standard 11-pound food package, using the bi-monthly parcel label for this purpose.

The American Red Cross is anxious to discourage this practice. All American prisoners of war and civilian internees who can be reached with relief supplies receive a standard food package every week and to use the next-of-kin label for sending the standard package means, in most cases, unnecessary duplication of relief. The main value of the next-of-kin package is that it provides a personal link and those reminders of home which no standard package could ever replace.

## Life Insurance

It was announced in our July issue that American prisoners of war, wherever located, could take out (before midnight on August 10, 1943) additional National Service Life Insurance sufficient to bring up their maximum coverage to \$10,000.

Some misunderstanding appears to have arisen over the statement that "All American prisoners of war who, up to the time of capture, had not taken out National Service Life Insurance were automatically covered for \$5,000 by an act of Congress." The Act in question (Public Law No. 667) set a delimiting date, the effective paragraph providing that:

"Any person in active service who, on or after December 7, 1941 and prior to April 20, 1942 has been or shall be captured, besieged, or isolated by the enemy, and who so remains as captured for a period of at least thirty consecutive days from that date, . . . shall be deemed to have applied for, and to have been granted, National Service Life Insurance . . . in the amount of \$5,000."

Furthermore, a prisoner of war captured before April 20, 1942, who had taken out insurance in less amount than \$5,000 was protected by the automatic clause in the above Act to the extent that additional insurance was granted to bring up the aggregate amount to \$5,000. Those prisoners of war who had applied for, and were carrying, \$5,000 of National Service Life Insurance at the time of capture were not then eligible for additional protection.

However, as we have already announced, prisoners of war were subsequently given until midnight on August 10, 1943, to apply for additional insurance without medical examination to bring their maximum coverage up to \$10,000. On the additional \$5,000, premiums will be deducted from the pay due the prisoner. Application for the additional \$5,000 had to be made by the prisoner himself, unless his next of kin or legal representative in this country had power of attorney specifically to act for the prisoner in this respect. It will require further action by Congress to extend beyond August 10, 1943, the date for making application for the additional \$5,000 of National Service Life Insurance.

### Mail for Far East

A cable received from the International Red Cross Committee, Geneva, late in August transmitted new mail regulations by the Japanese government for prisoners of war held by Japan, to take effect "after the present communication has been received."

The most specific regulation now advised is that letters must not be more than 25 words in length. The request made previously that letters be typewritten or printed is now established as a regulation, with the printing to be "in capital letters clearly legible." Letters not complying with these regulations, or those which are not correctly addressed, it is stated, will not be forwarded by the Japanese military authorities. An endeavor will be made to have the Japanese government liberalize this ruling, but it should be observed pending further instructions.

The cable also stresses that "letters to prisoners of war must contain only personal or family news, and that they must positively not contain any military or political information or opinions."

Mail to civilian internees held in Japan or "overseas Japanese territories" is not restricted to 25 words in length, and it is not explicitly required that such mail be typewritten or written in capital letters.

### Extracts from Letters

From an American gunner captured at Corregidor and now in Philippine Military Prison Camp No. 1: "I am uninjured and in fair health. See that all my friends are informed that I am O.K."

A British prisoner, writing from Oflag IX A/H, said: "We are all very up to date in news as some Americans have arrived here from Tunisia. Another 100 arrived today—very good chaps, very cheerful, full of admiration for our Navy and the 8th Army."

From Oflag XXI B, Germany, a prisoner writes: "I spent this afternoon scrubbing out the church, and certainly feel glad now that it's so small."

A wounded American prisoner wrote (on July 3, 1943) from the military hospital at Naples, Italy: "I'm still in the hospital and getting along swell. It won't be long before I will be out of the cast. Hope every-

thing is O. K. at home, and anxiously awaiting news from. Most of my time is spent reading playing cards, chess, etc., so they are flying by. We received a parcel from the Red Cross which is nice."

From an American aviator at St. Luft III, Germany: "I am fine keeping pretty busy. I had my ture taken the other day and on them should be sent to you. See you haven't already sent me a box of clothes, you don't have to. The Cross gave me . . . Some of the get food parcels from the St. Don't think I'm going home though. . . . I was on four continents and three islands within six weeks. Not bad, huh? Hope all are fine."

Also from Stalag Luft III an American sergeant writes: "Arrived by parachute. All my crew are: Thompson, Franklin, and several others are with me. Tell Jo no wish anybody 'luck' any more."

#### 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, in doing so, give the prisoner's name; his serial or service number; the name of the country in which he is held, as well as the camp address (if known); and the name, and new and old address of his next of kin. In the case of civilian internees, please give the name of the internee; the country and camp (if known) in which he or she is held; and the name and new and old address of the next of kin.

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# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

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## Prisoner of War Camps in Japan—Osaka

By John Cotton

There is now a substantial number of prisoner of war camps on the Japanese mainland (the island of Honshu) adjacent to the northern shores of the Inland Sea. Nine of these are designated as *Camp Osaka*, after the principal camp which is in the large industrial city of that name. The other eight, which are divisional camps, are situated in, or near, towns along the coast west of Osaka; but they all have the common address, *Camp Osaka*.

At the time of an International Red Cross Committee Delegate's visit in March 1943, there were several hundred Americans in the principal camp and at two divisional camps in Kobe and Hirohata, which are near Himeji. These men, mostly uncommissioned officers and enlisted men, came from the Philippines and the Zentsuji Camp. The first arrivals reached *Camp Osaka* in the fall of 1942, shortly after the camps were opened. Lately, increasing numbers are reported to have arrived from Zentsuji, Shanghai, and the Philippine Islands, so that the total number of Americans there in August appeared to exceed 1,000. British and Dutch prisoners make up the population of the six other divisional camps. While new arrivals at Osaka from Shanghai, the Philippines, and Zentsuji have been numerous in recent months, reports have also been received of American prisoners—mainly officers—being sent back to Zentsuji from Osaka. It might be inferred from this that the enlisted men transferred back to Zentsuji were unsuited for the labor required of them at Osaka.

All the camps are of new construction except the Kobe divisional

camp. They are enclosed with plank boards about 10 feet high. Wooden barracks are standardized with minor deviations in interior arrangements. Double-decker bunks stretch the entire length of the barracks, with lower bunks 16 inches above the ground. Rice straw mattresses are used over a layer of straw in the bunks. Each prisoner has a pillow and five thin blankets. Officers' quarters are somewhat better, separate cubicles being allotted to them. The camps are reported to be clean, tidy, and free from vermin. They are electrically lighted and some stoves provided heat during last January and February.

The food, prepared by army cooks among the prisoners, consists of

bread, rice, barley, fish, vegetables, potatoes, some fruit, salt, sugar, a small amount of meat, and some margarine from time to time. Sick prisoners receive some milk. Although the nutritive value of the food is said to be 3,000 calories a day, the prisoners reported to the International Red Cross Committee Delegate in March that the majority were still losing weight.

Canteens are operated, but, as in all Japanese camps, the articles available for purchase are strictly limited. Prisoners are able to purchase only a small number of cigarettes to supplement their monthly ration of from 150 to 200. Canteens sell sweets, but each prisoner may purchase only

(Continued on page 10)

### Gripsholm Transfer Completed at Mormagao

The Japanese exchange ship, *Teia Maru*, left Mormagao in Portuguese India on October 21 carrying the entire cargo of relief supplies, as well as 3,403 bags of next-of-kin packages and mail which had been transferred from the *Gripsholm* for prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Far East.

The *Gripsholm* left Mormagao on October 22 with repatriated Americans and 445 tons of supplies for Japanese war prisoners and internees in United Nations countries. She is scheduled to reach New York on December 2. Also on board are five American Red Cross nurses and a Red Cross worker, who are helping to take care of the returning civilians. Considerable quantities of warm clothing, magazines, children's games, and other supplies were sent out on the *Gripsholm* in order to care for the needs of the returning civilians.