



# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

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## The 1944 Christmas Package

Christmas Package No. 2, packed by women volunteers in the Philadelphia Center during the hottest days of the summer, reached Germany via Sweden in time for distribution to American prisoners of war and civilian internees held by Germany.

The ten thousand Christmas packages sent in 1943 for American prisoners of war and civilian internees in Europe were hardly sufficient to go around, although at the time of ordering, the number seemed excessive. No chances were taken this year. The total shipped in September was fully 50 percent in excess of the number of Americans reported held by Germany at that time, and much more than sufficient to cover those captured since September.

Similarly, all preparations were made—insofar as they could be by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the American Red Cross—to get the packages in time to all camps and hospitals in Germany housing American prisoners. They were shipped, along with large quantities of standard food packages and other supplies, on Red Cross vessels from Philadelphia to Goteborg, Sweden, and thence transhipped on Swedish vessels to a north German port fairly close to the camps where the largest numbers of Americans

are now held. The aim, of course, was to avoid railroad transport in Germany as much as possible.

Much thought was given to planning the 1944 package—the basis of it being “turkey and the ‘fixins’.” A complete list of the contents follows:

Plum pudding	1 lb.
Turkey, boned meat	¾ lb.
Small sausages	¼ lb.
Strawberry jam	6 oz.
Candy, assorted	¾ lb.
Deviled ham	3 oz.
Cheddar cheese	¼ lb.

Nuts, mixed	¾ lb.
Bouillon cubes	12
Fruit bars	2
Dates	14 oz.
Cherries, canned	6 oz.
Playing cards	1 pack
Chewing gum	4 pkgs.
Butter	3¾ oz.
Games, assorted	1 box
Cigarettes	3 pkgs.
Smoking tobacco	1 pkg.
Pipe	1
Tea	1¾ oz.
Honey	6 oz.
Washcloth	1
Pictures (American scenes)	2



Contents of the 1944 Christmas package for American prisoners of war and civilian internees in Europe. More than 75,000 of these packages were shipped from Philadelphia.

The packages were paid for by the United States government, and the contents in large part were purchased through the Department of Agriculture.

Left unsaid, but implicit in every package, were the heartfelt wishes of the American people for the safe and speedy return of their kinsfolk.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to get a special Christmas package to American prisoners held by Japan, but it is to be hoped earnestly that the large shipment of relief supplies held in Vladivostok, which was picked up by the Japanese steamer *Hakusan Maru* early in November, will reach the camps in time for distribution at Christmas, just as the *Gripsholm* supplies shipped to the Far East in the fall of 1943 reached the men in most of the camps by Christmas.