

America's Munitions

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CANDY for the A.E.F.



Candy in the days of the old Army was considered a luxury. The war with Germany witnessed a change. The old popularity of chewing tobacco waned; that of candy increased. Approximately 300,000 pounds of candy represented the monthly purchases during the early period of the war. This amount included both the home and overseas consumption. Demands from overseas grew steadily. The soldier far from home and from his customary amusements could not be considered an ordinary individual living according to his own inclinations, and candy became more and more sought after. As the demand increased, the Quartermaster Department came to recognize the need of systematic selection and purchase.

The first purchases were made from offerings of manufacturers without any particular standard, 40 per cent being assorted chocolates, 30 per cent assorted stick candy, and 30 per cent lemon drops. A standard was developed through the steady work of confectionery experts. This standard offered no opportunities for deception, and it guaranteed candy made from pure sugar and the best of other materials. The specifications furnished all bidders covered raw materials, the methods of manufacture, packing, and casing. Specifications were adopted after many conferences with the leading manufacturers of the country. These men cooperated in the work by giving their best suggestions and often their trade secrets.

Huge purchases of candy were made during the days when sugar was scarcest in the United States. The Food Administration was convinced that the Army should have all the candy it desired, and sufficient quantities of sugar were allotted for the purpose. From 300,000 pounds monthly the candy purchases increased till they equaled 1,373,300 pounds in November, 1918, the highest amount purchased up to that time. In December, 1918, an innovation was adopted, consisting of giving the troops a regular monthly ration of candy. The candy which had been shipped every month for sale in the various canteens had always been quickly disposed of. Many men did not get the opportunity to make purchases. The ration plan, however, assured each man a pound and a half a month, without exception. It required 3,495,000 pounds the first month of the ration system to provide each soldier overseas with his allotted portion.

In December, 1918, the Subsistence Division took over the purchase of all candy for the various organizations conducting canteens for our troops. The purchase for that month totaled 10,137,000 pounds, all of which was shipped overseas. It was the largest exportation of candy on record. The candy purchased for the canteens, commissaries, and other agencies was manufactured by the best known candy firms in the country. A portion of the candy consumed overseas was manufactured in France. This French supply was discontinued January 15, 1919, and thereafter all requirements were shipped over from the United States. The candy was sold to the men at just half the price it would have cost individuals here. After December, 1918, 50,000 pounds were furnished each month for sales purposes for every 25,000 men in France. Up to February 1, 1919, 21,000,000 pounds of candy had been sent across. The demand for candy jumped skyward after the signing of the armistice, the men then having more time on their hands in which to enjoy luxuries. Tobacco demands likewise increased.

The suffering sweet tooth of the Yank was not appeased by candy alone. The third of a billion pounds of sugar bought for the Army represents a tremendous number of cakes, tarts, pies, and custards. An old soldier recently stated that the ice cream eaten by the Army during the war would start a new ocean. The serious shortage of sugar which at one time threatened to reduce sweets to an irreducible minimum on the civilian bill of fare did not interfere with the soldier's ration, which continued to be 6 pounds monthly in this country and about 9 pounds overseas. The ration for the civilian population was reduced to 2 pounds monthly. Army officers were placed on the same status as the civilian population and were allowed to purchase only the amount stipulated for civilians for use in their homes.

Up to the signing of the armistice the total amount of granulated, cut, and powdered sugar purchased by the Subsistence Division equaled 342,745,862 pounds and cost \$28,465,050. Of this amount the greater portion was shipped to the troops in France.