

## **Crossen am den Oder POW Camp 1914-1918**

### **Food Parcels - Alleged lack of for British POW's interned at Crossen 1918.**

Complaint by British soldier (unnamed) that food parcels were not being given out in Crossen am den Oder POW camp from April 1918 through August 1918.

Here is the British Government's query with regard to this via the Dutch Legation and the subsequent reply from Prussian Ministry of War.

As grandad JG was in Crossen at the time he would have been in receipt of one of these parcels. With respect to bread, Crossen camp actually had their own bakery but whether towards the end they had the flour, salt etc to make it is another thing.

It is apparent that even then the German's were extremely efficient and that everything was written down and recorded.

The subsequent downfall of the main players in Hitler's Third Reich in 1945 and the bringing to justice of those involved in the resolving of the 'Jewish Problem' can be attributed in no small part to the accurate records kept by the Nazi regime from about 1936 to the end of the Second World War.

This was found in the Foreign Office archives at the Nation Archives ref.  
FO383/503

Researched by Graham R Morley  
Photos – Bundesarchiv - Koblenz

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The Netherland Legation (British Section) at Berlin presents its compliments to the British Legation at The Hague and, with reference to the latter's communication, No. 2111, dated October 7, 1918, enclosing British Foreign Office Memorandum, No. 113639/1918/P, dated September 30, 1918, regarding the receipt of parcels at the prisoners of war camp Grossen, has the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a communication from the Prussian Ministry of War, No. 51.13.18.U.3, dated December 9, 1918, together with enclosure.

December 13, 1918.

To the

BRITISH LEGATION

THE HAGUE

copy.

radiation.

Kriegsministerium.

Kriegsamt-Departement.

21.12.18.113.

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B E R L I N.

9th December, 1918.

Reply of the Prussian Ministry of War to  
the undermentioned Notes  
No. X 664 dated 18.10.18 and No. 113639/1818/T  
dated 30.9.18.  
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The enclosed report of the British Help  
Committee of Camp Grossen conveys the desired  
information.



15 November 1918

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Kommandantur des Kriegsgefangenenlagers  
Crossen a/Oder

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Reference Foreign Office letter of 30/9/18 No 113639/  
1218/P

Sir,

I have the honour to reply to above letter in so far as it reflects on the distribution of Foodstuffs to British prisoners of war by my Committee.

I am sorry the name of the man complaining was not disclosed, as I could then by my books prove if the complaint is justified, and would not have to write at such length,

On April 4th last there arrived at this camp 457 British prisoners of war, all wounded and captured during month of March, another 301 arrived on April 20th. There was no British Help Committee at that time, A. Committee was formed with myself as President, and about the middle of April my Committee appealed to several British Camps for assistance, in the way of foodstuffs.

The British Help Committee at Minden Camp most generously responded by forwarding us 1 case of Medical Comforts and 25 cases of Standard Emergency Parcels which was duly acknowledged to Minden and the Central Prisoners of War Committee London.

On receipt of the above 25 cases (500) Emergency parcels the Lager Officer suggested they should all be distributed to the men in Hospital, but my Committee decided to make a



a distribution of 1 complete parcel to each bed patient and 1 parcel between two men to remainder of men in camp. We distributed on that scale on the 8th 9th and 13th May 140 parcels leaving a balance of 60 parcels.

The first consignment of bread from Copenhagen arrived here during the week ending 18th May. Every British prisoner of war received an equal share.

On 8th June 140 men were transferred to Frankfurt the majority of whom arrived here on 26th April. All were hospital cases and had received Emergency parcels as above, and equal share of bread up to date of departure. No parcels were issued to them on departure owing to shortage of stock. The week ending 15th June 1 Emergency parcel and 1 packet of biscuits was issued to all men in camp and on Kommando.

Owing to shortage of stock an issue of 1 Emergency parcel between 2 men was made to all men on 27th June.

On June 29th the first consignment of personally addressed Red Cross parcels arrived in this camp for British prisoners of war.

On July 27th all men not in receipt of addressed Red Cross parcels and who arrived in this camp on April 4th and 26th were issued with 1 Standard Emergency parcel each. Tea, sugar, Beef and biscuits to those who arrived on 26th June and tea sugar and biscuits to those men transferred from Cassel a few days previously.



On August 6th an issue of biscuits was made to all in camp. On August 17th an issue of half an emergency parcel was made to each man transferred from Cassel, and 1 parcel to remainder in camp and on Kommando who were not then in receipt of personally addressed Red Cross parcels. Since above date our stock has enabled us to provide assistance to newly captured men, transferred men and men whose addressed parcels have been delayed, and to make a regular issue of 1 standard Emergency parcel to all men not in receipt of personally addressed red cross parcels. As will be seen by above particulars which is all verified by signatures of recipients except during the first 10 weeks or so or until the men were in communication with their regimental associations everything possible has been done by my Committee to keep all British prisoners of war in the camp provided with extra food and that no extraordinary hardship has been endured by anyone.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant

(signature) D. Nicholls, R.S.M.  
President, British Help Committee



Bundesarchiv, II 07 984-02-082  
Foto: o. Reg. | 1814/1918 ca.

**Crossen Main Gate**



Bundesarchiv, II 07 984-02-083  
Foto: o. Reg. | 1814/1918 ca.

**Winter Working Party - Crossen**



Bundesarchiv, N 67 98402-084  
Foto: o. Ang. | 1914/1918 ex

**Hospital & Rehabilitation Unit – Crossen**



Bundesarchiv, N 67 98402-081  
Foto: o. Ang. | 1914/1918 ex

**Officer's Inspection - Crossen**