

How United States Government Feeds Its Army

(Copyright, 1911, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
 WASHINGTON, D. C.—This letter is to tell you of the new preparations which Uncle Sam, patriarch, is making for feeding his army. What kind of a Christmas dinner will be given tomorrow? We have about 90,000 soldiers, and they are mighty hungry. Now that the army has become a great fighting machine their labor in times of peace is quite as hard as it would be in war. None of them lacks appetite, and they all want the best. The man who has charge of feeding them is the commissary general. His name is Henry G. Sharpe, and he graduated at West Point thirty-one years ago. He started his military career with this branch of the service, and he has served in every department of it and in every one of the United States possessions. He has had charge of emergency work in various parts of the Union, has been in Porto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines, and for some years has been commissary general of the United States army. It is from him and his department that the information I now give you comes.

Christmas Dinner with the Soldiers.
 And now as to the Christmas dinner. It will be varied according to the location of the troops. There are fat turkeys in Porto Rico and the Chinese raise them by the hundreds on the east coast of Asia. There is plenty of wild game in Alaska, and each army post, and especially those in the west, has its peculiar supplies. In the main, however, the Christmas dinner will be made up from the same markets as yours or mine, and the government has written its menu to suit. Here is a Christmas dinner suggested by the commissary general. It comes from a manual which has been recently prepared for the cooks of the army:

- Oyster Soup and Crackers.
- Roast Turkey and Dressing, Cranberry.
- Cold Boiled Ham.
- Mashed Potatoes, Canned Sweet Potatoes.
- Bread and Butter.
- Shrimp Salad, Celery, Olives.
- Chocolate Layer Cake, Fruit Cake.
- Mince Pie, Lemon Curlique Pie.
- Cheese and Crackers.
- Mixed Nuts, Assorted Candies.
- Apples, Oranges, Bananas.
- Chocolate, Coffee.

How do you like it? It is fit for a king, and it seems a costly feast for Uncle Sam to supply to 90,000 of his children. Upon investigation, however, I find that a dinner like this can be served for less than 8 cents. That is the price the commissary general allows for the soldiers on transports, where the meals cost more than on land.

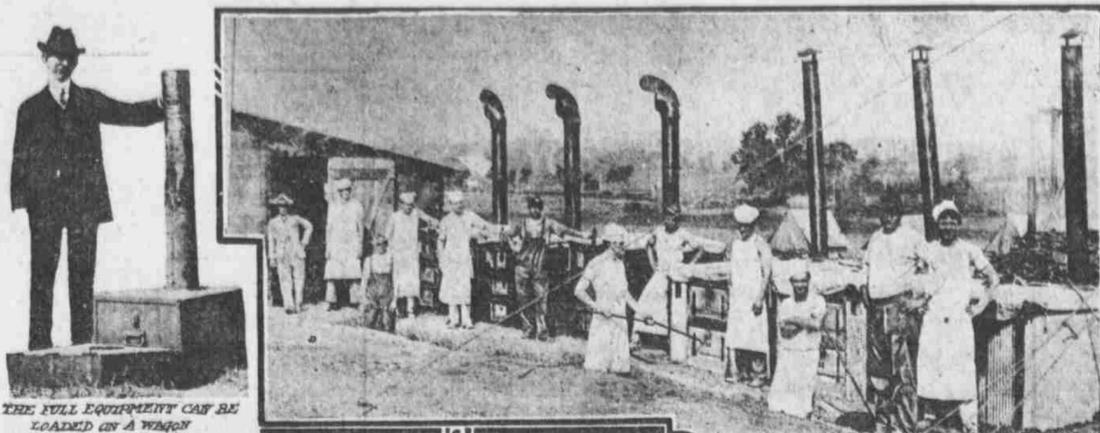
Twenty-Three Cents a Day.
 Indeed, the cost of feeding the army in one of the most important things connected with the commissary. The government has to know just what it is spending, and at present the army rations cost only a little more than 20 cents a year. This sum supplies the food for all the soldiers and the cost is so calculated that the commissary general can serve out the rations at so much a meal. The average price now paid is less than 8 cents, it is 2 1/2 cents per ration, and a ration means three meals. Last year the soldiers in the Philippines averaged less than a nickel a meal, and the yearly cost of subsistence per man per day, the whole army through, was less than 20 cents.

These are the figures for these days of high prices, and they lead one to think that the food must be skinty and poor. It is not. It is the best that can be bought in the market, and the variety is greater than that of the average family in the United States over. I have before me the bills of fare for one month as suggested by the commissary to the army cooks. They consist of thirty-one typical breakfasts, thirty-one dinners and thirty-one suppers, no two of which are the same.

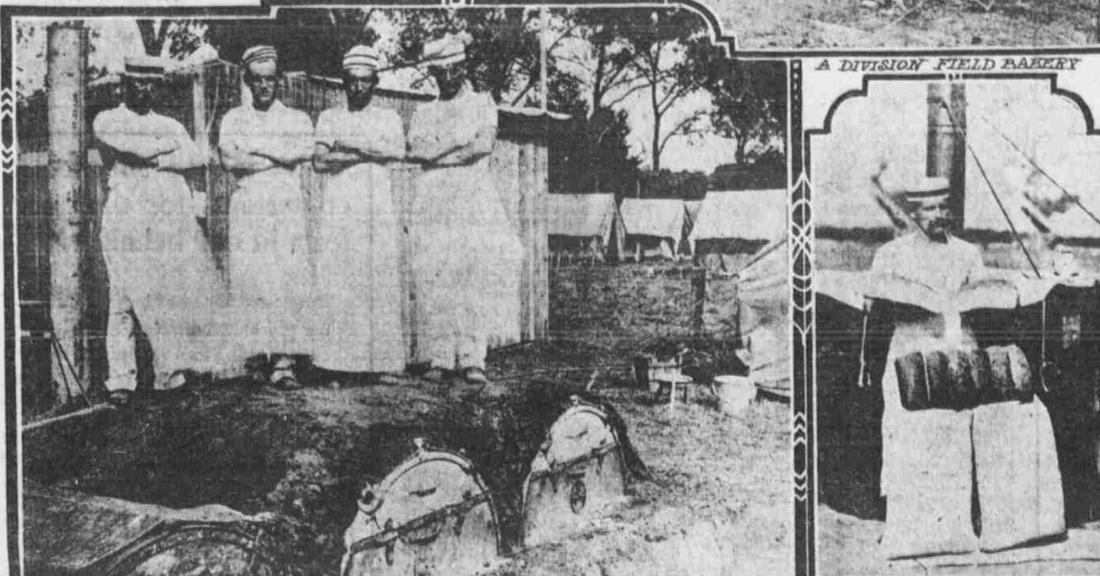
Good Meals at Seven Cents Per.
 I would like to give you housekeepers who are trying to make the ends meet some specimens of these rations. I venture that any one of you would consider the average menu good enough for your family. They are practically the same as those supplied to the soldiers at the Washington barracks, the meals for which are prepared by the students of Uncle Sam's School for Army Bakers and Cooks. This school I describe farther on in this letter. In each student has, from time to time, to plan out, prepare and serve for the day's rations for the sixty men at the barracks. He has to keep the cost of each item of food, and on the average the day's rations must not run over 2 1/2 cents per man. This means a little more than 7 cents per meal, which is close to the average cost that Uncle Sam pays the whole army through.

The bills of fare I choose are those of one day last week, as selected and prepared by one of the student cooks. The penmanship is crude and the man is probably uneducated. His breakfast consisted of pork chops, fried potatoes, hot griddle cakes and syrup, bread and butter, peaches and cream and coffee. A very good meal for 7 cents. The dinner consisted of a vegetable soup, roast pork and gravy, tomatoes with salad dressing, apple sauce, chocolate layer cake, coffee and bread. Not at all bad for 7 cents. The supper included beef loaf with gravy, baked beans, German fried potatoes, sliced cheese, plain cake and doughnuts and coffee and bread. Another good 7-cent meal. I would say, however, that the student has a right to spend a little more for breakfast, provided he cuts down on the supper or the dinner. Or he can add to the dinner and supper as he pleases; the only requirement is that the day's three meals do not cost more than 2 1/2 cents per man. Such meals are served by every student cook and student baker. He has to keep all inside the allowance of 2 1/2 cents for three meals.

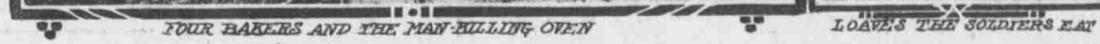
Cooking Schools for the Army.
 And this brings me to Uncle Sam's new schools for army cooks and bakers. These have been opened in the last two or three years, and they have already graduated about fifteen hundred cooks and over seven hundred bakers. The old cooks are being brought in and given instruction and new men are appointed from the various divisions to come to these schools to learn cooking, so that within a short time the army will have several thousand graduated cooks and bakers. This education is being done in three schools, each of which has been built and equipped for the purpose. One of these is at the Presidio near San Francisco; another at Fort Riley, Kan., and a third here at Washington. The cooks for the armies of the west; that at Fort Riley for those troops which are located in the central part of the United States, and that here for the soldiers of



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A DIVISION FIELD BAKERY



FOUR BAKERS AND THE MAN-MILLING OVEN

LOAVES THE SOLDIERS EAT

the east. All have been in operation for some time and all are graduating a number of cooks and bakers every year. The Washington school was established in 1907. It is now under the charge of Captain Elliott and its chef is a sergeant who is famous for his cooking, as was his father before him.

Armed with a letter from the commissary general, I visited the school this afternoon, and saw about twenty bare-armed, white-appeared, husky young men, with their sleeves rolled to the elbows, kneading dough, putting bread in and out of ovens, and presiding over a large number of ranges where food of all kinds was being cooked for the troops at the Washington barracks. In one room I was shown a chemical laboratory where the student-cooks are taught how to test flour and to know whether it is pure or not. They ascertain the amount of moisture in the flour, and also its feeding value. They learn something of arithmetic and of the keeping of accounts, and each must know just what goes into the dishes he prepares and how much they cost when given to the soldiers. Everything is done by weights and measures, and it takes a man of more than ordinary intelligence to pass through the school and become a graduate.

A Kitchen as Big as a Barn.
 The kitchen of the school is an interesting place. It is about seventy-five feet square with a high roof, the whole covering the most of the one-story building which has been built for it. The walls are of white tile, and the floor is cement. There are long tables running through the center, and near them a great dough trough of iron. At the back are two huge bake ovens, one which is permanent and is faced with white tiles, and another made of iron coated with porcelain. The latter can be taken down and moved at a moment's notice.

A part of the education of the students is connected with this oven. They are made to take it apart and put it together, and upon graduation any one of them could go with it to the Philippines or anywhere else and start a bakery there. The oven is twelve feet wide and about fifteen feet long and higher than a man's head. It will cook 420 loaves at once and can bake thousands of loaves in a day. In addition to this the students are taught to bake in field ovens, which can be put up and knocked down and carried from one place to another on wagons. A full bakery of that kind and all of its equipment can be put in a two-horse wagon, and there are enough of them here to turn out 20,000 loaves of bread a day. Each of the other baking schools has a similar equipment, so that Uncle Sam could put into the field bakeries and men to run them sufficient to supply 50,000 pounds of bread a day to his soldiers. He has, in addition, so the commissary general tells me, a sufficient equipment for ten other divisions, so that upon occasion he can now supply enough bread for 200,000 men, giving each a pound loaf a day.

Could Supply Bread for 200,000 Men
 During my stay at the bakery I looked at some of the bread. The loaves are larger than those sold in the private bakeries. They are white and crisp and the crust is delicious. They come out in great sheets of six loaves each, all baked to a turn. While looking at them I talked with the sergeant in charge about the cost of the bread and was told that there is a great deal of water in bread. Now, the water weighs, and this weight is taken into account when the pound loaf of bread is sold. The man who knows anything about baking need not

be awake at night worrying about the profits of his baker. They are very large.

This Bread Keeps Fresh Two Weeks.
 Another bread made here is such that it will keep for days and still remain fresh and good. This is after a French method, the bread being made in a long round loaf, one of which stood upon end would reach to the height of one's waist. The loaf is half slit before baking, and in this way an additional amount of crust is formed. Such bread is good when the army is marching so rapidly that new bread cannot be supplied from day to day. It should be good and palatable for fifteen days after making, and it is intended to be used when the troops cannot be supplied with soft bread and to obviate the necessity of using hard bread at such times.

The Emergency Ration.
 And just here I want to tell you about the emergency ration. This is a new food by means of which the soldier need never go hungry. It has been invented by the commissary general in connection with other officers of the army, and it consists of a little package not bigger than a deck of playing cards, or when incased in tin not larger than a half-pint flask of whiskey. It can be easily carried in one's breast pocket. This little package weighs only eight ounces, but it contains three full meals, and its nature is such that a man could live upon it for a long time if he had to. It is made of the component parts of milk and eggs, so treated and mixed with chocolate that they look exactly like the chocolate cakes you buy in the candy stores. Each ration is in the form of three cakes of equal size. Each cake is wrapped in tin foil, and all three are incased in an hermetically sealed round-cornered tin box of the size I have described.

In addition to this arrangements have been made for a large number of kitchen cars or rolling kitchens. This is in connection with the Pullman company, which, at the suggestion of the commissary general, has remodeled some of its tourist cars for the purpose. The cars may be used for the tourist travel while they are not employed by the War department, and in case of war they could be employed to carry the soldiers and each would supply hot meals for 500 men at one time.

These are among some of the things that Uncle Sam, patriarch, is doing to make of his army a live, active and always ready-to-move fighting machine, in order that if war should unexpectedly come from any source he may not be found napping.

As Big as a Hat Box.
 The small range is sufficient to do all the cooking for a company of fifty-five men, and nevertheless it is not as big as a woman's hat box of the present time. It is about twenty inches square and sixteen inches high, and at first sight it looks like a little safe or money chest. Nevertheless, it contains all the pans, kettles and equipment to supply that many men. It includes a stovepipe and a lantern and all of the kitchen utensils. The small range is sufficient to do all the cooking for a company of fifty-five men, and nevertheless it is not as big as a woman's hat box of the present time. It is about twenty inches square and sixteen inches high, and at first sight it looks like a little safe or money chest. Nevertheless, it contains all the pans, kettles and equipment to supply that many men. It includes a stovepipe and a lantern and all of the kitchen utensils.

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Those wishing further advice free, may address Dr. Theodore Deck, College-Building, College-Hillwood, St. Louis, Mo., enclosing self-addressed, stamped envelope for reply. Full name and address must be given, but initials or fictitious name will be used in my answers. The prescriptions can be filled at any well-stocked drug store. Any druggist can order of wholesaler.

Ex-Health—Your symptoms indicate a weak, run-down condition of the nervous system probably due to overwork. Obtain these ingredients separately, avoid any embarrassment, and mix at home as follows: Get three ounces of compound artemisia parviflora in a one-half pint bottle. Get one ounce each of compound fluid balneum, compound essence of cod liver and structure caducum compound. Add balsam of Peru, shake and let stand two hours. Then add other two ingredients, shake well and take a teaspoonful after each meal and one when retiring.

N. O. K.—Such symptoms as are mentioned announce three following conditions: a nervous condition of a condition of blood poisoning. The disease can be eliminated by a regular and thorough course of treatment. The symptoms are: sore, running sores, eczema, ulcers, boils, scabies, dandruff, itching scalp, etc. Obtain a four-ounce jar of plain white mineral and use as per directions accompanying same. Heavily lustrous fluffy hair will be your early reward.

Miss M.—The formula which you request is not one of my own, but I have frequently quoted it and have learned by correspondence that it has proven very effective for some of my patients. The formula is that of a noted beauty specialist. If properly used it should prove very satisfactory and you will see your figure as desired. Compound structure caducum 1 oz., (not castor oil), glycerine 2 oz., rose-water 1 pint, alcohol 1/2 pint, perfume 1/2 pint. Mix; shake well and apply about a tablespoonful to the neck, arms and bust, rubbing and massaging until completely absorbed. Then wash the face with hot water and soap and dry thoroughly. Apply to the face at night for several weeks or months, as the case may require.

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