

# QUARTERMASTER SUPPLY

in the

## EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS IN WORLD WAR II

Volume V

### Sales Stores, Post Exchanges, Tentage, and Miscellaneous Supplies

BY

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and

Sherman Allan

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THE QUARTERMASTER SCHOOL  
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## PREFACE

The conversation of the Walrus and the Carpenter in *Alice in Wonderland* dealt with subjects no more varied and incongruous than those that make up the contents of this volume. The heterogeneity, however, calls for no apology.

Many items and services provided by the Quartermaster Corps of World War II would have astonished American soldiers of an earlier day. Yet the paternalism that prompted their inclusion in the supply program is as old as the Army itself. The first edition of Army Regulations, published in 1779, imposed upon the Army Commander the responsibility for "keeping a watchful eye over the officers of companies, that they may pay the necessary attention to their men." This quaint document went on to say that each officer "should endeavour to gain the love of his men by his attention to everything that may contribute to their health and convenience."

Personnel and materiel, the only resources upon which an army can draw, are wholly interdependent. The best weapon of modern warfare is no better than the man who handles it. The Quartermaster Service and the Medical Service in active theaters keep men fit for combat and help return men to civil life fit for the duties of citizenship. The war was not won by weapons and ammunition, by food, by clothing and individual equipment, or by the genius of tacticians and logisticians but by all these elements working together.

Stationed in countries that had suffered years of depleting warfare, troops required items contributory to morale as well as to health and fighting efficiency. The difficulty of the supply task involved was in direct proportion to the variety of items and in inverse proportion to the quantities obtained.

The Army Exchange Service was dissolved in Europe in August 1943 and the Quartermaster Service was charged with the procurement and distribution of merchandise for sale in ex-

changes and commissaries. Though the Army Exchange Service was reestablished in Europe in May 1943, the Quartermaster Service continued to distribute post exchange items. The Army Exchange Service was the retailer, the Quartermaster Service the wholesaler.

The War Department defines class IV supplies as those "for which allowances are not prescribed, or which require special measures of control and are not otherwise classified." Within this broad definition, the Theater Chief Quartermaster grouped as class IV supplies: officers' and nurses' clothing and accessories; items procured specifically for war correspondents, members of the American Red Cross, and members of quasi-military organizations working with United States Forces; medals and decorations; and materials handling equipment not contained in standard tables of allowances or equipment. In the European Theater post exchange supplies, distributed by the Quartermaster Service but sold by the Army Exchange Service, were also grouped under class IV supplies.

Other volumes of this series treat of programs essential to the successful performance of troops. This volume treats of services equally as important as the supply of food, shelter, and clothing and individual equipment for the enlisted man. The series attempts to present the whole drama of quartermaster supply in the European Theater of Operations. This volume should be used in connection with volume II, which sets the stage, and volume VIII, which delineates the characters.

These studies are not to be considered official for data other than those now available may be unearthed. It is hoped that persons who took part in the quartermaster program of the European Theater will send constructive criticisms that can be incorporated in a revised edition.

15 March 1949

Eudora Ramsay Richardson

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## CHAPTER 1

# SALES STORES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Officers of the United States Army in World War II purchased all regular uniform items except wool-knit caps and steel helmets, complete. They were beneficiaries of the Quartermaster Corps only so far as individual equipment and special clothing were concerned. All officers, whether in the Regular Army or the Reserve Corps, who were commissioned before 14 May 1940 had dug into their pockets in order to bring about their sartorial conversion from civilians to officers. Then by a munificent act of Congress, Reserve officers were given a clothing allowance of \$50 if they should serve 3 months during a 12-month period. Their cumulative allowances, however, might not exceed \$150. On 9 March 1942 the Congress authorized an initial clothing allowance of \$150 for each officer who had been commissioned on or before 26 September 1941.<sup>1</sup> The allowance was increased in 1943 to \$250.<sup>2</sup> Newly commissioned officers drew the whole amount, and other officers drew \$100—the difference between the old and new allowances. In the zone of interior officers might purchase clothing from quartermaster sales stores or from haberdashers and tailors. In theaters of operations they depended entirely upon sales stores.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF SALES STORES

Clothing and accessories for men and women officers of the United States Army and for other authorized persons were handled in the European Theater of Operations by static and mobile sales stores. The Quartermaster Service did not plan until August 1942 to operate sales stores. Then it received information that the Commanding General of the Services of Supply had directed the Quartermaster Corps to purchase, ship, and store merchandise for sale at exchanges and commissaries in theaters of operations outside the continental limits of the United States and had published a list of the items that the Quartermaster Corps would be permitted to purchase for resale.<sup>3</sup>

On 24 August 1942 Major General John C. H. Lee, Commanding General, SOS, ETOUSA, dissolved the Army Exchange Service and transferred its functions to the Quartermaster Service.<sup>4</sup> Then personnel in the Supply Division of OCQM who were in charge of officers' clothing were combined with personnel of the Army

Exchange Service to form the Exchange Service Division of OCQM.<sup>5</sup> In November the Exchange Service Division became the Sales Store Division.<sup>6</sup> It was then that the sales store program got under way. A directive reestablishing the Army Exchange Service was published on 24 April 1943.<sup>7</sup> After 1 May 1943 sales stores in the European Theater of Operations handled only officers' clothing and accessories.

The bulk depots that were established in London, Ashchurch, Liverpool, and Bristol on 27 November 1942 handled both post exchange and sales store items and supplied designated distribution depots, which in turn supplied sales stores.<sup>8</sup> By 30 November distribution depots had been set up as follows:

Distribution Depot	Manpower
G-14 —Liverpool	20,000
G-20 —Burton-on-Trent	25,000
G-25 —Ashchurch	20,000
G-35 —Bristol	10,000
G-45 —Thatcham	30,000
G-50 —Taunton	10,000
Q-107—Stowmarket	20,000
Q-110—London	20,000*

In December provision was made for the establishment of sales stores in London, Cheltenham, and Belfast. Model stocks for officers' and nurses' clothing were prescribed for these stores (see apps. I and II). All requisitions should conform to these model stocks. No model stock for mobile sales units had been worked out at that time.<sup>9</sup> The sales stores would make requisitions on depot Q-110 in London and in so doing would report not only the amount of stock required but also the amount of stock on hand.<sup>11</sup> At the same time the depot in Belfast was designated as a distribution depot authorized to provide sales store items to organizations and directed to make requisitions on depot G-14 in Liverpool.<sup>12</sup> In addition to standard items of officers' clothing and accessories, sales stores sold to officers many items of regular issue to enlisted men.<sup>13</sup>

A mobile clothing unit began operations in the Eastern Base Section on 27 December 1942 without benefit of prescribed model stocks. On 23 January the sales store officer reported that six stations had been served and that the following merchandise had been sold:



Item	Quantity
Belts, web	45
Blouses	191
Caps	204
Coats, burberry	97
Coats, trench	144
Drawers, thick	118
Drawers, thin	81
Gloves	46
Handkerchiefs	2,603
Jackets, field	62
Linings, trench-coat	124
Overcoats	95
Overshoes	53
Pajamas, fancy	305
Pajamas, plain	95
Pants, od	57
Shirts, khaki	239
Shirts, od	226
Shirts, poplin	94
Shoes, buckle	168
Shoes, high-top	65
Shoes, laced	184
Slacks, green	259
Slacks, pink	285
Slippers	82
Socks, wool	1,401
Ties	1,174
Towels	423
Vests, thick	142
Vests, thin	65 <sup>14</sup>

The commanding officer of the area in which a sales store was located was responsible for its operation and for the personnel it employed and was answerable to his base section commander. OCQM, however, was responsible for prescribing model stock, fixing prices, and providing supplies.<sup>15</sup>

By mid-July 1943 the quartermaster of the Western Base Section was of the opinion that a sales store for officers' and nurses' clothing would soon be required at Lichfield, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Cardiff. The first of these was opened at Lichfield on 19 July with a model stock of clothing for 850 officers. The quartermaster of the Western Base Section recommended that stock be increased by 31 December to accommodate 5,000 officers. He was of the opinion that the sales store at Liverpool should be opened on or about 1 September with a model stock for 1,500 officers and that the stock should be enlarged by 31 December to accommodate 7,500 officers. The sales stores at Glasgow and Cardiff should also be opened on 1 September, each with a model stock for 1,000 officers. By 31 December the stock at Glasgow should be enlarged to accommodate 2,500 officers, and the stock at Cardiff to accommodate 5,000 officers. As soon as sufficient quartermaster officer per-

sonnel should be available, a base section sales officer would be designated. Procedures for inventorying and stock-record accounting were being set up at Lichfield immediately. Results would be analyzed and used as a basis for setting up procedures throughout the base section. In order to cover stations not accessible to static stores, the Western Base Section quartermaster requested that one platoon of a mobile sales store unit be assigned to the Western Base Section.<sup>16</sup>

Upon receipt of the ambitious program planned for the Western Base Section, the Deputy Chief Quartermaster replied that periodic increase of model stocks and activation of sales stores, though highly desirable, should be governed by availability of stock. Despite a very evident improvement in the supply situation, it was still necessary to proceed with caution. To this end he suggested that recommendations for the activation of new stores be sent in separate letters not more than 30 days before the desired date of opening and that recommendations for the increase of model stocks be sent not more than 30 days before the increase was needed. In each case the base section quartermaster should establish a priority. Such a plan would enable OCQM to evaluate each recommendation. If efforts then being made to activate an additional mobile sales company proved successful, the Western Base Section would be assigned one platoon indefinitely.<sup>17</sup>

Following the suggestion, the quartermaster of the Western Base Section recommended that two additional sales stores be activated on or about 1 September 1943. The first of these should be in Glasgow, and the second in Cardiff. The initial stock of each store should be based upon 1,000 officers.<sup>18</sup> On 19 August OCQM approved the establishment of a sales store in Glasgow and sent the quartermaster of the Western Base Section a computation of model stock for 1,000 officers (see app. III). When the strength of nurses and WAC officers should be known, OCQM would compute model stocks and forward them.<sup>19</sup>

Sales stores were activated in the United Kingdom at Services of Supply headquarters in Cheltenham and in the base sections as follows:

Base Section	Sales Store
Southern	Tavistock Thatcham Tidworth
Western	Glasgow Lichfield Liverpool
Eastern	Bovington Kettering
Central	London
Northern	Belfast Seskinore Toome <sup>20</sup>
Ireland	

A map showing their location appears as appendix IV.



Figure 1.—Interior of the London Sales Store.



Figure 2.—Components of a Mobile Sales Store.



Figure 3.—British Master Tailor Fitting Uniforms in London Sales Store.

## RATIONING OF OFFICERS' CLOTHING

Rationing of uniforms to be sold to United States officers had its beginning before the creation of the European Theater of Operations. The program was motivated by the need not only to conserve shipping space but also to conform to the strict economy that had long been practiced in the United Kingdom. The United States Army Forces in the British Isles (USAFBI) instituted the rationing of uniforms in March 1942, decreeing that 212 coupons would be issued to a newly commissioned officer and 88 coupons to each officer for annual maintenance. Since many officers were reaching the United Kingdom without their full equipment, arrangements were made with the British Board of Trade for obtaining coupons in bulk. The coupons were held and distributed by the London quartermaster of USAFBI and the quartermaster of the United States Army, Northern Ireland Forces, (USANIF). Officers applying for coupons would indicate the article that they needed, and quartermasters would keep records of coupons issued in order that USAFBI might make a full report to the British Board of Trade. The coupons might not be used for the purchase of civilian clothing.<sup>21</sup>

The plan continued in effect after the establishment of the European Theater. In the fall of 1942, however, it was subjected to careful analysis. Undoubtedly rationing should not be stopped. Indiscriminate purchase of uniforms and accessories by United States officers would bring about a most unfavorable reaction, particularly because a procurement program in Great Britain was under way. The control plan at that time consisted of British ration books and loose coupons to be used in civilian establishments.

If officers should be prohibited from purchasing in civilian stores, quantities sold to them could be controlled and sales to unauthorized persons could be prevented. On the other hand, such a plan was not workable. Sales stores were inaccessible to about a third of the United States officers in the United Kingdom. Others who could reach the stores could not remain for necessary fittings. Still others preferred custom-made uniforms. Therefore, a control plan should cover purchase from both army sales stores and civilian establishments.

The new plan, as propounded by OCQM, was based upon the turn-in of all British ration books and loose coupons. Officers would be issued new coupon books valid for purchase of uniforms and accessories in army sales stores and civilian establishments. Neither sales stores nor civilian establishments might sell uniforms and accessories unless an officer pre-

sent his identification card and the required number of coupons. An officer who needed a complete wardrobe would be issued 400 coupons, though the ration of a British officer was 212 coupons. The complete initial issue, which no officer should need in its entirety, would require 406 coupons. The annual United States maintenance allowance was set at 240 coupons, though the British allowance was 88 coupons. The disparity in the figures was thought to be justified because of the small amount of baggage that United States officers were permitted to bring with them.<sup>22</sup>

A circular based upon the proposed plan was drawn up in OCQM and submitted to the Commanding General, SOS, ETOUSA. This was forwarded to the Commanding General of the Theater on 24 November with a recommendation that SOS, ETOUSA, be authorized to control the purchase of officers' clothing and accessories in the Theater because it was desirable that Americans should not seem extravagant in comparison with the British and because many United States officers' uniforms would be manufactured in the United Kingdom.<sup>23</sup>

While the circular was being considered, service coats, trousers, and overcoats would be sold only to officers who could show that they had no more than one service coat and one pair of trousers and no overcoat. An officer was permitted to purchase only the following items:

Item	Quantity
Cap, service	1
Coat, service	1
Coat, trench, with lining	1
Gloves	2
Handkerchief, cotton, white or khaki	12
Jacket, field	1
Muffler, wool	1
Overcoat, EM	1
Pajamas	2
Shirt, EM, worsted, flannel, or cotton	4
Socks, wool or cotton	6
Sweater	1
Tie	2
Trousers, EM	1
Underclothing set, wool or cotton	6 <sup>24</sup>

The British thought the proposed American ration exorbitant. After a series of conferences Mr. C. H. Carruthers of the British Board of Trade formally requested the United States Army to accept the British scale. All British maintenance allowances, moreover, had been lowered: the male Army officers' ration from 88 to 76 coupons, the Auxiliary Territorial Service's ration from 100 to 88 coupons, the