

## Appendix 4b

### Christmas Carols

The Christmas season was a particularly depressing period for prisoners of war, far from home and loved ones, in all countries. To combat this depression, the YMCA sought to make the yuletide as festive as possible behind the barbed-wire fences by ministering to the needs of POW's. WPA secretaries provided prison camps with Christmas trees and candles and tried to provide prisoners with small gifts, usually pieces of candy or fruit for Allied prisoners in Central Power prison camps. The Association also distributed special literature to mark the holidays. In this appendix, the *Kriegsgefangenenhilfe-Christlicher Vereine Junger Männer* (War Prisoners' Aid-YMCA) in London distributed *Weihnachts Lieder 1916* (*Christmas Carols 1916*) to German and Austrian prisoners of war in British prison camps. This eighteen-page booklet included Christmas poems, a passage by Martin Luther, a space for memorable events, nine Christmas carols (including "O Tannenbaum" and "Silent Night"), and the Christmas story from Luke, Chapter 2, Verses 8-14. The English National Council of YMCA's, the Markel Committee, and Bishop Herbert Bury issued a Christmas booklet similar to this edition the next Christmas.<sup>1</sup>

#### Notes:

**Note 1:** Kriegsgefangenenhilfe-Christlicher Vereine Junger Maenner, *Weihnachts Lieder 1916*, London, 1916, 18 pp. Armed Services Records Box-53, Folder: "Prisoner of War Work-German Language Publications-ca. 1918," Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.