**An Oflag 64 Thanksgiving**

The Kriegies were intent in observing holidays such as Thanksgiving even under their deprived circumstances. They set on celebrating with the same spirit they had known in past years. Of course that meant replicating as closely as possible the traditional Thanksgiving Day dinner. Kriegy Clarence Ferguson described the efforts thusly, “Each of us contributed a specific item of food to be prepared by the kitchen crew and served ceremoniously in the large dining room in the big house. On the day preceding, a portion of our potato ration was held back for the big dinner.” Extra canned meats, Spam and Prem, were supplied from Red Cross parcels along with canned green peas commandeered by their black market contacts.

Ferguson continued, “Time for dinner came and we were summoned to the mess hall. Much imagination had been used by the kitchen crew. Someone had acquired table cloths, and each table had its own centerpiece. The untiring work of dedicated men had transformed this hall into a glamorous experience.” After the chaplain offered a Thanksgiving Day prayer, “Waiters immediately brought steaming bowls of food to each table and for once in a long, long time we ate until we were no longer hungry.” After dinner Kriegies who were fortunate enough to have received parcels with cigarettes, shared them with others topping off a wonderful dinner. Ferguson finished by saying “For a short time the thoughts of war receded, and the memories of home, family and country dominated our thinking. The spirit of this day would strengthen our morale for days to come.”

Nov. 1943 Piece from “The Item”