

WARTIME BLACK BREAD.

The Kriegies of Oflag 64 subsisted on rations provided by the Third Reich supplemented by Red Cross food parcels. One of the main staples of the German ration was the infamous Black Bread (see picture below). A loaf was usually served at the evening meal to every table of Kriegies.

"Each table of eight or ten officers at dinner would choose a trusted carver to slice up the provided loaf of German bread into exactly equal portions. The bread seemed to be mostly sawdust. The carving was done with extreme care with the carver always taking the last piece, so as to ensure his accuracy. Many Kriegies would take their portion back to the barrack and slice the bread as thin as possible and toast it over what was known as a 'smokeless heater', a camp specialty made from old Red Cross powdered milk tins. Heat was provided by burning pieces of German newspapers which were provided by the Reich's propaganda ministry." (Frank Diggs, "Americans Behind Barbed Wire", Arlington, VA, 2000, Vandameer Press, Pgs.18-20.)

Americans who attended a reenactment held on the grounds of the former prison camp in 2017 were afforded the opportunity to sample bread made from the same exact recipe seen in the picture. Not one person got beyond the first bite!

For more info see www.friendsofflag64.org or our partner The Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin, www.szubinpowcamps.org/en/

